Association of Mexican American Educators Journal

Volume 13 Issue 2

A peer-reviewed, open access journal

2019

AMAE Special Issue

Critical Latinx Indigeneities and Education

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http://amaejournal.utsa.edu ISSN: 2377-9187

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Critical Latinx Indigeneities and Education: An Introduction[1]

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Indigenous Latinx children and youth are a growing population that has been largely invisible in U.S. society and in the scholarly literature (Barillas-Chón, 2010; Machado-Casas, 2009). Indigenous Latinx youth are often assumed to be part of a larger homogenous grouping, usually Hispanic or Latinx, and yet their cultural and linguistic backgrounds do not always converge with dominant racial narratives about what it means to be "Mexican" or "Latinx." Bonfil Batalla (1987) argued that Indigenous Mexicans are a *población negada*—or negated population—whose existence has been systematically denied as part of a centuries-long colonial project of *indigenismo* (indigenism) in Mexico and other Latin American countries. This systematic denial in countries of origin often continues once Indigenous people migrate to the U.S., as they are actively rendered invisible in U.S. schools through the semiotic process of erasure (Alberto, 2017; Urrieta, 2017). Indigenous Latinx families are often also overlooked as they are grouped into general categories such as Mexican, Guatemalan, Latinx, and/or immigrants. In this issue, we seek to examine the intersections of Latinx Indigeneities and education to better understand how Indigenous Latinx communities define and constitute Indigeneity across multiple and overlapping colonialities and racial geographies, and, especially, how these experiences overlap with, and shape their educational experiences.

This special collection brings together empirical and conceptual papers that explore the experiences of Indigenous Latinx students and their families in U.S. public schools. Drawing on a range of methods and theoretical perspectives, the authors examine Indigenous Oaxacan mothers' viewpoints on multilingualism and Indigenous language maintenance; the language socialization practices of Indigenous Mexican parents; the ways that Indigeneity and family

[1] **DOI:** http://dx.doi.org/10.24974/amae.13.2.425

socialization relate to the academic resilience of Yucatec-Maya students; racialized labor and language experiences and their association to indigeneity in the lives of Guatemalan and Mexican Indigenous youth; and the possibilities for engaging Critical Latinx Indigeneities (Blackwell, Boj López & Urrieta, 2017) as an interdisciplinary theory and practice to center Indigenous Latinxs experiences in education. Overall, these papers challenge dominant narratives about Latinidad that erase both Indigeneity and multilingualism. Collectively, these papers extend discussions of both Indigenous Latinx families, multilingualism, and U.S. schools.

To explore the nuances of Indigenous Latinx youths' experiences, we broadly ground this special issue in the Critical Latinx Indigeneities (CLI) analytic (Blackwell, Boj López & Urrieta, 2017). We engage the CLI framework with the field of education because im/migrant youth, including Indigenous Latinxs, are usually the first to be fully thrust into U.S. institutional contexts, such as schools, shortly upon their arrival. When Indigenous Latinx youth attend U.S. schools, they may share their Indigenous heritage, allowing for peers and teachers to learn about them. However, as Lourdes Alberto (2017) highlighted from her own experience in "coming out as Indian" as a girl in school, this is usually done with caution. Although Alberto's experience in "coming out as Indian" (Zapotec from Yalalag) was generally positive, Indigenous youth can become the subject of discrimination from other students and teachers due to their ethnoracial, linguistic, and cultural differences (Casanova, 2011; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012).

CLI and Indigenous Latinxs

When Indigenous migrants from Latin America enter the U.S., they challenge essentialist and monolithic understandings of both Latinidad and Indigeneity (Blackwell et al., 2017). Unfortunately, the historical discrimination Indigenous people endure in their Latin American countries of origin also often transfers/continues once they arrive in the United States (Fox & Rivera-Salgado, 2004; Stephen, 2007; Kovats Sánchez, 2018). For instance, Indigenous Mexicans and Central Americans face intra-group racial stereotyping from non-Indigenous Latinxs (Barillas-Chón, 2010; Blackwell, et al., 2017; Boj López, 2017; Holmes, 2013; Pérez, Vásquez & Buriel, 2016; Poole, 2004). These forms of discrimination impact how Indigenous migrants and their children embrace (or not) their ethnoracial identity in the U.S. and also how they manage their visibility and invisibility (Batz, 2014; Machado-Casas, 2012).

We use the term ethnoracial[2] in relation to *indígena* (Indigenous) to disrupt the grey ambiguity between ethnic and racialized understandings of indigeneity in Mexico and other Latin American countries, especially because these have wavered in the ways that Indigenous peoples have been referred to and have experienced life in Latin American societies. These ethnic and racial understandings then shift in the U.S. due to the collectivized racialization of minoritized groups, including Latinxs, within the racial hierarchies of the white settler state. This creates a context of multiple mappings of multiple colonialities and hybrid hegemonies for Indigenous Latinxs in the U.S. (Blackwell, 2010, 2017), both in relation to other Latinxs and in relation to the Whiteness of the broader society. Critical Latinx Indigeneities highlights these multiple colonialities and hybrid hegemonies that are formed in the United States as Indigenous people from Latin America encounter translocal spaces, overlapping colonialities, and imposed logics of erasure that marginalize Indigenous people (Blackwell et al., 2017; Alberto, 2017).

Critical Latinx Indigeneities rejects the idea that Indigenous people cease to be Indigenous when they migrate (*leave the pueblo*) or when they cross the political borders of modern nation states. Instead CLI examines and interrogates the perception and constitution of Indigeneity across nations, including how particular racial logics and hierarchies shift and change across political borders. Most important, CLI recognizes complex, multivocal, and multilayered ways of being Indigenous from local self-understandings to larger scales of imposed state regulation, surveillance, criminalization, and erasures of indigeneity (Blackwell et al. 2017). CLI allows us to understand indigeneity in education in a more dynamic way, and in more durable ways across migration, generational, and linguistic experiences. These complex understandings of indigeneity serve this special issue well as the contributing authors center the varied cultural, linguistic, and identity experiences of Indigenous Latinx youth that might otherwise be overlooked, dismissed, or invisiblized within Hispanidad or Latinidad in U.S. educational contexts.

Using a settler colonial frame, Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) referred to schools as instruments of settlement that explicitly and implicitly justify the theft and occupation of Indigenous land in the U.S. and other settler states. Critical Latinx Indigenities encourages

[2] Goldberg (1997) uses the term ethnoracial to identify social groups that have been interchangeably defined, viewed, or classified as both ethnic and racial over time. Alcoff (2009) further argues that ethnorace encompasses a group with both ethnic and racialized characteristics that allow them collective affinities but are also a source for others' exclusion and denigration.

the complex understanding of the historical and contemporary matrices of relations inherited and in place as a result of multiple and hybrid colonial formations (Blackwell, 2017; Quijano, 2000), including the *settler grammars* of U.S. schools (Calderón, 2014; Urrieta & Calderón, this issue). Latinx im/migrant schooling experiences are thus enmeshed within multiple colonial formations, especially since schools as state institutions have been used to assimilate, Americanize, and implement cultural genocide (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006). Within these colonial entanglements, CLI encourages us to recognize that Latinx im/migrants are also intersectional, multiracial, multivocal, and multilingual, and that this diversity of experience cannot be collapsed into a generalized approach or pedagogy for working with Latinx im/migrant children and youth in schools. CLI emphasizes the lived experiences, struggles, and survivance (Vizenor, 1999) of Indigenous Latinxs, and this emphasis is an entry point for engaging with the growing body of work in education that focuses on Indigenous Latinx families' experiences in U.S. schools, and especially Indigenous Latinx youth's assertion that "somos [Latinos] pero no somos iguales" experiences within U.S. schools (López & Irizarry, 2019).

Finally, CLI recognizes that Latin American Indigenous people arrive on the lands of other Indigenous peoples, and this recognition challenges the colonial narrative of *terra nullius*, as well as the U.S. master myth that this is a nation of immigrants. Recognition of settler colonial logics, CLI argues, necessitates responsibilities and alliances with U.S. Northern Tribal peoples. Indeed, Renya Ramírez's study (2006, p. 22) with unrecognized Tribes, enrolled Tribal members, and Indigenous Mixtec migrants in California, shows that "Native hubs" can be important gathering sites for Northern and Southern Indigenous peoples' collective empowerment, regeneration, and identity resurgence. For Ramírez, these sites can be the coming together of peoples from various Indigenous groups where "community, identity and belonging are created in an unbounded network of culture and relationships."

Indigenous Migrants in the U.S.

While there has been an increase in the number of Indigenous migrants to the U.S. in recent years, Indigenous migration from Latin America to the U.S. is not new. Dating back to the Bracero Program (1942-1964) and beyond there are *testimonios* of Indigenous men who were part of the Mexican labor force that was brought to the U.S. Most recently, Mireya Loza's (2016) book *Defiant Braceros*, details the accounts of several Indigenous men, including Pedro Domínguez and Félix Flores, both P'urhépechas from Janitzio, contracted in Texas in the 1940s;

Isaías Sánchez a Zapotec from San Pedro Apóstol, Oaxaca, who in 1955 was contracted in Southern California, and Julio Valentín May-May who left his Mayan community of Cansahcab, Yucatán, in 1962 and worked in Caléxico, California. This record of Indigenous migration *al norte* is not new. María Herrera-Sobek also identified "Tarascan" (P'urhépecha) speakers in her studies of braceros published in 1987.

Subsequent studies of South to North Indigenous migration have included rich ethnographic accounts of Mixtec, Zapotec, Triqui, P'urhépecha, and Maya migration [3]. Some of these works have been praised and others critiqued, but they did produce research that brought attention to the diversity of Indigenous migration experiences. There are increasingly more studies of Indigenous migrants in the U.S. and their future generations by members of these communities themselves[4]. These emerging bodies of scholarship engage colonialism, genocide, U.S. imperialism, migration, and *sobrevivencia*[5] of the Latin American Indigenous diaspora primarily through interdisciplinary comparative ethnic studies approaches that center the migrants' lives, communities, and their generations in the U.S. (Blackwell et al., 2017). These studies generally tell us that the diversity of Indigenous and Afro-Latinxs challenges collectivized notions of Latinidad that usually homogenize and revolve around an imagined Latinx community that is most often thought of as Mexican and mestizx (Laó-Montes, 2005).

In recent years, we have seen increased numbers of Indigenous Central American migrants coming to the United States. Unaccompanied minors, refugees, and asylees are among the most vulnerable of the dislocated, including Maya youth arriving primarily from Guatemala, and Garífuna from Honduras and other nations in Central America (Hernández, 2015; Saldaña-Portillo, 2017). Indigenous and Afro-Latinx migrants then experience Mexicanization, Latinoization, and Americanization as overlapping colonialities (Castañeda, Manz, Davenport, 2002). Despite the growing presence of Indigenous migrants, research on Latinxs in the United

[3] This includes works by Michael Kearney (1995, 2000), Inés Hernández Ávila & Stefano Varese (1999), Néstor Rodríguez & Jacqueline Hagan (2000), Jonathan Fox and Gaspar Rivera Salgado (2004), Lynn Stephen (2007), and Allan Burns (1993) to name a few.

[4] This includes the growing body of work by scholars such as Floridalma Boj Lopez (K'iché), Giovanni Batz (K'iché), Elizabeth Gonzalez (Zapotec), Lourdes Alberto (Zapotec), Noé Lopez (Mixtec), Griselda Guevara Cruz (Mixtec), Luis Sanchez Lopez (Zapotec), Brenda Nicolás (Zapotec), Daina Sanchez (Zapotec), Patricia Baquedano Lopez (Yucatec Maya), Isabel Altamirano (Zapotec), Melissa Mesinas (Zapotec), David Barillas-Chón (Maya), Rafael Vasquez (Zapotec), Margarita Machado-Casas (Creole/Miskito), and Gabriela Spears Rico (Matlaltzinca/P'urhépecha), to name a few, that are part of diaspora communities.

[5] Trinidad Galván (2005:11) drawing from Vizenor defines sobrevivencia as survivance beyond responding to the global political economy to include everyday cherished interactions and measures.

States continues to assume a homogenous experience and neglects to discuss racial, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic variability within Latinx immigrant families (Boj López, 2018; Fox & Rivera-Salgado, 2004; Oboler, 1995, 2006; Stephen, 2007). While Indigenous families share some similarities with their Latinx immigrant counterparts, they also participate in distinct cultural practices such as Indigenous language use, organized hometown associations, and different traditions and customs (Mesinas & Pérez, 2016). These distinctive forms of social organization and cultural expression warrant further attention and awareness, especially by educators. Indigenous communities organize around language, transnationalism, and youth cultural practice to resist their displacement and migration with creative forms of cultural unity, including through do-it-yourself (DIF) theories and aesthetics such as book publishing and Zines (Boj López, 2017, 2018). These practices and forms of organization are a part of Indigenous communities' resourceful and creative adaptation processes as they settle into the United States. It is also important to note that we cannot assume Indigenous communities practice their cultural traditions in the same ways across communities. CLI recognizes that Indigenous migrants bring with them language, epistemologies, translocal practices, identity, youth practices, and cultural cohesion that challenge the homogenizing and normative discourses that collectivize Latinx experiences, including their school experiences.

CLI, Indigenous Saberes, and Education

In addition to naming the erasure of Indigenous Latinx communities from educational discourse and policy, CLI highlights the intersectional dimensions of their/our experiences in relation to multiple and intersecting colonialities, as well as everyday forms of active *survivance*—or what Casanova (this issue) calls *resilient indigeneity*. The CLI framework also helps disrupt simplistic and essentialist notions of indigeneity by reframing practices and phenomena that are not typically understood as "Indigenous" in order to understand the role that they play in processes of transmigration. For example, a CLI lens allows us to see how Spanish—a colonial/colonizing language—can come to signal different meanings and serve different purposes for Indigenous migrants in the U.S. context than it might in Latin America, even serving as a vehicle or tool for Indigenous survivance/*sobrevivencia* (Martínez & Mesinas, this issue; Morales, Saravia, and Pérez-Iribe, this issue).

Despite the invisibilization of Indigenous communities in the U.S., some Indigenous migrant communities have been able to maintain re/create their cultural practices. According to

Urrieta (2013), Indigenous heritage *familia* and *comunidad*-based *saberes* (knowings) are "complex 'knowings' or understandings' of the world, tied to familia and comunidad knowledge(s), but also encompassing larger social, natural, and spiritual well-being" (p. 321). Urrieta explains that Indigenous heritage *saberes* are learned through community participation. Although such *saberes* originate in Indigenous pueblos of origin (in Latin America), they transcend borders and are brought to the United States (Urrieta, 2016). Indigenous Latinxs have adapted to their new home by re/creating spaces such as sports clubs, hometown associations, and binational organizations, that serve as social capital (Malpica, 2008). Scholars of human development argue that educators and researchers can only fully understand learning when they include culturally heterogeneous processes of engagement in repertoires of practice (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff, 2003; Nasir, Rosebery, Warren, & Lee, 2006). Educators cannot continue to exclude the learning experiences in which Indigenous Latinx youth engage in with their family and cultural communities because these encompass critical forms of Indigenous knowledges and cultural assets that contribute to the development, education, and well-being of Indigenous youth, their families and communities (Urrieta, 2015).

Participation in *bailable*s, or traditional dance performances, intergenerational philharmonic bands, basketball tournaments, and trips back to the *pueblo* are a few examples of how Indigenous youth engage in their cultural traditions (Urrieta & Martínez, 2011). Some of these activities result from the organization of hometown associations, hosting and attending pueblo/regional specific events that Indigenous Latinx migrants prioritize maintaining in the U.S. The availability of these cultural practices provides parents with an opportunity to engage in the cultural socialization of their children through language use, social and cultural values, and religious and spiritual traditions (Buriel, 1993). Recent work by Boj López (2017, 2018) highlights the work that Indigenous Latinx youth are doing themselves to understand and represent their own experiences through technology and youth cultural practices. Distinguishing these varieties of social and cultural practices existent among Indigenous Latinxs, especially by youth themselves, is important because children and youth are exposed to and have various levels of engagement with the Indigenous languages their parents teach them at home and in their extensive communities (Casanova, 2011; Menjívar, 2002; Mesinas & Perez, 2016, Morales, 2016, Martínez, 2018). For example, Morales (2016) found that transnational Zapotec youth developed multiple identities that were influenced by Zapotec and parents had

an additive framework of language use for their children to learn multiple languages. Ruiz and Barajas (2012) advocate for researchers to learn more about the strengths of Indigenous Latinx students and families and how they contribute to their learning in schools.

The presence and accessibility of cultural practices that entail community engagement vary based on the levels of resources and organization available to Indigenous Latinxs. Los Angeles, for example, has become a huge receptive location for Indigenous communities. Given their larger population, Indigenous Latinxs have been able to organize various communal traditions. The arts, such as *danzas* and *bandas filarmónicas*, have become prominent activities. The example of the philharmonic band presents a salient form of intergenerational knowledge that uses various languages—Indigenous languages, Spanish, English, and music—to teach youth about the inner workings and purpose of this tradition (Sánchez, 2018). These communal spaces offer youth opportunities to develop their sense of belonging and Indigenous identity formation (Nicolás, 2012; Sánchez, 2018). Most important, youth have created their own spaces for cultural and political identity development as Indigenous Latinx youth. *La Comunidad Ixim*, for example, is a 1.5 and second generation Maya youth grassroots collective in Los Angeles that uses self-published literature, such as *Las Aventuras de Gaby*, that create narratives that embrace not only their family and school experiences, but also their own political investments in how their Maya community is represented and written into existence (Boj López, 2018).

The U.S. education system should recognize these forms of knowledge and educational experiences that go beyond the limited dimensions of how they currently define education, and how they define Latinxs. According to Nasir et al. (2006), learning environments need to be restructured by "changing our collective understanding of the routine language use and social practices of daily life and their relation to the practices of academic disciplines, and on the other hand, designing classrooms that support the myriad pathways along which learning can proceed" (p. 700). Indigenous Latinxs can lead the path of this restructuring if U.S. educators allow the children and youth to use all of their forms of knowledge, learning, languages, and understandings, including do-it-yourself (DIF) publishing and Zines (Boj López, 2018), to guide these processes.

The Special Issue

Using the CLI framework, the contributors to this special issue emphasize issues of language, identity, and survivance, highlighting the varied and dynamic ways in which Indigenous

Latinx youth and families preserve, construct, and interpret notions of Indigeneity in ways that promote self-understandings, intergenerational socialization and learning, and educational success. In his article "*Indigenous Immigrant Youth's Understandings of Power: Race, Labor, and Language*," David Barillas-Chón, highlights how segmented labor incorporation is closely tied to racialization processes across regions for Indigenous Guatemalan and Mexican youth in the U.S. His study highlights youth's understanding of asymmetries of power based on divisions of labor, and language hierarchies, arguing that there is a racialization of labor and language produced by overlapping colonialities that contribute to asymmetries of power. Barillas-Chón proposes that, within the context of overlapping colonialities, the subaltern positioning of Indigenous youth reproduces divisions of labor.

Saskias Casanova, in her article entitled "*Aprendiendo y Sobresaliendo:* Resilient Indigeneity and Yucatec-Maya Youth," invites us to consider indigeneity as a dimension of intersectional inequality for U.S. Latinx youth. She examines how indigeneity and family socialization relate to the resilience of California-based Yucatec Maya youth. Her study highlights the psychological construct of resilience as an asset that also serves as protective factor facilitating the agency of Maya youth despite living in overlapping colonialities.

In *Zapotec Identity as a Matter of Schooling*, Rafael Vásquez explores how Zapotec-origin youth's identities can positively impact their education. Through in-depth interviews, Vásquez reveals how the Zapotec high school students in his study assert their Indigenous, Oaxacan, and Mexican identities as a basis for developing viable educational approaches that promote their overall educational success. In *Multilingual Mexican-Origin Students' Perspectives on Their Indigenous Heritage Language*, P. Zitlali Morales, Lydia Saravia, and María Pérez-Iribe trace the trajectories of three Oaxacan-origin students from elementary to middle school. Examining these students' perspectives on their Indigenous heritage language—Zapoteco—and their related experiences in a Spanish-English dual language program, their study has important implications for how out-of-school spaces can support authentic language use, as well as for how school-sanctioned language programs might promote multilingualism.

In *Linguistic Motherwork in the Zapotec Diaspora*, Ramón Antonio Martínez and Melissa Mesinas explore Indigenous Mexican mothers' perspectives on multilingualism and Indigenous language maintenance. Drawing on interview data from a larger qualitative study of language and ideology in California, they examine the perspectives of four Zapotec mothers who have

children in a local public school with a Spanish-English dual language program. The interview data highlight what these women *think* and *do* with respect to their children's maintenance of the Zapotec language. The authors draw on Critical Latinx Indigeneities and the feminist notion of *linguistic motherwork* to highlight the intersectional nature of these mothers' efforts to construct and sustain indigeneity in diaspora.

Finally, in *Critical Latinx Indigeneities: Unpacking Indigeneity from Within and Outside of Latinized Entanglements*, Luis Urrieta and Dolores Calderón highlight an important, but difficult conversation about the erasure of indigeneity in narratives, curriculum, identities, and racial projects that uphold settler colonial logics that fall under the rubric of Hispanic, Latinx, and Chicanx. Urrieta and Calderón provide diverse examples of how this process works to advance a theory and praxis of Critical Latinx Indigeneities to decolonize Latinidad and mestizaje in order to envision Indigenous futurities within and outside of the Latinized entanglements of the present.

Taken together, these articles contribute to a more robust and critical understanding of how Indigenous Latinx youth and families experience education in the United States. This understanding can help prepare teachers to work with an increasingly diverse Latinx population, and it can enrich and add important nuance to current scholarly discussions of immigrant education, bilingual instruction, and culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogies. As these articles illustrate, a CLI frame can help begin to challenge the erasure and misrepresentation of Indigenous Latinx students and families in U.S. schools.

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Indigenous Immigrant Youth's Understandings of Power: Race, Labor, and Language

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Abstract

One highly significant yet under-investigated source of variation within the Latinx Education scholarship are Indigenous immigrants from Latin America. This study investigates how Maya and other Indigenous recent immigrant youth from Guatemala and Mexico, respectively, understand indigeneity. Using a Critical Latinx Indigeneities analytic, along with literature on the coloniality of power and settler-colonialism, I base my findings on a year-long qualitative study of eight self-identifying indigenous youth from Guatemala and Mexico and highlight two emergent themes: youth's understanding of (a) asymmetries of power based on division of labor, and (b) language hierarchies. I propose that race is a key component that contributes to the reproduction of divisions of labor and the subaltern positioning of Indigenous languages. Findings from this study provide linguistic, economic, and historical contexts of Maya and other Indigenous immigrants' lived experiences to educators and other stakeholders in public schools working with immigrant Latinx populations.

Key Words: Critical Latinx Indigeneities, Indigenous youth, coloniality

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24974/amae.13.2.425

Introduction

Latinxs[1] continue to be the largest racialized and minoritized group in the United States (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011; Stepler & Lopez, 2016) and its public schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). The number of recent unaccompanied minors coming into the U.S. from Mexico and Central America (Donato & Sisk, 2015), however, is currently changing the composition of Latinxs. Many of the recent unaccompanied youth from Guatemala, for instance, come from rural, often predominantly Maya, regions such as the Western Highlands (Stinchcomb & Hershberg, 2014). Destinations for the majority of the new Maya immigrant populations are urban centers that have historically consisted of Mexican immigrant and/or Mexican-descent communities (Peñalosa, 1984). This new Maya immigrant population is changing the Latinx student demographic in urban public schools (López & Irizarry, 2019). Such new change requires of educators, including teachers, practitioners, school staff, and researchers, working with recent immigrants from Latin America to understand the markedly different experiences of Maya and other Indigenous[2] youth in their countries of origin and their new contexts of reception (Dabach, 2014; Peñalosa, 1984).

Recently, Latinx Education scholars have started to investigate the experiences of Indigenous immigrants, primarily from Southern Mexico, mapping out identity development (Gonzalez, 2019; Kovats Sánchez, 2018), post-primary and secondary schooling experiences (Casanova, 2012; Casanova, O'Connor & Anthony-Stevens, 2016), linguistic diversity and characteristics (Pérez, Vasquez, & Buriel, 2016), and pedagogical interventions based on linguistic and cultural assets (Menchaca Bishop & Kelley, 2013; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012; Velasco, 2010). Others have examined negative experiences Indigenous youth face in and out of school contexts (Barillas Chón, 2010; Stephen, 2007; Urrieta, 2003). These studies are important contributions to an emerging field of Indigenous immigrant studies; however, they do not investigate the experiences of recent Maya immigrants nor sufficiently address Indigenous immigrants' self-understandings of indigeneity.

[1] Latinx is used as a gender inclusive term with those traditionally not included in the gendered uses of Latina, Latino, Latina/o, or Latin@ in the field of education.

[2] In this study, "Indigenous" refers to a self-understanding process contributing to Indigenous group belonging and identification (Urrieta, 2018).

The purpose of this study is to investigate how recent Maya immigrant youth from Guatemala and recent Indigenous immigrant youth from Mexico understand indigeneity. I point out that the ways youth make sense of indigeneity is through their experiences with and understanding of asymmetrical relationships of power based on the dynamics of race, labor, and language in Guatemala, Mexico, and the U.S. I rely on a "Critical Latinx Indigeneities" (CLI) analytic developed by Blackwell, Boj Lopez, and Urrieta (2017) that accounts for the "co-constitutive relationships of multiple contexts of power and multiple colonialities" (p. 127) present in Indigenous immigrant experiences. Critical Latinx Indigeneities assists in analyzing flows of understandings the Maya and Indigenous youth engage in as they simultaneous make sense of their experiences in the U.S. and places of origin from their new contexts of reception. Youth's flow of understandings reveals layers of coloniality present in their Indigenous experiences.

Empirically, findings from this study provide cultural, linguistic, and historical contexts of recent Maya immigrant youth's lived experiences to educators and other stakeholders in public schools. Additionally, this study highlights the importance of utilizing analytics that foreground power and overlapping colonialities. Critical Latinx Indigeneities analytic gives crucial insights into how Indigenous youth make sense of power matrices and different colonialities that overlap in the U.S.

The following is the structure of this paper. First, I describe the importance of utilizing CLI as an analytic that expands understanding of Indigenous immigrant experiences. This is followed by a description of the methodology that includes a discussion of my positionality as Maya and immigrant. I include my positionality because it informed the focus and purpose of this study. I then discuss the major findings of the study: youth's understanding of (a) asymmetries of power based on divisions of labor, and (b) language hierarchies. I argue that there is a racialization of labor and language produced by overlapping colonialities that contribute to asymmetries of power. Additionally, I propose that outcomes of overlapping colonialities is the subaltern positioning of Indigenous languages and the reproduction of divisions of labor. I conclude by providing recommendations for educators working with Indigenous immigrant youth.

Analytic Framework

Analyzing the experiences of Indigenous immigrants from Latin America require expanding the usual analytics used in the study of Latinx immigration to include examinations of the complex social dynamics of race, indigeneity, power, and colonialities. Critical Latinx Indigeneities has taken on this task. Blackwell et al. (2017) developed CLI to understand the multiple contexts of power and multiple colonialities present, sometimes as overlapping structures, in the experiences of Indigenous immigrants from Latin America. Critical Latinx Indigeneities' interdisciplinary approach allows the use of distinct frames developed in Latin America and the U.S. to address racial constructions, power dynamics, and colonialities that overlap in the lived experiences of Indigenous immigrants. Frames that I find complimentary to CLI are coloniality of power and settler-colonialism.

The "coloniality of power" frame was initially developed by Quijano (2000) to conceptualize an axis of power based on the relationships between the construction of race and global capitalism. Subsequent scholarship has built on Quijano's original work by examining relationships and dynamic of power between literacy (e.g., Mignolo, 1995) and personhood formations (e.g., Maldonado-Torres, 2007). A coloniality of power frame gives us insights into the importance of Spanish in Latin America for maintaining power imbalances through the creation of racial categories, which became reified through linguistic practices (Dussel, 1995; Mignolo, 1995; Rama, 1996). In Guatemala and Mexico, for instance, Spanish is the primary language of instruction, learning, labor, and social interactions. The coloniality of power allows us to see that intentions behind teaching in Spanish are to create a uniformity of language while simultaneously erasing Indigenous languages and identities. These intentions and practices are rooted in the colonization of the Americas and the ontological and epistemological distinctions established by colonizers between Western Europeans and the newly invented *indio* racial category. Specifically, racial differences were created in order to establish and sustain power regimes and relationships of marginality between Western Europeans and the *indio* (Dussel, 1995; Mignolo, 1995; Quijano, 2000; Quijano & Wallesrtein, 1992). Moreover, such differences were transformed into values whereby Western Europeans were seen as fully human and Indigenous people as sub-human. Therefore, all that was connected to indigeneity, that is, to a perceived inferiority, needed to be done away with. Instruments for sustaining this regime of power and differences in the Americas were race, Spanish, and the accompanied hierarchies of race and language (Mignolo, 1995).

In the U.S., settler-colonialism operates as a distinct structure (Wolfe, 1999)[3]. The basis for settler-colonialism was not originally race, but the dispossession of Indigenous people from the original lands they inhabited. Nonetheless, settler-colonialism, like coloniality, share the goal of Indigenous erasure. Some methods of Indigenous erasure are the establishment of citizenship categories and construction of race (Wolfe, 2006). For instance, the U.S. war against Mexico (1846-48) resulted in the creation of citizenship types linked to land, which then re-articulated racial categories. Thus, Indigenous Mexicans living in what was once Mexico not only became "illegal" in the lands they originated from, but also non-Indigenous according to U.S. racial formulations. Exercising power against Indigenous communities in the settler-colonial U.S., unlike in Latin America, was based on proving how White Indigenous people were in order to claim ownership of land. The Whiter, the less claims Indigenous people had to land. The case of Indigenous Mexican immigrants, thus, requires us to expand analytics used to understand Indigenous migration to the U.S.

The CLI analytic and complementary frames such as coloniality of power and settler-colonialism help us understand the multiple contexts of power and overlapping colonialities that Indigenous immigrants experience. Coloniality of power points out racial constructions in Latin America tied to labor, race, and language. Settler-colonialism illustrates relationships between Indigenous erasure and citizenship categories. Thus, CLI allows us to see "contemporary migration as a continual consequence of settler colonialism" (Saldaña-Portillo, 2017, p. 143) that intersects with colonialities and racial formations specific to Latin America.

Methodology

This study is based on a year-long (2015-2016) basic qualitative research of eight self-identified Indigenous and recent immigrant male youth, between 16-20 year of age, from Guatemala and Mexico, in Northwest High (NH)[4]. The focal youth consisted of six Maya youth from Guatemala's Western Highlands: Edward, Weas, Joaquín, Elías, Antonio, and Hernández. The remaining youth, Adler and Pedro, were from the Mexican states of Morelos and Oaxaca, respectively. While Adler and Pedro did not provide specific ethnic identifications (e.g., Zapoteco, Tlapaneco, Nahua, etc.), I include their experiences because they contribute to

[3] See M. Bianet Castellano (2017) for a thorough discussion of debates regarding settler-colonialism as an appropriate analytic for understanding power dynamics in Latin America.
[4] Pseudonyms were used for names of all participants and of places.

broader understandings of how recent indigenous immigrants make sense of indigeneity. At the time of the first interview, the youth had been in the U.S. between 6-24 months. Primary methods for gathering data consisted of semi-structured interviews with the focal Indigenous youth and three non-Indigenous Latinx peers. All interviews with youth lasted between 30-90 minutes and were conducted in Spanish. Other data consisted of classroom and school observations.

Northwest High, located in Evergreen, a midsize metropolitan city in the Pacific Northwest, was selected as the site for this study because it functioned as a newcomer center and high school, and it was in the midst of experiencing an increase of Maya students from Guatemala. Originally designed to be a newcomer center, NH served as a transitional space to orient recent immigrants to life in the U.S., help them gain English language skills, and then transfer them to a neighborhood school[5]. At the time this study took place, NH had transitioned into full high school status, serving 6th-12th grade levels. The student population was diverse in terms of culture, language, and immigrant status. For instance, during the 2013-2014 school year, Spanish was the leading language spoken by the student population (29%) followed by Chinese (16%), Vietnamese (12%) and Somali (11%). Of the Latinx student population (46 students) during those years, only six were identified as speaking an Indigenous language. I learned through informal conversations with a staff in charge of student enrollment that the number of Indigenous language speakers from Latin America during the 2013-2014 academic year was underreported. Given the nature of the school serving as a transitional space for recent immigrants, the student population was constantly shifting. Therefore, there were no consistent records indicating Indigenous language speaking student populations from Latin America in the school during the time of this study.

It was primarily through my volunteering, starting in the Fall of 2014, that I got to know many of the Latin American youth at the school, including those that participated in this study. Other ways I met students was through recruitment methods in which I asked for participation from students who self-identified as Indigenous, were immigrants to the U.S., between the ages of 15 and 20 years, and had a working understanding of Spanish. I narrowed the age group to

[5] Northwest High is an "option" school, meaning that students are given the option of attending, remaining, or leaving the school at any time. Varied reasons affecting students' attendance include immigration status, work opportunities, family circumstances, or option of attending a neighborhood school.

15-20 years of age because most of the Indigenous youth I had established relationships with were between these age ranges. I focused on students who had a working understanding of Spanish simply because I am a Spanish speaker. I realize the importance of gender and I made every effort possible to provide an equal representation of gender in this study. However, none of the young Indigenous women I met who fit my criteria were willing to participate in this study. It is possible that including their understanding of indigeneity might have provided different insights into racial constructions, power dynamics, and other claims made in this study[6].

Peers often play significant roles in youth's self-perceptions. Moreover, they can impact youth's self-understanding in negative and positive ways (Steinberg & Morris, 2001). Peers were interviewed in order to understand their perceptions of Indigenous people in their countries of origin and in the U.S. The peers in this study consisted of three recent immigrant male Spanish-speaking youth from El Salvador and Guatemala who were students at NH. These peers did not self-identify as Indigenous.

Similar to the youth in this study, I am a member of the Maya diaspora who at one point was an undocumented immigrant. Not being satisfied with traditional analytics use to understand Latinx immigrants and then applied to the experiences of Indigenous immigrants like myself, I turned to CLI. Critical Latinx Indigeneities affords me the opportunity to incorporate multiple frames that examine how different contexts of power and colonialities overlap in my own lived experiences and those of other Maya and Indigenous immigrants. My personal engagement in processes of Indigenous remembrance and reclamation (Barillas Chón, 2019) along with my work with immigrant and Indigenous communities over the last twelve years, have provided me with specific knowledge about the lives of immigrant and Indigenous people. In this case, I am an "insider" (Banks, 1998) to the focal youth in this study and their lived experiences. However, my age, documented status, research position, and doctoral degree among other identities that mark differences in power dynamics also makes me an outsider.

Foregrounding my positionality as an insider also does not guarantee a complete and full awareness of the youth's lived experiences. In fact, my "outsiderness" secures me a limited understanding of the youth's sense-making. Additionally, it is quite possible that my

[6] For a more flushed out conversation on gender and Indigenous migration see Blackwell (2010, 2017).

interpretation of the youth's lived experiences and understandings are different than their own interpretations. Therefore, all interpretations being made about the youth's experiences and sense-making in this study reflects a partial understanding of them. It is not my intention to make generalizations regarding all Maya and Indigenous immigrant youth. Rather, my aims are twofold. First, to investigate the experiences of a specific set of Maya and Indigenous youth and make a type of localized generalization that is specific to the youth in this study. This localized generalization can be used to contextualize the experiences of other Maya and Indigenous immigrant youth throughout the U.S. My second goal is to expand the CLI analytic employed in making sense of Indigenous immigrant's experiences and understandings by including racialized labor incorporation as an important category of analysis.

Findings

Division of Labor and Race

The youth in this study made sense of Indigeneity through their experiences with and understanding of asymmetries of power based on divisions of labor in Guatemala and Mexico. Important to notice in this section are the youth's awareness of the mutual relationship between labor and language. In the next section I take a closer examination at how this division of labor has a relationship with language hierarchies identified by the youth. I propose that race is a key component that contributes to divisions of labor and language hierarchies.

The youth in this study were keenly aware that Spanish was the language of economic power in their countries of origin. Exemplifying this point was Adler's statement regarding how people in Mexico were able to obtain jobs: "well, [the language]…that was spoken the most [in Mexico] was Spanish, and based on that, you could get more jobs…and they [employers] would even ask you, 'do you speak Spanish or other [language]?' And when you said you spoke Spanish, 'Ok. We'll hire you tomorrow. Come at this time.'" While Adler pointed out that Spanish speakers were more likely to find work or be hired than non-Spanish speakers, Weas discussed the differences in jobs available to Spanish versus K'iche' speakers. He commented that Spanish was important to speak in Guatemala and further elaborated by saying that those that "*habla*[*n*] *bien español y tiene*[*n*] *un buen estudio*" ("speak Spanish well and have a good education") had better jobs than K'iche' only speakers. When I asked Weas what types of work K'iche' speakers did, he said, "*agricultura. Sembrando maíz. Trabajo duro*" or "agriculture. Sowing corn. Hard labor."

Apparent in the youth's accounts are understandings of a direct relationship between Spanish and the types of jobs, along with economic opportunities, available to Spanish speakers. For example, Weas believed that learning Spanish, along with a good education, could lead to jobs that were not confined to outside, hard, manual labor. Weas and Adler demonstrated awareness of relationships between divisions of labor and language. However, with the exception of Edward, the youth did not make any explicit connections to the role that race played in job obtainment. In Guatemala, Edward worked in construction and selling clothes and explained that "[one that] works in the *campo*, in construction, that is an *indio* [indian]"[7]. Here, Edward identified a relationship between labor and race that he did not further unpack. Building on his insight, I posit that there is a racialization of labor that parallels divisions of labor established by the coloniality of power. For Quijano, the coloniality of power established racial hierarchies and a new global capitalism that had a direct and reinforcing relationship to labor divisions (Quijano & Wallesrtein, 1992). Quijano (2000) noted, that "the new historical identities produced around the foundation of the idea of race in the new global structure of the control of labor were associated with social roles and geohistorical places" (p. 536). Thus, the new global economic structure imposed a systemic racial division of labor in which each form of "labor control was associated with a particular race" (p. 537). Moreover, the control of a particular form of labor was at the same time the control of a particular racial group. In Latin America, the racial groups created were the Western European and the range of non-Western European, including *indio/as*. Indigenous people, because of their ontological and epistemological position as inferior human beings, were relegated to manual, and in many cases, indentured servitude; whereas white Western Europeans placed themselves in the top division of labor, often remaining there through exploitative policies (Rama, 1996). For Quijano, this new technology of domination/exploitation, manifested as race/labor, "was articulated in such a way that the two elements appeared naturally associated" (p. 537).

The coloniality of power articulated race and labor in such a way that they both became structurally linked and mutually reinforcing. There is a connection between race and labor evident in the youth's personal work experience as well as in their explanation of the types of

[7] Edward used "indio" as synonymous to Indigenous people.

work Indigenous language speakers in their countries of origin did. Table 1 illustrates the relationships between Indigenous language and labor histories in countries of origin and the U.S.

Table 1

Relationships Between Indigenous Languages and Labor[8]

Name	**Indigenous Language: Community of Origin**	**Labor of Community of Origin**	**Labor of Family In Country of Origin**	**Youth's Labor: Country of Origin**	**Youth's Labor: U.S.**
Hernández	Mam	*Campesinos*	N/D	Started working at 12 years old	Dishwasher
Pedro	N/D	*Campesinos*	*Campesino*	*Campesino*	Dishwasher
Edward	K'iche'	*Campesinos*	Textile and artisanal work	Retail and construction work	Cook/dishwasher Part-time Janitor
Adler	Náhuatl	*Campesinos*	*Campesino*	N/D	Painting houses with father
Weas	K'iche'	*Campesinos*	*Campesino*	Non-wage *campesino* work	Dishwasher
Joaquín	K'iche'	*Campesinos*	*Campesino*	Worked at wholesale of onions	Restaurant work
Elías	K'iche'	*Campesinos*	*Campesino* and Merchant	Non-wage *campesino* work	Not working

[8] "N/D" indicates No Data. Also, no information is provided for Antonio

The table shows that across indigenous groups in my study there is a relationship between the types of labor done in the communities the youth originated from and Indigenous languages. In this relationship, Indigenous language speakers' labor was characterized as general work in "*agricultura*" (agriculture) and "*campo*" (field). Subsistence living such as harvesting, sowing corn, and "*vender lo que ellos hacen mismo*" or "sell whatever they themselves made" (Elías) characterized some of the youth's families' socioeconomic background, including their labor. Most of the youth described the types of labor Indigenous language speakers did as *campesino* work. Weas described this type of work as "hard labor," because as Adler said, it was "labor under the sun" that was "*muy mala para la gente*" or "very bad for people." There were some exceptions to this pattern, however, as for Edward, Indigenous people also worked in construction or in textiles (crafts). Seen in this table is also a relationship between their families' labor and their Indigenous language use. Hernández, Edward, Weas, Elías, and Joaquín were born to parents (or grandparents who raised them as it was the case with Elías) whose primary (or only) language was K'iche' or Mam. Pedro was the only youth who was not born into an Indigenous speaking family. Additionally, five out of the seven youth originated from families with some history of being *campesinos*. We see in the table that two out of the three youth that worked for wages associated with *campesino* labor were primarily K'iche' speakers (Edward and Joaquín). Out of those who did not work for wages (Weas and Elías), one was primarily a K'iche' speaker (Weas), and both helped family with *campesino* work.

The table also evidences that Indigenous language speakers—as illustrated by the Indigenous languages spoken by the youth, their families, and/or their linguistic communities—were relegated to specific labor sectors. More specifically, Indigenous language speakers were most likely to be *campesinos* or do manual labor associated with *campesino* work. I posit that this demonstrates a division of labor along the lines of race. What is more, such racial/division of labor parallels the coloniality of power whereby Indigenous people occupy the lower ranks of the division of labor. For the youth, other forms of labor, that paid better and was less physically demanding, was reserved for Spanish speakers.

Stephen (2007) described a similar labor division along the lines of race that took place in the agricultural work between immigrant Oaxacans and non-Indigenous Spanish-speaking Mexican workers in the U.S. Because her analysis is situated in the U.S, it provides insights into how colonialities overlap. Stephen wrote that the intersections of "the hierarchies of color

found in Mexico, on the U.S. border, and in Mexican communities throughout the United States" results in "formidable hierarchy of power differences experienced in its most intensified form by recent undocumented Indigenous workers who come from rural Mexico" (p. 176). Stephen's work illustrates a hierarchy of labor reflecting a hierarchy of race present in agricultural work in the U.S. Stephen described how Indigenous migrant workers were often under the direct surveillance of and economic exploitation from non-Indigenous/non-Indigenous speaking, Mexicans. According to Stephen (2007), non-Indigenous/non-Indigenous speaking Mexican foremen would identify indigenous workers in order to exploit their labor. Indigenous migrants were in turn dependent on these Spanish-speaking foremen as intermediaries because they shared a language in common.

The exploitation of Mexican Indigenous labor by their Mexican co-workers illustrates overlapping colonialities. Many Mexicans are *mestizos*, however, their Indigenous roots often are de-emphasized, and in many cases erased. One reason for de-emphasizing their Indigenous ancestry is that *mestizos*, depending on their skin color, education, and language, benefit from the race/labor division made possible by "hierarchies of economic, legal, and cultural power" (Stephen, 2007, p. 176) that are foundational to a settler-colonial state. These hierarchies of power overlap with racial/labor dynamics reproduced in Mexico, creating "hybrid hegemonies" (Blackwell, 2010). The consequence is that agribusinesses take advantage of racial divisions maintained in Mexico to utilize non-Indigenous/non-Indigenous-speaking Mexicans to exploit the labor of Indigenous/Indigenous-speaking Mexicans.

The division of labor, within marginalized labor, in the U.S. was evident in the type of jobs the youth in this study held. For example, two-thirds of the youth in this study did restaurant work. It is quite possible that the metropolitan location in the Pacific Northwest where the youth lived contributed to the types of work they did. Researchers on agricultural and social networks (e.g., Runsten & Kearney, 2004) point to how migrant workers use networks to secure jobs. One result of these networks is the concentration of particular migrants in specific geographic sectors associated with agricultural work. While the youth in this study did not work as migrants, it is quite possible that they relied on labor networks to secure restaurant work. For example, Hernández, Weas, and Edward got their jobs because of family connections. López and Runsten (2004), in their investigation of the labor sectors Indigenous immigrants from Southern Mexico end up in, showed that Mixtecos' labor was

concentrated in California's agricultural sector, while Zapotecos worked in urban service sectors doing restaurant related work. In my study, the youth's work history in the U.S. reflected the types of work Indigenous Zapotecos did in urban sectors. What I want to highlight here is that there are other interpretations situated in overlapping colonialities that account for why two-thirds of the youth in this study ended up doing restaurant work, dishwashing in particular. Critical Latinx Indigeneities allows us to see that structural practices, which are a product of overlapping colonialities, contribute to divisions of labor reflecting the division of race in Guatemala, Mexico, and the U.S.

Language Hierarchies and Race

Another way youth made sense of indigeneity was through their understanding of asymmetries of power based on language hierarchies. Here, I discuss how language hierarchies parallels a division of labor established by the coloniality of power. Specifically, I argue that similar to labor divisions, race is a key component that informs hierarchies of language.

I begin with two quotations, one from Antonio and one from Adler, to show youth's awareness of and understanding of language hierarchies in Guatemala, Mexico, and the U.S. Asked about the importance of Indigenous languages, referred to as "*dialectos*" by the youth, Antonio said,

> In Guatemala, some people have told me, because *dialecto* is only used in your town with those that understand it. On the other hand, Spanish is utilized in different countries. In other places. Well then, "don't use it [*dialecto*]. Focus more on Spanish." Some people have said that to me, because that is what is always used. On the other hand, *dialecto* is also good, but is only used in some places. Then is better to learn Spanish.

Adler responded to the same questions with: "there are people that sometimes say, 'I prefer to speak English than to speak Spanish or this other language [Náhuatl]. It's not even known. No one is going to speak it.'" For Antonio and Adler, English, Spanish and Indigenous languages occupied specific spheres of social and linguistic importance, or lack thereof. When Adler said that others preferred to speak English or Spanish because no one knows or speaks Náhuatl, he was pointing out the global linguistic currency of English and Spanish. Adler understood the importance of learning Spanish in Mexico; he specifically said, "they learn the most famous one like Spanish. The one [language] that everyone speaks." Other youth such as Hernández and

Elías expressed similar views. When I asked what it meant for them to learn English and Spanish they said the following: "for me English is very important in order to look for more opportunities; to be able to talk to people…Learning Spanish is also very interesting, like for people from other countries to be able to communicate with our [Spanish-speaking] people" (Hernández), and "learning English is something that will help a lot in studies [education], at work. In many things, too. Learning Spanish is to be able to communicate with people from different Central American countries" (Elías). Here the youth showed understandings of Spanish being a transnational language of communication in Spanish-speaking countries. This was supported with their view that Spanish was "utilized in different countries" (Antonio), and that it facilitated communication across Latin America.

Spanish being a "famous language" that "everyone speaks" demonstrates its position as the main language of communication and social interaction in Latin America. However, the sphere of influence Spanish had, while broad, was limited to Spanish dominant geographic locations. This is evident when the youth understood that English in the U.S. was important for the social and economic benefits accessible to English speakers. The youth demonstrated a complex understanding of economic and social matrices of power tied to language hierarchies.

From the youth's awareness of the hierarchies of languages in the U.S, and in their countries of origin, we begin to see how they understand the overlapping of colonialities. Critical Latinx Indigeneities allows us to situate the youth's experiences and understanding of language hierarchies within the history of colonial languages as mechanism of control. One goal behind imposing Spanish as the language of social and linguistic interactions in the Americas was to sustain particular relations of power and domination between the colonizers and the colonized (Dussel, 1995; Mignolo, 1995). The imposition of the Spanish language had the effect of molding Indigenous people into the image of the Western European colonizer through the control of thought and behavior. For instance, Indigenous people were made to adapt and reproduce Spanish text and thought if they wanted to be part of the new social and political order established by the colonizers and their language of power. In this way, Spanish inserted new logics into Indigenous people's everyday understanding of themselves, each other, and the colonizers.

When Antonio was told to focus more on speaking Spanish than K'iche', because that was the language that was "always used" in Guatemala, he was underlining the entrenchment of

Spanish in Guatemala's everyday linguistic interactions. Adler's statement, and Hernández and Elías' views about the importance of Spanish also exemplify the role of Spanish as the dominant language in Latin America. This power was evident in that Spanish was the language of social and linguistic interactions at school, in their everyday life, and in accessing medical services. When asked how they learned Spanish, the youth who grew up monolingual K'iche' or Mam speakers—Weas, Joaquín, Edward, and Hernández—responded that it was through schools. Edward said, "before when I was five-four years old, I couldn't speak Spanish. It was until I started school, around six years old when I, little [by] little [started to] read in Spanish. And like that, little by little I learned." Adler and Weas' following experiences demonstrate examples of how Spanish mediated important everyday linguistic interactions. Adler shared the following story of helping a Náhuatl speaking woman to buy soap at a store back in Morelos, Mexico:

> Once, a woman went to [the store to] buy *jabón* (soap) and was saying "*jamón*" ("ham") [to the clerk]. She was asking for *jamón*. And she was given a kilo of *jamón*. But this woman didn't want ham. She wanted *jabón*. Then she asked me, "hey friend, do you speak *dialecto*?" I responded yes in her *dialecto*. I tell them [the clerk], "listen, she wants *jabón*." "Oh, *jabón*! [said the clerk]." And she was given a kilo of *jabón*.

While it may appear that going to the store and not being able to ask for what they want is a minor inconvenience or inconsequence to their personal lives, such experiences, nonetheless, reveal the impact of Spanish in the everyday linguistic interactions of Indigenous people. Other experiences that were of far more consequence are apparent in accessing medical services. Weas provided a glimpse of this when he talked about his family's experience with hospital visits. Weas shared that his K'iche' only speaking parents had difficulties when going to the hospital because "Spanish is used there only, and they don't understand it."

Coloniality established Spanish as the language of social and linguistic power in Latin America through its public sanctioning. Thus, Spanish had the effect of controlling behavior in the form of Indigenous people's public linguistic interactions. The importance and urgency of speaking Spanish was apparent in Weas' example of accessing medical services. Youth's understanding of the importance of Spanish in their countries of origin and in the rest of Latin America demonstrates the great pressure they were under to learn this colonial language. Worthy to note is that not all in Mexico and Guatemala learn Spanish. The fact that Weas',

Hernández's, and Edward's mothers did not speak Spanish points to gender and schools as additional factors that mediate the learning of Spanish[9].

Missing from Adler's comment that Spanish was the language that "everyone speaks," is that it is the language everyone speaks *in public*. Spanish is not only a sanctioned language in Mexico and Guatemala, but also among Latin Americans and Latinxs in the U.S. In my observations at NH I noted the following:

> During lunchtime I went to sit next to "V" and "M" [two male K'iche' dominant speakers]. Soon after, "Bal" [Mam and Spanish speaker] and "Teo" [Mexican and non-Indigenous youth] came over to us and sat at the end of the table [across each other]. [At the same] time, "Fran" [Mexican non-Indigenous youth] joined us.
> "V" did not talk much and neither did "M." I saw "M" trying to get "V's" attention and lean over to talk with him [almost whisper like]. I overheard "M" say something to "V" in K'iche'. (Field Notes, 1/26/2016)

The above is one example that shows how Indigenous language speakers would speak their language very softly, almost to a whisper, when in public and communal physical spaces such as the school cafeteria and the hallways. Moreover, the frequency of Indigenous language use was rare in the cafeteria and infrequent in the hallways. One reason for these patterns might be attributed to the youth guarding themselves from being overheard speaking their Indigenous languages. Because I was paying particular attention to them, I was able to pick up on their use of Indigenous languages. The only exception to youths' frequency and use of Indigenous languages was in the sports field, during their lunch break. In these instances, Indigenous language speakers would cluster around each other while being further away from Spanish speakers. Moreover, Indigenous speaking youth, especially the young women, would sit together and speak a mix of their Indigenous languages and Spanish, with Indigenous languages prominently spoken. I did not overhear Indigenous language speaking youth speak to one another in Indigenous languages in any of the classrooms where I volunteered with classwork. Additionally, just because I did not overhear youth speaking Indigenous languages in classrooms, it does not mean that they did not do so. It is also possible that they spoke their Indigenous

[9] See Blackwell (2010) and Martínez-Salazar (2012) for more nuanced investigations of gender and indigeneity.

languages in others spaces, and/or that the frequency of their Indigenous language use was higher than I observed.

Nonetheless, the sanctioning of Spanish in physical and social spaces at NH shows overlapping of colonialities. Colonizers utilized Spanish in Latin America to structure the everyday social and physical life of the colonized. This resulted in the creation of social, physical, and linguistic centers and peripheries where literate White Europeans occupied the former and Indigenous people were relegated to the latter (Rama, 1996). The spaces where the youth in this study frequently spoke their Indigenous languages without whispering them were away from Spanish dominant linguistic centers. Here we see that sanctioned linguistic interactions continued even when the youth no longer lived in their Spanish dominant countries of origin as apparent in the public spaces the youth spoke Spanish, while reserving their Indigenous language use for (semi)private settings.

The history of the English language in the Americas as a settler-colonial power is different from that of Spanish as a power of coloniality. However, the result of English as a mechanism of settler colonialism, much like Spanish for the coloniality of power, is the control and marginalization of Indigenous people. In their essay analyzing immigration, educational and nation building policies in the U.S., Cervantes-Rodriguez and Lutz (2003) propositioned that the coloniality of power "informs power relations and regimes designed to regulate behavior, including language-regulating mechanism" (p. 523). For the authors, this asymmetrical relationship is rooted in power differentials between the U.S. and Latin America that stem from colonial relationships. Such power differentials play out in the linguistic experiences of immigrants in the U.S. as English becomes an additional colonial language of power that youth must learn.

Indigenous language speaking youth in this study are positioned at the intersection of colonialities by the asymmetrical relationships of power between English and Spanish. In order to access social and economic resources in Guatemala, youth like Edward and Weas, along with their families had to learn and speak Spanish. Once they were in the U.S., these youth, while still learning and improving their Spanish, must also learn English in order to be part of the linguistic and social settings, outside of their Spanish-speaking enclaves (e.g. Batz, 2014; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012; Peñalosa, 1984; Urrieta, 2013). As Hernández said, English was important in order "to be able to express [one self] to the people of this country [U.S.]", moreover, "*sin el*

inglés no puedes hacer nada acá" or, "without English you can't do nothing here." Even Spanish speaking enclaves and Latinx spaces in the U.S can be exclusionary and discriminatory of Indigenous people (e.g., Barillas Chón, 2010; Fox, 2006; Pérez, Vasquez, & Buriel, 2016); thus, preventing Indigenous monolingual speakers to benefit from Spanish-speaking networks and communities.

The focal youth in this study were aware of English as a language of power, while simultaneously utilizing their Spanish to navigate linguistic interactions and dynamics established in their countries of origin that immigrated with them to the U.S. From the youth's awareness of the language hierarchies in the U.S, and in their countries of origin, we see how they understand the overlapping of colonialities. The colonial logic of dehumanizing Indigenous people is not left behind in Latin America as immigrants settle into the U.S. Rather, it is carried over into the U.S where it is sustained by settler-colonialism and implicitly by Latinxs' exclusionary practices.

Outcomes of Overlapping Colonialities: Labor Divisions and Language Subalternity

Youth's labor and linguistic experiences demonstrates the reproduction of labor divisions in their contexts of departure and reception as well as the subaltern positioning of Indigenous languages. I rely on Weas' experiences and understandings of K'iche' to illustrate how subalternity of language intersects with the reproduction of specific labor done by Indigenous youth. First, however, I begin with discussing how the imposition of Spanish on Indigenous people resulted in the subaltern positioning of Indigenous languages and in the *learning not to learn* them. This subaltern position is evident in the youth's use of the word "*dialecto*" when referring to Indigenous languages and their descriptions of the importance, or lack thereof, given to them. Kovats' (2010) identified in her study of identity among Mixteco youth in Southern California that "*dialecto*" within this community was referred to as "*tu'un nda'vi*, meaning 'the poor language'" and Spanish was referred to as "*tu'un jaan*, 'the rich language'" (p. 47). Evident here is that *dialectos* are placed in economic positions of inferiority. Conversely, Mixtecos placed Spanish as a "proper" language because it was one that was connected to economic and linguistic power. Kovats' work shows that some Indigenous communities inadvertently adopt a coloniality of power logic that reproduces Indigenous languages as linguistically and economically inferior.

The youth in this study were proud K'iche' or Mam speakers and understood the cultural importance of Indigenous languages. However, similar to what other scholars have documented (e.g., Kovats, 2010; Pérez, Vasquez & Buriel, 2016), the youth continued to refer to Indigenous languages as "*dialectos*." The use of *dialectos* to refer to Indigenous languages demonstrates their subaltern positioning even if the youth did not believe that their languages were inferior. *Dialectos* are subaltern languages because they are not the primary or normalized language of communication and linguistic interactions, and they do not yield well-paying jobs.

In other cases, the youth referred to Indigenous languages as "*un otro idioma*" or "an other language." The usual translation of "*un otro*" is "another," by which is meant "one more" or is used to reference one thing from one already mentioned or known about. While it is true that the Indigenous languages some of the youth spoke was "one more" language they knew, the term "another" does not correctly translate the youth's understanding of the positioning of Indigenous languages in the larger linguistic, social, labor, and cultural context they are located in. An accurate translation of "*un otro*" is "an other." When the youth said "*un otro idioma*" they did not mean Indigenous languages were lesser. Nonetheless, their use of the modifier "*un otro*"/"an other" reified Indigenous languages as "other than" the normative language of communication and power[10].

Indigenous languages occupy a subaltern position as evident in the youth's descriptions of the importance, or lack thereof, given to Indigenous languages in their countries of origin. When asked if it was important for him to speak or understand K'iche', Weas responded, "*para mí, no. Porque siento que k'iche' no, casi no sirve nada*" ("for me, no. Because I feel K'iche', no, it's almost no good at all"). Weas statement indicates that Indigenous languages were "no good at all" in Guatemala. It must be clear that for him, K'iche' was not intrinsically "no good;" however, he viewed it as no good because he was understanding its positioning in the larger social-linguistic and economic contexts he lived in and operated from. One outcome of seeing Indigenous languages as no good, or being locally useful, is their extinction as evident in Adler's statement that the "[Náhuatl language] is becoming extinct; and just we...Indigenous people or our people are going extinct and are becoming less." Hernández expressed a similar view when he said that Indigenous languages "are becoming lost."

[10] See Said's (1978) work on "Othering" as mechanisms of maintaining differential power relations.

Whereas Weas perceived K'iche' to be no good at all, Antonio and Elías believed that Indigenous languages were locally important. For instance, Antonio and Elías respectively said "*dialecto* is…good, but is only used in some places," and "I don't think that everyone is going to want to learn K'iche' because that [language] is only used in Guatemala." Even when acknowledging their local importance, Indigenous languages remained subaltern as they had no transnational, social, and economic authority. Here I highlight Weas' negative associations with K'iche' and his push for learning colonial languages. I focus on him to show the intersections of labor divisions with the subaltern positioning of Indigenous languages.

Weas expressed a deep desire to disassociate himself with K'iche' and K'iche' speakers, primarily because these youth spoke mostly in K'iche' or some Spanish. He wanted Indigenous people in Guatemala to speak Spanish and for his immigrant Spanish speaking peers to speak English. His perceptions, attitudes and experiences with K'iche' and Spanish illuminate the complexities of learning Spanish and Indigenous languages along with their intersections with labor. Weas' linguistic, social, and labor experiences as a K'iche' speaking person in Guatemala shaped his views about the utility of the language in Guatemala and the U.S. He specifically spoke about the invisibilization of K'iche' people by the Guatemalan government: "*Porque algunos* [*que hablan k'iche' fueron*] *encontraron muerto en la calle y no hacen nada* [*el gobierno de Guatemala*]. *No hacen nada porque* [*los de la comunidad*] *son indígenos (sic), sólo que hablan k'iche', y no nos quiere ayudar el gobierno. Ayudan más lo que, lo que hablan español (sic)*" ("Some [K'iche' speakers] were found dead in the streets and they [Guatemalan government] don't do nothing. They [government] don't do nothing because they [people in his community] only speak K'iche'. The government helps more those that speak Spanish").

The experiences as someone who comes from a *campesino* community that speaks a subaltern language have greatly influenced Weas' decision to want to learn Spanish and English. His wish for Indigenous people to learn Spanish was made out of a deep desire for them to "*no sufrir mucho*" or "not suffer much" socially, politically and economically. That is to say, he saw Spanish as an instrument for mitigating "*trabajo duro*" ("hard labor") and the hard life associated with being Indigenous—specifically, political persecution and *campesino* work in Guatemala, and dishwasher/restaurant work in the U.S. There is much agency to his desire to speak Spanish and English instead of K'iche'. For him, part of learning colonial languages was about survival, about not becoming invisible. Weas' desire must also be understood against the backdrop in which

colonialities created hierarchies of race/language and race/labor divisions. The coloniality of power and settler-colonialism made it possible for the youth in their countries of origin, and other Indigenous peoples in the U.S., to *learn not to learn dialecto*. Adler's experiences not learning Náhuatl is exemplary of this: "I was taught since little that I should not learn that language [Náhuatl] because there was a lot of bullying toward [Náhuatl speaking] children. People that spoke Spanish really well would do a lot of bullying. So, that's why my family members stopped learning that language." While Adler is the only youth that talked about the reasons why he stopped speaking Náhuatl, his account is important because it points to a process of *learning not to learn* their Indigenous languages.

Given the sociolinguistic and economic power of colonial languages, Indigenous language speakers are restricted in their options for the languages they can use in different social and labor spheres. In their countries of origin, Spanish mediates social and linguistic interactions. There is also a belief that speaking Spanish allows access to different types of labor. In the U.S., Spanish also mediates social and linguistic interactions, but English becomes important for accessing well-paying jobs. However, we see that in both contexts, while learning colonial languages mitigates some of the social and linguistic spheres of interactions, they do not necessarily translate into different labor strata. On the contrary, while the youth may no longer be doing *campesino* work in the U.S., the type of labor they do continues to be marginal within the already marginal work of Latinxs. Thus, Indigenous people continue to experience the effects of overlapping colonialities through the subaltern positioning of Indigenous languages and labor exploitation in their contexts of origin and new contexts of reception. Nonetheless, youth, along with other Indigenous people, make calculated risks when deciding, or not deciding, to speak colonial languages, in their countries of origin and in their new contexts of reception.

Implications and Conclusion

Mignolo (2000) wrote that there is an inherent asymmetry as it pertains to colonial and Indigenous languages. The reason for this is that languages are connected to larger social, political, economic and cultural institutions that legitimize or place them in subaltern positions. Being Indigenous or speaking Indigenous and colonial languages means living this asymmetry. For Mignolo (2000), this asymmetry of languages is about power (p. 231). The youth in this study understood this asymmetrical relationship of power. This understanding was evident

when they described labor divisions and language hierarchies they experienced or perceived in their countries of origin and in the U.S. For the youth, Spanish and English were of transnational and global importance, respectively. Indigenous languages were of local importance. In the U.S., English took on the role that Spanish did in their countries of origin, as it became important in order to communicate with others and because of the belief that knowing it could yield better economic opportunities. The youth also saw links between a division of labor and the hierarchies of languages. Utilizing a Critical Latinx Indigeneities analytic, specifically, the "multiple contexts of power," (Blackwell et al 2017, p. 127), I highlight that there is a racial component to this division of language/labor. The coloniality of power created racial categories, and such categories were tied to language, among other ethnic indicators. Race, language, and division of labor have, thus, been inextricably linked since the invention of the Americas and they overlap in the Indigenous youth's self-understandings through their immigrant experiences with U.S. racial constructions.

Education scholarship on native Spanish speakers positions the "home language," which is proxy for Spanish, as assets to be utilized by educators in order to enrich their students' classroom learning (e.g., Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Nieto, 2002; Valdés, 2001a, b). This scholarship continues to be of utmost importance. However, when it relates to Indigenous immigrant youth, this scholarship operates under the problematic assumption that "home languages" are situated under the same matrix of racial, linguistic, social, and economic power as other languages spoken in their countries of origin. For the youth in this study, Indigenous language speakers, and their languages, are marginally positioned in their countries of origin. Often, Indigenous languages are invisibilized as evident in that the language of everyday economic, social, and linguistic interaction in their countries of origin is Spanish. Therefore, when focusing on the strength of home languages, educators must be attentive to the fact that such "home" languages for Latinx youth may not be Spanish. In some cases, the home language became a language that was adopted in order to navigate broader labor, linguistic, and social spheres. For some of the Indigenous youth in this study, a home language included their Indigenous language of origin *and* Spanish. For this reason, educators working with Latinx youth, including immigrants from Latin America, must be aware of the complex relationships between race and language within different groups of youth in their classrooms and schools. Language relations operate under more nuanced ways than educators might be

aware of. Simply relying on Spanish as a home language and asset can have the unintentional effect of reproducing inequitable power dynamics, which contribute to further invisibilizing and marginalizing Indigenous languages.

The youth in this study were aware of power codes and the matrices of colonialisms. The youth still had to speak and continue to learn Spanish because it is useful for their everyday life, based on the racialized labor incorporation that they enter into. This includes the particular labor sectors where the youth find authorized and unauthorized employment, such as in restaurants. Educators must be aware that these youth often work many hours late into the night in the restaurant industry and still manage to attend school early the next morning. English, however, supersedes Spanish, as it is the U.S. language of power—one that they are also learning and a primary reason why they are attending school. Under these matrices of power, Indigenous languages slowly fade and become invisible, reproducing the goals of the multiple and overlapping colonialities—Indigenous erasure.

Lastly, educators working with Latinxs, Latin American immigrants, and specifically Indigenous immigrants should be attentive to the power dynamics between different Latin American groups. One way of being attentive to how power dynamics play out within Latinx youth is to notice the subalternity of Indigenous languages within their schools, classrooms, and peer cliques. As this study shows, some youth are reluctant to speak their Indigenous languages in public settings. Educators must pay attention to such moments of silence by Indigenous immigrant youth. Speaking or not willing to speak an Indigenous language is both a form of survival and resistance. At no point should Indigenous youth be forced to speak their Indigenous language, among other reasons, because that may expose them to unwanted negative attention. Educators can co-create with Indigenous youth and other Indigenous allies (Boj Lopez, 2016) spaces where Indigenous youth may feel comfortable to be their Indigenous selves. This includes facilitating educational programs or projects in which Indigenous youth can improve their Spanish and English while maintaining their Indigenous languages so that they can pursue educational, social, and economic opportunities. In the case of high school age youth who work, such educational programs should also include information on labor rights and opportunities. Finally, educators must be aware that this type of work must be accompanied by larger campaigns aimed at ending racist practices maintained by the multiple and overlapping colonialisms in the U.S.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank the youth in this study. They, and others like them, continue to shape our understandings of indigeneities. I also want to thank the editors for this special edition and Critical Latinx Indigeneities in Education, and the Interdisciplinary Research Institute for the Study of (In)Equality (IRISE) at the University of Denver for supporting my scholarship.

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Aprendiendo y Sobresaliendo: Resilient Indigeneity & Yucatec-Maya youth

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Abstract

Relatively little research has focused on the experiences of students and families of Yucatec-Maya origin in the U.S., and even less has focused on Yucatec-Maya youth and resilience, a normative process of positive adaptation despite exposure to adversity. Using Critical Latinx Indigeneities, which centers on Indigeneity across multi-national spaces, sociohistorical colonialities, and migrations, this study examines how Indigenous identity, familial linguistic and cultural practices, and resilience processes relate to one another for 10 (three girls) California-based Yucatec-Maya students. Through interview data, the themes that emerge expose discrimination as one form of adversity Yucatec-Maya students experience. There are three overarching themes related to the students' collective resilience process and the emergence of resilient Indigenous identities: 1) their lived, linguistic, familial, and community-based experiences; 2) familial support and academic resilience; and 3) transformational welcoming spaces. These protective processes contribute to the students' agency in [re]defining their resilient Indigenous identities in the U.S.

Keywords: Indigenous identity, resilience, families

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24974/amae.13.2.428

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Introduction

Latinxs comprise 18% of the U.S. population, making them the largest ethnic minority group in U.S. society (U.S. Census, 2018). As this population continues to grow, it is important to understand the ethno-racial diversity and within-group differences of Latinxs. For example, compared to their non-indigenous counterparts, Indigenous Latinx youth are more likely to exit high school and to not pursue higher education (Ruiz & Barajas, 2012). However, there are only a limited number of research studies that focus on the school experiences of Indigenous Latinx youth (Casanova, O'Connor, & Anthony-Stevens, 2016; González, 2018; Kovats-Sanchez, 2018). In particular, studies that focus on Yucatec-Maya students, their families, and communities (Baquedano-Lopez & Janetti, 2017; Cornejo-Portugal, 2015) and resilience (Casanova, 2012) are scarce. This study explores how resilience and Indigenous identity relate to one another for Yucatec-Maya youth. The study considers resilience from an interdisciplinary Critical Latinx Indigeneities (CLI) lens, which centers on Indigeneity across multi-national spaces, sociohistorical colonialities, and migrations (Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017). Specifically, how do familial, schooling, and community linguistic and cultural practices inform the Indigenous identities and collective resilience processes of Yucatec-Maya students?

Critical Latinx Indigeneities and Resilience

Resilience is a dynamic and normative process in which a person can positively adapt to difficult experiences, such as exposure to adversity, trauma, and other life stressors (Kuperminc Wilkins, Roche, & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2009; Luthar & Zelazo, 2003; Masten & Powell, 2003). Suárez-Orozco, Motti-Stefanidi, Marks, and Katsiaficas' (2018) integrative model of risk and resilience for immigrant-origin youth grounds itself in the challenges faced by the youth and their families at the micro-, exo-, meso-, macro-, and chrono- systems. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) socio-ecological systems theory situates the child within multiple contexts, in which interactions occur which relate to the child's development. The microsystem, for example, includes the relations between the child and persons in her immediate environment such as parents. A resilience framework traditionally consists of identifying risks, or conditions associated with a higher likelihood of negative or socially undesirable outcomes, which lead to developmental challenges. There is abundant research on risks specific to immigrant-origin youth (Suárez-Orozco, Motti-Stefanidi, Marks, & Katsiaficas, 2018). Some of the risks for immigrant-origin

Latinxs are acculturative stress, or the stress associated with adapting to a new culture, and perceived discrimination, which is an individual's interpretation of discriminatory encounters.

Resilience also consists of protective processes that lessen the likelihood of negative consequences from exposure to risks (Kuperminc, Wilkins, Roche, & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2009; Suarez-Orozco, Stefanidi, Marks, & Katsiaficas, 2018). Some protective processes include positive experiences and relationships with parents, peers, and community members (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998). For example, teacher mentorship (Casanova, 2012) and community involvement (Kovats Sánchez, 2018) for Indigenous students contribute to their academic resilience. Other protective processes for Latinxs, in particular, include familial socialization into the cultural value of hard work, as well as the development of positive ethnic identities and biculturalism (Kuperminc, Wilkins, Roche, & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2009).

Indigenous scholars have problematized resilience due to its individualistic nature. Resilience theory tends to place fault on Indigenous youth that are not successful in school instead of on the systemic inequalities and barriers they face (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008; LaFromboise, Hoyt, Oliver, & Whitbeck, 2006). Latinx, immigration, and Indigenous scholars have begun to unravel the shortcomings of resilience theory and recommend ways to incorporate more culture-specific contexts in understanding resilience for each of these communities. The integrative model of risk and resilience acknowledges the reciprocal interactions and relations with family and community that serve as protective factors for immigrant-origin youth (Suarez-Orozco, Stefanidi, Marks, & Katsiaficas, 2018). Casanova, O'Connor, and Anthony-Stevens (2016) have considered the collective transformations of Indigenous Mexican families in diasporic contexts and called attention to transborder networks they traverse as they face exclusion in multiple nation-states. However, these scholars have not critically examined resilience for Latinx Indigenous communities.

Critical Latinx Indigeneities (CLI) is a fitting lens to complicate theoretical frameworks such as resilience. CLI considers the multi-dimensional, intersectional identities of Latinx Indigenous communities, integrating the interlocked oppressions that they face across transnational spaces, while centering on Indigeneity (Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017). Critical Latinx Indigeneities emphasizes the Indigenous voice by drawing from narratives and Indigenous knowledge systems to inform research (Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017). CLI refocuses on the complex, lived experiences of Indigenous peoples while also critiquing

colonial-based practices, systems, and power structures that often invalidate, exclude, and erase their experiences from our academic fields and from theories such as resilience. In this article, Critical Latinx Indigeneities is used to present the collective resistance of Indigenous youth that challenges established individualistic norms of psychological processes like resilience, which at times render invisible Indigenous Latinx identities and cultural ways of being. The present study focuses on protective processes that are specific to Indigenous, Latinx, immigrant-origin students' Indigenous identity development across multiple contexts (e.g., school, home, etc.)

The Transborder & Schooling Experiences of Yucatec-Maya youth

The unique experiences of Yucatec-Maya communities begin prior to living in the U.S. context. Due to a violent and oppressive history of colonization which has shaped cultural systems of inequality in Mexico, Yucatec-Maya youth migrate within the country into urban centers for service jobs (Castellanos, 2008). The lack of jobs available for Indigenous Mexicans in urban areas forces them to migrate to the U.S. (Casanova, O'Connor, & Anthony-Stevens, 2016). Much of the literature on Indigenous Mexican migration has focused on the transnationalism of Purépecha, Zapotec, Mixtec, and Guatemalan Maya communities (Fox & Rivera-Salgado, 2004; Popkin, 1999; Stephen, 2007). Notably, Cornelius, Fitzgerald, and Fischer (2007) examined the migration flows and adaptation of adult Yucatec-Maya men, while Whiteside (2006) explored the linguistic choices made by Maya adults with Maya colleagues at work. However, these studies do not focus on youth.

Once in the United States, Yucatec-Maya youth are faced with different structures of oppression and macro-systemic ideologies that continue to invalidate their Indigeneity. Immigrant-origin Latinxs are often profiled as a homogeneous group, and stereotyped as reluctant to learn English, and a threat to American values (Suárez-Orozco, Motti-Stefanidi, Marks, & Katsiaficas, 2018). Among these broader stereotypes of Mexican-origin Latinxs is the intra-group stereotype of being *indio.* Indigenous Latinx students in the U.S. experience intersectional discrimination for being Mexican, immigrants, and Indigenous, including from their non-Indigenous or *mestizo* Latinx peers, and feel less welcomed in schools (Cooper, Gonzalez, & Wilson, 2014; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012).

There are a number of research studies that focus on the experiences of Indigenous Mexican students in the U.S. Most of these studies have examined the experiences of Purépecha, Zapotec and Mixtec youth (Barillas Chón, 2010; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012; Mesinas &

Perez, 2016; Kovats Sánchez, 2018; Velasco, 2010). Scholars have investigated the challenges Oaxaqueño students, or students who come from the Mexican state of Oaxaca, encounter in high school and college due to their Indigenous cultural, linguistic, and racial backgrounds such as stereotyping, discrimination, marginality, and lack of sense of belonging (Barillas Chón, 2010; González, 2018; Kovats Sánchez, 2018; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012). Scholars have also explored the consequences of colonial, internalized beliefs about the "inferiority" of Indigenous languages which lead parents to not teach their children their Indigenous languages (Velasco, 2010). However, research has shown that more inclusive teaching pedagogies (Ruiz & Barajas, 2012); after-school newcomer clubs (Barillas Chón, 2010), college experiences and community activism (Kovats Sánchez, 2018; Mesinas & Perez, 2016); and transnational networks (Machado-Casas, 2012) can create supportive spaces. In these counter-spaces of collective resistance, students can adapt to the U.S. and also maintain and reaffirm their Indigenous identities.

Researchers have documented the pre-migration and migration experiences of Yucatec-Maya youth and families which include the economic and educational reasons that they migrate, as well as the use of familial and community networks during the journey north; and adult responsibilities youth take on as they adapt to the U.S. (Casanova, 2012; Cornejo-Portugal, 2015). Scholars have focused on the stress of family separation and reunification, poverty, documentation status, and intersectional discrimination (e.g., being an immigrant, Mexican, and Indigenous) that impact Yucatec-Maya children's mental and physical health (Casanova, 2012; Perez-Rendon, 2011). A handful of studies have focused on the migration experiences of Yucatec-Maya youth to places such as California (Cornejo-Portugal, 2015; Perez-Rendon, 2011). Few researchers have examined Yucatec-Maya youth experiences in schools (Casanova, 2016), familial linguistic practices (Baquedano-Lopez & Janetti, 2017), or Yucatec-Maya youth resiliency (Casanova, 2012), especially from a critical lens such as CLI.

Yucatec-Maya students experience higher levels of stress due to discrimination than their non-Indigenous or *mestizo* peers (Casanova, 2016). Baquedano-Lopez and Janetti (2017) reveal the pedagogical strategies teachers in a Northern California school used to support and affirm the Yucatec-Maya students' identities. The authors urge educators to understand the Indigenous diasporic consciousness, or "awareness of multiple and often contradictory epistemological hemispheric locations" (p.178), that the students navigate alongside notions of being Latinx.

Similar to the Purepecha, Mixtec, and Zapotec youth, Yucatec-Maya youth and their families experience many obstacles in migrating and in the U.S. school systems yet have various sources of support that enable them to academically succeed and adapt to their transnational, intersectional, diasporic identities (Casanova, 2012). Using the integrative model of resilience for immigrant-origin youth and Critical Latinx Indigeneities, this study examines the relation between familial, schooling, and community linguistic and cultural practices, Indigenous identity, and collective resilience processes for Yucatec-Maya youth.

Method

Participants

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 (M_{age} = 16.39, $range_{age}$= 5, SD_{age}=2.07, 3 female) Yucatec-Maya students in the U.S. The participants were from the southern state of Yucatan, Mexico or had parents that originated from Yucatan, Mexico. Four of the participants were second generation immigrant origin. These students were born in the U.S., but their parents were born in Mexico (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Five participants were born in Mexico and came to the U.S. after the age of 12, making them first generation immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). One participant was 1.5 generation. He was born in Mexico and came to the U.S. before he was 12 years old. The participants all ethnically identified as Maya and/or Yucateca/o alongside other ethnic labels (see table 1).

The students went to two different public high schools. Some went to a school located in a suburban middle-class area of Southern California. These students lived in the lower-income neighborhood of this suburban city. The Southern California high school had a 95% graduation rate. Students' ethno-racial demographics breakdown consisted of 69% White, 21% Latino, 5% Asian, 2% Black, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, and 2% other. Fifty-two percent of the students at this high school were male and 48% were female, 20% were low-income, and three percent were English Learners. The other students went to a high school located in a large urban city in Northern California. The Northern California high school had a 71% graduation rate. Students' ethno-racial demographics breakdown consisted of 50% Latinx, 18% Asian, 15% Black, 11% White, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, and 5% other. Fifty-nine percent of the students in the Northern California high school were male and 41% were female, 68% were low-income, and 40% were English Learners.

Table 1

Yucatec-Maya Participant Background Demographics

Student pseudonym	Birthplace	Age	Immigrant Generation	Ethnicity	Race	Number of Discriminatory Experiences Reported [c]	GPA[d]
Antonia	California[a]	14	2	Yucatecan American	Maya	9	3.00
Jenny	U.S.[a]	14	2	Yucatec-Maya, Mexican	Mexican/ Mexican-American	7	n/a
Jose	California[a]	18	2	Mayan	Mexican/ Mexican-American	7	3.78
Luis	California[a]	15	2	Yucateco, Mexican	Latino/Hispanic, Mexican	9	3.50
Mateo	Yucatan, MX	19	1.5[b]	Mexican, Yucateco	Mexican/ Mexican-American	9	2.50
Ricardo	Yucatan, MX	18	1	Maya-Yucateco	Maya	10	3.00
Gaby	Quintana Roo, MX[a]	14	1	Mexicana, Yucateca	Maya, Mexican/ Mexican American	9	4.00
Juan	Yucatan, MX	17	1	Yucateco-Maya	Latino/Hispanic	9	2.50
Alberto	Mexico	17	1	Latino, Yucateco	Latino/Hispanic	7	2.50
Miguel	Yucatan, MX	19	1	Yucateco-Maya	Latino/Hispanic	11	3.00

[a] Parents were born in Yucatan, MX

[b] 1.5 generation refers to students who migrated to the U.S. before the age of twelve

[c] Range of incidents 1-17; some examples: due to your race/ethnicity you…got a lower grade; were unfairly disciplined; kids thought you did not know English well; kids did not include you in activities; kids called you racially insulting names; teachers expect less from you

[d] Based on a 4-point scale

Procedure

Non-probability, purposive sampling was used to recruit the participants. Students were recruited through networks formed with Northern and Southern California schools and cultural organizations that offer services to the Yucatec-Maya communities of Muna and Oxcutzcab (Indigenous, rural towns in Yucatan). Parents or guardians gave permission for the students to take part in the study and then students assented to participating in the study. The participants took a survey which included perceived discrimination, ethnic identity, and acculturation scales. Ten participants who took this survey were randomly selected for an interview. The findings for this article are based on the interviews, which were conducted after school or at times convenient for the students. The interviews explored school experiences; educational attitudes; familial, cultural, and linguistic practices; and discrimination. Initial interview prompts and questions included: *Tell me about your family. How do your parents feel about school? What do your parents tell you about the Maya culture?*

Analysis

Grounded theory open-coding was conducted with the semi-structured interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Relevant raw text was coded, then repeating ideas were organized into significant themes in which theoretical constructs regarding the topics emerged (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Throughout this process, the codes and themes were refined. Once the codes were established, content analysis was conducted. NVivo 12 (QSR International, 2018) was used to organize the major themes and memos that emerged from the analysis.

As an Indigenous, Yucatec-Maya woman born in Yucatan, Mexico and immigrant in the U.S., the author is a partial insider of the Yucatec-Maya community. Yet, being labeled a researcher with all the privilege it carries due to the education and training received, the author of this study is also an outsider immersing into these young persons' lives. The author had to continuously evaluate her own multiple academic and Indigenous identities within the context of the analysis of the participant narratives. Through constant self-awareness, and in line with Critical Latinx Indigeneities as a methodological tool, the author aimed to avoid any simplification of the complexities and heterogeneity of the Yucatec-Maya experience. Furthermore, research with Indigenous peoples who have been geographically, psychologically and socially colonized throughout history, and continuously lack visibility in academic and

sociopolitical discourse, must be conducted with complete respect for the agency the Indigenous persons have toward their own lives and social processes (Smith, 2013).

Findings

The interviews reveal various themes aligned within Critical Latinx Indigeneities and the integrative model of resilience. The participants discussed discrimination experiences, which reflected the interlocked marginality and at times invisibility that they face across geographical and sociocultural borders (Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017). However, the main focus of the findings are the protective processes of resilience which fall into three overarching themes: 1) resilient indigeneity across their linguistic, familial, and community contexts; 2) familial support and academic resilience; and 3) transformational welcoming spaces. In line with Critical Latinx Indigeneities, these themes emphasize Indigenous voices by drawing from narratives and Indigenous knowledge systems.

Discrimination

The Yucatec-Maya students experienced discrimination in their daily interactions with peers and adults. Seven participants reported witnessing discrimination from Latinxs and non-Latinxs. The ten participants experienced an average of seven out of a possible 17 instances of perceived discrimination due to their ethno-racial background. Some of these instances in which students perceived that they were discriminated against included: being called racially insulting names and teachers expecting less from them (see Table 1). Jose described how having an accent in their Spanish led to being discriminated, "I've seen Yucatecos discriminated a lot, either because of the way they speak, or cuz of their um, their, their accent, or just because the way they're dressed or who they are, you know?" Jose became visibly distressed when he spoke about this type of discrimination, and stated in a louder tone, "It makes me feel really upset, like dude cannot talk to this person this way."

Furthermore, experiences with discrimination were associated with being embarrassed to be part of Maya cultural organizations. Alberto expressed that young people "may want to join a Maya Yucateco group, but they don't because they are scared to be embarrassed, that they will be criticized and judged, discriminated." The fear of being discriminated against if you form part of Indigenous cultural organizations is problematic. Indigenous community cultural organizations are important in creating spaces for youth to positively explore their Indigenous identity and serve as a resource for Indigenous Mexican families (Casanova, O'Connor, &

Anthony-Stevens, 2016). These community organizations support youth and their families with the stress of adaptation; serve as a transnational link to the families' hometowns in Mexico; and increase civic participation for adults and youth in the United States (Popkin, 1999; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006).

The discrimination findings are examples of the complex, and sometimes contradictory nature of the lived experiences of these Indigenous youth. Six participants, while facing the fear of being shamed by others for being Maya due to the sociohistorical colonial remnants of racialized hierarchies of being *"indio",* still wanted to learn about their Maya culture. Some of the participants were part of Maya community organizations and challenged the adversity of discrimination. The following themes will focus on the protective processes that support these students' complex and paradoxical desire to explore and [re]claim their Maya identities, despite or in some cases due to the discriminatory experiences they faced.

Resilient Indigenous Identities: Protective processes enacted across contexts

Although discriminated against, the youth reflect a collective resilient Indigenous identity. Eight of the ten participants believed that their culture is defined by the familial and linguistic practices and traditions they follow. They defined being Maya through language, family, and community.

Maya identity as language. Nine of the participants understood a little Maya and had heard it spoken at home, however, less than half of the them spoke Maya. All the students stated that they wanted to learn the Maya language. If they already knew some Maya, they expressed wanting to learn more of the language. The participants who valued Maya stated it was necessary to learn the language to preserve the culture after Yucatec-Mayas migrate to the U.S. They believed it was harder for people to learn Maya in the U.S. Jose felt sad to "see my people just forgetting where they come from, or their language, Maya." Ricardo stated:

> Some people who are Yucatecos do not really know Maya. And I say, for me, that our culture should not get lost, right? Because it is important. And I say, it is not fair that nowadays other people from different countries and states are interested in our culture and we are not, and I say, that we as youth now have the opportunity to learn it [Maya] because we have time to learn it.

Several participants described the Maya language as an important part of identifying with their Indigenous identity. The students spoke about the Maya language as a marker of Maya

culture that differentiates it from Mexican culture. For example, Mateo said, "the way we speak, like certain [Spanish] words have different meanings and like the accent is different too." Although eight out of the ten students interviewed discussed the importance of learning English to succeed academically, six of the participants equally spoke about [re]claiming their Indigenous identity through the learning of Maya. As Jose stated:

> Because, though, then I'll have a little piece of where I'm from, and, and, and the way I am, and I could just probably go back to my roots and just talk to people, you know? And so they could remember um, 'cuz a lot of people here in U.S. they come and they forget their, their native language, Maya.

The participants stated that they would like to learn Maya through classes and from their families. Miguel said, "I would like to speak it [Maya] because it is the dialect of my hometown. I would like to learn it form my parents and from the people that are native from there." The students wanted to learn Maya to be able to communicate with their family, and with other members of their Yucatec-Maya community. Gaby commented that learning more Maya would allow her to communicate with her uncles who only speak Maya. Gaby defined her cultural identity as Maya partly because of the language and the connection to her family. She stated, "Maya, because it is the culture of my parents, the language of my mother, and I really like learning more about it." Mateo discussed his want to learn Maya so he could communicate better and connect to his roots. He stated, "I would like to learn it because it's a language they speak *en de donde soy* (where I am from). And it's just, I don't know, like I would like to communicate with people through not just English and Spanish." Like Mateo, six out of 10 of the participants wanted to be more connected to their culture and identity through the language. Alberto, for example, felt "that not speaking it, I am not following what my culture is, like following the traditions of my ancestors."

Maya identity as familial practices. Parents socialize youth into their cultural repertoires and play a key role in the preservation of Indigenous culture (Casanova, O'Connor, & Anthony-Stevens, 2016). Eight of the participants spoke about their family as a source of knowledge of their Maya culture. Parents actively engaged in passing down knowledge and stories regarding the Maya culture. The Yucatec-Maya parents' effort and labor in socializing their children in daily lived Indigenous practices (e.g., language) and activities (e.g., traditional

dance groups) was recognized by the students. For example, Alberto described what his parents and family have taught him:

> Um, my parents have always talked to me about what the Maya culture is and how it is. Inclusively, thanks to my grandmother, she has always told me stories of what, when she was, of her infancy and childhood, and I have learned various things, and like when one starts to like learn something and do not feel like you learn, like you start learning something and you don't feel like you have really learned it, you get a desire or want to find more information about what they have told you or what you have heard, and so thanks to my grandma that always, all the time, has talked to me about it , I have tried to find information in the internet, in books, I have even tried that when I meet [Maya] people tried to ask them questions in Maya so they can speak to me in Maya.

Eight other participants had similar responses regarding their family actively teaching them about their Maya culture. Miguel discussed his grandparents' stories of hardship. His grandparents would tell him how hard it was for them to maintain their Maya culture, yet Miguel, discussed their resilience and how "they were able to get ahead, and well little by little our culture is being exposed." Interdependent, familial ties seemed extremely important for the Yucatec-Maya families. The Yucatec-Maya students were motivated to preserve their Indigenous culture through the support of family and transnational community networks.

All the participants could list and describe traditional Maya dishes. Antonia stated, "…sometimes I help out my mom to make them," while Ricardo talked about when these dishes are made: "Well, in Yucatan when we wanted to eat something for example the *cochinita, or* the *escabeche* my family would make it…for example the custom is when it is for special events like a birthday or a wedding." Whether it is learning how to make the dishes or understanding what food is served for celebrations, both participants described the consumption and preparation of traditional foods as rituals linked to being Yucatec-Maya.

Maya identity as affect and community. The participants defined their Indigenous identity as a strong connection to home and community. The participants discussed their diasporic Indigenous identities within the context of what Blackwell and colleagues (2017) term transregions of Indigenous migrations (p. 132). They described being Maya beyond the borders of nation states, which includes understanding their positions within their Indigenous immigrant families in the context of the U.S., but also having an awareness of their own Indigenous

worldviews that transcend regional and hemispheric post-colonial borders. One way the participants expanded their notion of being Maya was by describing this Indigeneity as an emotion or feeling. Ricardo describe his Maya culture as historical traditions from home:

> In reality the Maya culture is something very beautiful, very gorgeous because of its history,…the great accomplishments that were left permanently,…One of those that we can observe is like the ruins of Chichen [Itza], as the representation of the calendar,…For example the traditions of the home towns… the dance of the head of the pig, … the dance of the turkey, the traditions that they do in honor of the saints or their gods,…even nowadays, the culture continues, the traditions.

Jose discussed a lived and enacted indigeneity:

> Being Mayan, I don't know how to explain it…if you're Mayan, you're Mayan from blood. You know we're family, and I always feel comfortable with other Mayans. The way we grow up, it's just in the head, it's like Bixa Wani, saying how you doing, and it's just like joy to hear the language again…like a feeling.

He mentioned a Maya phrase and stated it is that happiness when you hear Maya. He could not fully articulate the feeling, but defined being Maya as "in the head," transcending an actual physical place. From a Critical Latinx Indigeneities perspective, Jose not only embraced his Indigeneity, but resisted limiting the identity to a single location, and instead identified being Maya as having a translocal community, which is connected by Maya language and ways of thought. Miguel also stated that his culture is defined by the "way of thinking that is being passed down by the older generations, like his parents."

The participants spoke about their community and the collective experiences that influenced their Indigenous identities. They mentioned *jarana,* which is a dance that blends pre-Colombian Maya and Spanish dances, that is performed during traditional gatherings. One of these gatherings is the *vaquería.* The *vaquería* events organized by hometown organizations and the Yucatec-Maya social networks in Los Angeles and San Francisco provide a space for Yucatec-Maya families to dress in traditional *huipiles* and perform *jarana* dances. The *vaquería* also brings bands from Yucatan and provide the attendees with traditional Maya cuisine. Miguel described his experience at a *vaquería*:

> And yeah, I like it, I like seeing how they dance *jarana* and sometimes it gives me this emotion, to listen to the music of the *jarana*. And, well, I think that, that it is something

> good for the people of different states and even the people of this country to know that culture, what is the dance, and the dress of our culture.

Miguel expressed an emotional reaction, almost a sense of nostalgia, to being part of this event and desired to share his culture with others. Eight of the students expressed their interest in the *jaranas* as an activity in which they would like to participate.

Six participants stated that they participated in cultural programs such as *jarana* dance classes to learn more about the Maya culture. Luis, stated:

> I am in the group Chan Kaajal, and we dance folkloric dances of Yucatan. One time we participated with [the] government of Yucatan to promote the Maya culture for the people to be proud of it. And we have also gone to dance at the Chabot [Science Center]…because they were promoting a movie about the pyramids of Chichen Itza. And after the movie, it was not like other documentaries, it was interesting, and it didn't only have the history, but also had the rituals and legends, and like the Bible of the ancient Maya [Popol Vuh].

It is evident from the excerpt above that Luis learned a lot about his Maya culture through his involvement with the dance group. By participating in the dances, he was able to attend informative events on the history of the Maya, where he learned a part of Maya history. The experience allowed the students to [re]claim their history and feel proud and empowered by this cultural knowledge. The dance represents the existence of Maya culture in the present in these students' lives. Jenny, one of the participants taking *jarana* dance classes, stated that she always attended the dances with her family. In addition, six participants discussed their exposure to Maya culture through storytelling. Storytelling has always been part of the traditional practices of Indigenous communities (Casanova, 2012). Mateo recalled, "I get to interact with like Yucatecan people,…So I get to like, listen to what they say, and how they tell it. And sometimes it's sort of... it's interesting. Like the stories they get to tell, they have a lot of stories." Family, and parents in particular, actively engage in passing down the Maya culture to the Yucatec-Maya youth through participation in community events like the *vaqueria, jaranas*, and storytelling.

The Yucatec-Maya students' resilient Indigenous ways of being were supported and enriched by both local community practices as well as enacted through ideologies and transformations of Indigeneity that crossed hemispheric borders and regions. Blackwell, Boj

Lopez, and Urrieta (2017) ask for researchers to "acknowledge the multilayered ways of being Indigenous across national borders and within migrant transregions crossing multiple ethnoracial structures" (p. 129-130). In line with this component of CLI, the findings from this study reflect how Yucatec-Maya participants develop and expand their ideas of what it means to be Maya from local, individual ways of being and feeling to translocal, collective ideologies cultivated by familial practices, histories, and experiences of migration.

The transformative preservation of Maya identity. The students did not only acknowledge the need to preserve their Indigenous culture, but also understood the importance of transforming the cultural practices in the context of their diasporic positions in between and within multiple ethnoracial and nation-state structures (Blackwell et al., 2017). Four participants believed that their culture was consistently being transformed in the diasporic contexts of the U.S. Alberto talked about the saliency of the Mexican identity in the U.S. context:

> I identify with the Maya culture, most of my life I have lived in Yucatan,..we have traditions and customs, we try and conserve our culture,…to be here [U.S], it's like you shed a little more of your [Maya] culture, and like you kind of take other cultures,… and a part of the Mexican in you comes out.

Seven participants identified strongly with the Maya culture. Antonia described her indigeneity as equally important to her American identity. She stated, "I practice *jarana* and I also…sometimes wear the *huipiles* and *ternos* that my grandma makes, and [I'm] American, 'cuz I speak English and I also have part of the American culture." She has integrated both cultures without losing her Maya culture. Of note, she equated her American identity to speaking English which, according to current literature (i.e., Suárez-Orozco, Abo-Zena, & Marks, 2015) has continued to be a marker for *becoming American* in the U.S. Nonetheless, Antonia had also taken Maya classes. This tricultural adaptation (American, Maya, and Mexican) is important in developing resilience. Biculturalism is associated with better educational and mental health outcomes for immigrant- origin and Indigenous youth (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Padilla, 2008).

Five participants spoke about the importance of Maya culture preservation. Alberto discussed that "to not lose the Mayan culture in whatever state you might be...try to form groups, do meetings to be able to interact with more Yucatec people and do the

celebrations…People will start coming together." He described a process of empowering youth and Maya people in general through meetings, groups, and organizing celebrations in the U.S., in order to reclaim and conserve their culture. Similarly, Gaby stated that "there are not a lot of people who preserve their writings [language] and we have managed to and safeguard our culture." Jose believed people were starting to know more about Maya culture, but he also wanted Maya classes and outreach programs available for the youth community. Four of the participants emphasized the need to target Maya children at a younger age. Luis also noted that there was a need for programs here in the U.S. like the ones in Yucatan:

> We need to teach our sons and daughters what the Maya culture is at a younger age, to be proud of their culture and all the beautiful things…I am proud of it too, I like the language, and all and that is why I learned about it. Other places do not have pyramids like the ones we have; a history like ours. The Maya were very intelligent with astronomy and a lot of other cultures do not have something like this. They [the Maya] sometimes overcame, like the way they could predict things without the technology we have today. I believe that it is being conserved more with what the government is doing [in Yucatán], but here I do not see much, only in a couple places where there are more Yucatecos...

All 10 participants had a wide range of ideas as to how to reclaim their culture in order to sustain it, and at the same time transform it in the context of being in multiple transregional spaces. They believed that creating spaces to share the cultural knowledge and teach young people the language, dances, stories, etc. was crucial in preserving the Maya culture, but they also rejected the idea that there is a particularly "correct" or more "authentic" way to be Maya. The students' conceptualization of their Indigeneity acknowledged the CLI diasporic complexities of bridging their indigenous, migrant, Mexican, and American intersecting social identities (Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017).

Apoyo Familiar: Indigenous Families and Academic Resilience

Four participants defined American culture as opportunities and advancement, and as different from their own culture. Miguel spoke about this sense of advancement, "the U.S.…here it is easy to obtain what you want sometimes, what one wants, right, and if one is motivated to do it, one can achieve many things." To the students, being American represented educational opportunities and success. The Indigenous students saw school as a chance to

"make something" of themselves and most of them are looking forward to going to college. Seven students felt school was a place to be able to succeed and secure a good future. Nine students had positive feelings toward school, while three admitted to encountering challenges. Gaby stated, "Yeah, because I want to have a good future, and I want to prepare myself to do something with my life." Six of the participants had a positive view of American culture and the "American dream" ideology. The students were motivated by their parents to believe school was an opportunity to better themselves and to "*sobresalir*" or excel.

The students spoke of the hard work ethic their parents instilled in them in order to persevere in their educational trajectories. All the students acknowledged that their parents had supported them in going through school. Six students discussed their parents' emphasis on the importance of school in order to obtain a career and grow as a person. Antonia stated, "they [parents] encourage me more to go to school and to like be successful." Mateo discussed how his parents always continuously motivated him to finish school:

> Well, my parents like always wanted me to do good in school and I did. And they would always push me to do better and better, to get my grades up when I had to and yeah they really supported me in school.

Jose stated that his parents told him school is "my number one priority, and they um, they say school is my job." Another participant stated that his parents are usually happy with him, but consistently push him and sometimes tell him "he can do better" and to put in the effort at school so he can "become someone." Parents encouraged students to develop an academic identity, which is important in developing academic resilience (Suárez-Orozco, Motti-Stefanidi, Marks, & Katsiaficas, 2018). Parents were proud of the participants for pursuing an education, Jose stated:

> They feel proud of me because they say that even though I come from another country, which is Mexico, and my culture is different I have managed to be successful here, and well they are proud of me. But, well for example, youth like us we base the knowledge we learn and success on them [parents].

Educational success for the students was not only an individual goal, but a familial aspiration that validated their contribution to a larger collective purpose within their community. Seven participants stated that their parents constantly motivated them to attend college. Their educational ideologies were aligned with their familial practices and cultural ways

of being Indigenous, while at the same time embracing the American dream ideologies of success. These students' sense of agency to academically excel formed part of the multilayered and complex ways in which they navigated their diasporic and transregional resilient Indigeneities within the educational structures of the U.S. (Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017).

Transformational Spaces: Critical Latinx Indigeneities in Schools and Communities

Two of the participants were involved in clubs at school. Alberto, who went to the Southern California school, described the club as being a family for him at school, stating, "Latin Network, in which the members are Latinos or Mexican, and well there we coexist, uh, well there I feel like I am part of a family at school because we all interchange ideas, and we are a group and we are good." Jose, who went to the Northern California school, discussed the club as a welcoming space for him in school, especially to speak about "cultural things." The other eight participants did not belong to cultural school clubs. Yet, the two participants that stated they were part of a Latinx club had a clear sense of belonging at school and felt empowered, two important protective processes. The two students that were part of the Latinx school club did not state that the Latinx students in the club discriminated them due to their Indigenous identity. On the contrary, the club served as a positive, transformational space for dialogue and sharing of their diverse experiences as Yucatec-Mayas, while also commiserating over similar experiences as Latinxs. Club spaces can assist with increasing sense of belonging and participation in schools (Gibson, Bejinez, Hidalgo, & Rolon, 2004).

Antonia and Alberto were part of youth church groups. Ricardo also recalled being involved with a youth group prior to immigrating to the U.S. This group focused on issues such as drug and alcohol addiction. School and church organizations provided a place for the Yucatec-Maya students to engage in the intersection of their identities, whether it is their pan-Latinx or their religious identities. To understand the complex, multi-layered experiences of Indigenous youth, scholars must also understand how other identities intersect with their Indigeneity (Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017).

Seven participants found school was a positive space where they could speak about their Indigenous culture. Alberto did a project in which he could talk about where he was from and he stated, "I noticed that all my peers liked knowing about the Maya culture, because of everything that exists in Yucatan." Antonia spoke with her teachers and friends about her

culture. Mateo spoke about "try[ing] to explain, to let [people] know how the culture as much as I know at least. And I like, I just try to get my culture out so people know about it." These school spaces where students felt comfortable speaking about their Indigeneity are key in creating a strong sense of school belonging which is linked to motivation, increased self-efficacy, greater success in English learning, and academic performance (Huo, Molina, Binning, & Funge, 2010). The incorporation of classroom activities in which students can share their cultural knowledge are crucial to developing resilient Indigenous identities and academic resilience (Yosso, 2005).

Discussion

For Yucatec-Maya youth, the Maya identity is strongly rooted in a common history and collective memory passed down through generations and the way everyday life is lived and acted. Maya language is constantly mentioned in the participant interviews, but not exclusively what defines their Indigenous identity. The participant interviews expose familial and community practices representative of the diasporic Indigenous consciousness described by Baquedano-Lopez and Janetti (2017). The students [re]created their Maya identities in the U.S. context. The youth cultivated and constructed a resilient Indigenous identity**,** pushing back against the discrimination they experienced. The *vaquerías* are examples of Critical Latinx Indigeneities, as they expose the multifaceted aspects of being Maya and reflect a hybridity of cultures and identities. In other words, the *vaquerías* support the notions of intersecting and crossing the borders of Maya, Mexican, and American spaces proposed by Blackwell, Boj Lopez and Urrieta (2017). The collective history and cultural ways of being in these community gatherings reflect the transregional dimensions of their Indigeneity (Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017). Centered on their families' and some of their own experiences of transmigration, these multifaceted ways of being Maya and enacting Maya ideologies are part of the daily lived experiences of the youth. The students' negotiation of their Indigenous, Mexican, immigrant, and American identities shows the cultural transformation and [re]production of being Maya within U.S. school structures, their collective communities, or through their familial practices. These experiences illustrate the Yucatec-Maya students' bicultural efficacy which LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993), describe as a protective process associated with positive social and developmental outcomes.

Parents encouraged the participants to go to school and obtain a higher education for a better future. This form of support is important for these students' school and academic resilience processes (Suárez-Orozco, Abo-Zena, & Marks, 2015). Parents and family also served to catalyze cultural discussions and pass down cultural knowledge to the students. Many of the participants felt their families were the strongest connection to their cultures and motivation for doing well in school, which aligns with findings from previous literature on the importance of family and parental support for immigrant-origin students (Suárez-Orozco, Abo-Zena, & Marks, 2015; Suárez-Orozco, Motti-Stefanidi, Marks, & Katsiaficas, 2018).

The participants were most involved with cultural community groups. These cultural networks became crucial in the development and cultivation of their resilient Indigenous identities. School was also a place where many of the participants discussed their culture informally with peers and teachers. The persistence, inclusivity of other cultures, and transformation of these students' Indigeneities reflect an identity that is dynamic, intersectional, malleable, and constantly adapting in order to be resilient across diasporic settings.

Implications & Conclusion

Immigration scholars have called upon researchers to focus on "intersecting inequalities," or multiple dimensions of identity that shape unequal outcomes for immigrant-origin children and youth (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa & Tseng, 2015). It is critical to consider Indigeneity as a dimension of intersectionality for U.S. Latinx youth. By incorporating Critical Latinx Indigeneities, this article begins to do so and, more importantly, exposes how resilient Indigenous identities serve as protective factors that contribute to larger collective resilience processes. Future studies should use a larger sample size and expand participant recruitment to other Indigenous Latinx communities beyond the Yucatec-Mayas. A longitudinal study of Indigenous Latinx students would serve to better understand other ways resilient Indigenous identities foster positive development. Future research should include teachers' and parents' perspectives.

This study expands the understanding of Indigenous youth in the U.S. who make up our growing culturally and linguistically diverse Latinx student populations. The prevailing themes described in this study emphasized Yucatec-Maya students' agency in [re]defining their resilient Indigeneities. The research has implications in starting to develop resources and culturally competent classrooms in which these students can be academically successful. Educators would

be wise to expand their culturally responsive curricula through the lens of cultural community wealth (Yosso, 2005) to counter the discriminatory experiences these students face and encourage academic resilience.

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Zapotec Identity as a Matter of Schooling

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Abstract

Little research has been dedicated to Indigenous Mexican students' education and their sociocultural adaptation to U.S. schools, which includes their ethnic identity as significant to their schooling experiences. This study examines Zapotec-origin youth, original to the state of Oaxaca, Mexico, and how their Indigenous identity can positively impact their education. Often, educators have limited knowledge about Mexico's ethnoracial groups, presume that their Mexican students share indistinguishable characteristics, and are unaware that Indigenous students are ever-present in their classrooms. Through in-depth interviews, this study reveals how Zapotec high school students assert their Indigenous identity as a basis for developing viable approaches for their overall educational success.

Keywords: Indigenous education, Zapotec youth, secondary schooling, ethnic identity

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24974/amae.13.2.429

Introduction

The Latinx population in California outpaces that of any other state; they also comprise the largest student demographic in the state's public-school system (California Department of Education, 2017-2018). Among them are immigrant, refugee, and bi-national students arriving with a variety of national, racial, and ethnic backgrounds, including Guatemalan, Honduran, Salvadoran, and many others. Due to globalization and immigration patterns, Indigenous Mexican families and their children have largely settled in California communities. Until recently, however, Latinx educational studies have focused on Latinx pan-ethnic and Mexican issues without taking into consideration the heterogeneity of these groups. One such group is the Indigenous or original populations of Mexico. The discrimination and marginalization that Indigenous people experience within Mexico is often reproduced within communities of Mexican immigrants in the U.S. (Fox, 2004; Minkoff-Zern, 2012; Pick, Wolfram, & López, 2011). Due to their marginalization, little is known about the social, cultural, or political experiences of Indigenous Mexican groups, particularly their education.

A growing body of work on Indigenous Mexican students draws attention to diverse student populations, their linguistic abilities, academics, and school acclimation (Martínez, 2018; Morales, 2016; Perez, Vásquez, & Buriel, 2016). This article examines fifteen Zapotec-origin youth's ethnolinguistic and cultural identity in the context of two high schools in Los Angeles; Zapotecs are people with socio-historic kinship to the original place of Tlacolula, Oaxaca. I use ethnic and ethnolinguistic identity theories with a Critical Latinx Indigeneities (Blackwell, Boj-Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017) representation in the backdrop to explain Indigenous identity formations and the quality of relationships that they forge. Ethnic identity is important to study since it can be crucial for encouraging meaningful school engagements and, by extension, important to creating successful educational pathways. To this end, teachers/educators and school agents can use information about their students' ethnic and cultural uniqueness to create learning conditions that accomplish student contributions. Further, it is my expectation that this article encourages discussion on how to inform educational practice and policy in support of Indigenous students.

Literature Review

Critical Latinx Indigeneities and Sites of Learning

Much of the work that concerns issues of Indigenous ethnic and cultural identity tends to center on Native peoples from the U.S., Australia, Canada, and New Zealand and explores how historical process are shaped by settler colonialism; a practice of occupation and claim to native lands and resources (Saranillio, 2015; Whyte, 2016). Recently, however, scholars have put forth a hemispheric approach to indigeneity known as Critical Latinx Indigeneities that mark and unmark Mexican and Central American Indigenous identity formations, namely in the U.S., under parallel processes that navigate, straddle, and transcend multiple geographies and countries at diverse points-in-time. According to Blackwell et al. (2017) an important tenet of Critical Latinx Indigeneities is its proposition to endorse intricate, multilayered, and multilingual Indigenous ways of being across distinct ethnoracial boundaries. This includes Indigenous migrations from Latin America into the territories of U.S. Native Tribal lands (USA).

This study takes place at two public high schools in the ancestral homelands of the Gabrielino-Tongva. The first school is located a few miles west of Los Angeles on the 24-acre site built atop the springs of Kuruvungna or what is known in the Tongva language as "a place where we are in the sun." The second school is located just a stone's throw away from a green space named Tongva Park. These and other efforts to underscore Indigenous Los Angeles, such as the re-naming of Route 187 in Santa Monica to Moomat Ahiko Way or "breath of the ocean," raise an intimate connection to water, land, and a people that reinvigorates Indigenous identity and language. According to Alvitre (2015), "Language is at the heart and soul of a worldview. Within the Tongva community, efforts to connect and renew language are active and very much alive, with at least two communities fully engaged in the language revitalization process" (p. 44). At the heart and intersection of Tongva lands, arrive and settle Indigenous Mexican migrants. After Mexico City, Los Angeles has become the city with the largest number of Indigenous Mexicans where the Zapotec population is estimated to reach 200,000 (Warman, 2001; Takash, Hinohosa-Ojeda, & Runsten, 2005).

Ethnic Identity and Immigration

As many researchers have noted, immigration can play a role in activating ethnic identity awareness (Phinney, 2003; Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006; Verkuyten, Drabbles, & Van den Nieuwenhuijzen, 1999). Bosma and Kunnen (2001) stated that the evolution of identity is likely to occur when individuals grow to recognize that the surrounding society's beliefs, values, and norms are dissimilar to their own. Ethnic identity can be contingent upon

immigration as related to how the receiving culture views the ethnic group (Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005; Liebkind, 2006). The literature often describes immigrants and their native-born descendants in terms of their ethnic group memberships rather than by individual attributes and unique personalities. Ethnicity-based ascription and stereotyping give rise to one's realization of the ethnic group to which he or she belongs to but, perhaps, has not been consciously aware of (Hecht et al., 2005; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Research also suggests that immigrants' sociolinguistics (i.e., differentiation of language use according to a given social context) signify their identity management and cultural adaptation style. Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder's (2006) research on 1.5-immigrant youth (people born in another nation who must adapt to a new country's culture) in 13 countries (Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States) suggests that language knowledge and use are closely related to one's ethnic identity and cultural orientation. Other research has demonstrated similar relationships for second- and later-generation Mexican-Americans (Norris, Ford, & Bova, 1996). Ethnolinguistic identity theory (ELIT) posits that language represents a core aspect of one's social group identity, if not one's worldview (Giles & Johnson, 1987; Giles, Williams, Mackie, & Rosselli, 1995). One study revealed that, whereas Mexican-Americans generally viewed English and Anglo/European American culture as more vital than Spanish and Mexican-American culture, those who strongly identified with Mexican culture perceived the vitality of Spanish as higher than did their counterparts with weaker ethnic identification (Gao, Schmidt, & Gudykunst, 1994). Evans (1996) showed that Hispanic immigrant parents who believed in the vitality of the Mexican ethnic culture tended to transmit their cultural beliefs and Spanish to their children, which suggests a structural tie between youths' Mexican heritage ethnic identity and their language knowledge.

Indigenous Identity in Schools

Recent studies are documenting the ways in which Indigenous students may seemingly forfeit or take on their identities due to unsettling or reassuring social and academic schooling experiences (Baquedano-López & Janetti, 2017; Machado-Casas, 2012; Perez et al., 2016). Ethnographic and mixed methods research in California have examined the educational experiences of Indigenous Oaxacan high school students to determine how recent Indigenous immigrants are received in school, to understand the relationship of discriminatory practices

and ethnic identity, and to uncover processes that promote or discourage Oaxacan social integration and academic achievement (Barillas-Chón, 2010; Gonzalez, 2018). Barillas-Chón (2010), for example, revealed how school peers referred to first generation Indigenous youth derogatorily as *bajitos* (low in stature) and *morenitos* (dark skinned) or characterized them as not speaking Spanish or English well and being "dumb." Additional disparaging remarks such as *oaxaquita* (short Oaxacan) can take a toll on Indigenous Oaxacan first and second-generation immigrant students' ethnoracial attitudes. Facing discrimination has some impact on endorsing assimilationist attitudes and accepting negative stereotypes, however, facing discrimination has also been reported to have a moderate but negative impact on students' multicultural and inclusive attitudes—implying an unsuccessful adaptation to society (Gonzalez, 2018).

In a parallel manner, labeling Indigenous students as "dumb" and assuming that they are not "smart," often reduce their meaningful linguistic and kinship practices and can have implications on their educational prospects. In Machado-Casas' (2009) study of Indigenous mothers, Inez, an undocumented Otomí mother from Mexico, taught her son about the importance of English, Spanish, and Otomí for his schooling experience. Research suggests that Indigenous people are in tune with "smartness" through continuing knowledge transmissions facilitated by diasporic communities that engage purposeful ongoing connectedness to their homelands' scientific, socio-cultural, spiritual, and language knowledge (Urrieta, 2016). For Indigenous Mexican students, traveling to and from their own and their parents' hometowns and actively participating in local celebrations and developing peer-adult relationships often involve language brokering, supporting U.S. educational skills sets. These practices inform their formal education through learning of millennial agricultural and natural chemical process (Urrieta, 2016). Bartering, conducting currency exchange and other financial transactions that involve measurement and distance can creatively represent various mathematical techniques, statistical, and other analyses while language brokering allows Indigenous youth to draw on multiple semiotic systems for a variety of purposes in diverse contexts (Perez et al., 2016; Urrieta & Martínez, 2011; Urrieta, 2016). Moreover, Zapotec and Yucatec Mayan youth identity have shown to be influential to students' academic achievement (Casanova, 2011; Vásquez, 2012).

Methodology

Fifteen Zapotec high school students participated in an in-depth interview based on a 48-item interview protocol. All 15 interview transcripts were examined for self-reported ethnic identity, schooling experiences, and background characteristics; additionally, emotions (e.g., happiness, sadness) and cognitions (e.g., confusion, inattentiveness), as they pertained to ethnic identity and schooling, were carefully noted in the analysis. Pseudonyms were used to ensure participant, school, teacher, and other party confidentiality. Participants provided assent (if under age 18) or consent (if over age 18) before they completed the interview. In addition, participants under age 18 were required to present parental consent. In total, interview participants consisted of 8 males and 7 females. In-depth interviews were chosen as a qualitative research method to allow interviewees to express opinions and ideas in their own words. The development of an interview protocol helped to focus the interview without locking the interviewer into a fixed set of questions, a rigid order, or specific wording. The primary goal for using an interview protocol was to balance the systematic collection of data with the flexibility needed to tap respondents' understanding.

Participants

With the exception of four interviewees who were born in Mexico, all were born in the United States, in various cities of what today is known as Greater Los Angeles. Two Mexican nationals were born in Oaxacan municipalities: San Lucas Quiaviní and Tlacolula de Matamoros, and one was born in Mexico City. Three students attended Mexican schools, from elementary through middle school. Two students were U.S.-born nationals; however, they migrated to Mexico as children or early adolescents and spent significant parts of their lives there. One participant arrived in the U.S. three years before being interviewed. One participant belonged to a mixed-immigration-status family, where at least one member was a citizen living in the U.S. and another was undocumented. Almost all were fluent in English and Spanish. One student reported being able to write in Spanish "not very well" and another "not at all." Another reported being able to speak or write in Spanish "not very well." Only forty percent of students mentioned knowing Zapotec, including speaking, understanding, or a combination of both. Four students mentioned that they worked either part time, full time, or a combination of both. All youth reported having an average of two siblings. Table 1 presents participant demographics.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

			Hometown from the state of Oaxaca, Mexico	
Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Mother	Father
Irene	Female	15	Tlacolula de Matamoros	Tlacolula de Matamoros
Yazmin	Female	—	La Ciéniga	La Ciéniga
Rosario	Female	15	Santa Ana del Valle	Santa Ana del Valle
Jose	Male	16	Santa Ana del Valle	Tetela de Ocampo, Puebla
Pedro	Male	—	Tlacolula de Matamoros	Tlacolula de Matamoros
Nayeli	Female	17	San Lucas Quiaviní	San Lucas Quiaviní
Yadira	Female	—	La Ciéniga	La Ciéniga
Alex	Male	14	Tlacolula de Matamoros	Santiago Apóstol
Melissa	Female	—	San Lucas Quiaviní	San Lucas Quiaviní
Fernando	Male	16	San Lucas Quiaviní	San Lucas Quiaviní
Marco	Male	14	Tlacolula de Matamoros	Acapulco, Guerrero
Lucas	Male	16	San Lucas Quiaviní	San Lucas Quiaviní
Edgar	Male	—	Tlacolula de Matamoros	--
Eddy	Male	15	Oaxaca	Unión Hidalgo
Gloria	Female	18	Mexico City	Oaxaca

Note. Dash represents missing or unreported data.

Findings

Ethnic Identity

Mexican and Mexican-Americans. Research has shown that many Mexican youth express strong ties to their culture of origin and often have a high sense of Mexican pride. Studies have found that strong ethnic ties are important to adolescents' well-being, can serve to counter stereotyping, and facilitate school success (Bernal & Knight, 1993; Gloria, Robinson Kurpius, Hamilton, & Wilson, 1999; Keefe, 1992; Phinney, 1989, 1993; Rotheram & Phinney, 1987). In this study, all students expressed a sense of ethnic identity. Students considered their Mexican identity to be integral to their sense of self and provided explanations as to why they considered themselves as such.

Mexican heritage students such as Rosario and Fernando took a "hyphenated approach" to their ethnic identity. A hyphenated approach is a reference to an ethnicity combined with the name of the country of residence. Rosario stated that she is Mexican-American "because of where my family is from, they're from Mexico and I was born in America, so Mexican-American." Alex specified the need to identify Mexican as something that set him apart from other Latinx:

> Sometimes, some people would be like, they would ask you are you Guatemalan or Salvadoran or from other part of Central America, and then if you just want to keep it general, you can just say no, I'm Mexican, and that's how you would know.

Interestingly, Mexican-born students were quick to mention their identity as such. However, as opposed to their U.S.-born peers, Mexican-born students did not use hyphenated ethnic identity labels such as Mexican-American. For example, Edgar stated, "I like saying I'm Mexican." Nayeli discussed how she indicates her ethnic identity when filling out questionnaires, exams, and other documents. Because Mexican was never an ethnic identity option, Nayeli previously resorted to the Latino/a category, stating, "On any application that they ask for ethnic background, I would always [write] Latino/Latina." However, she clarified her preference for identifying as Mexican when given the opportunity to do so. "Just recently, last year, I circled other and I put Mexican." According to Nayeli, because many forms do not categorize Mexican, she now selects the "other" category and writes in Mexican. Jose emphasized his ethnic pride:

> I just feel really proud of being Mexican . . . and it helps me stay on top of things . . . I want to show everybody else that we are strong people, we're smart people. Everybody has that stereotype mentality and I want to prove them all wrong. I can beat White students and then I get proud of being in my class and just saying I know I'm smarter than that [White] student and I'm Mexican and I have more trouble and I have more responsibilities than they'll have.

Jose not only presents his Mexican heritage as integral but also associable to his school success. He feels that being Mexican fueled his competitiveness. He also felt that he had more responsibilities and faced greater life obstacles than did his White counterparts.

Oaxacans. All students considered themselves Oaxacan and being Oaxacan was an important part of their ethnic identity. Most students spoke at length about what it means for

them to be Oaxacan and shared anecdotes about foods, culture, and patron saint festivities as related to their Oaxacan identity.

Although Nayeli clearly affirmed her Mexican identity, she also distinguished herself as Oaxacan, stating, "But when I'm asked what part of Mexico or where I'm from, I've always said Oaxaca. I usually don't say Mexico; I mention Oaxaca first." Further, she spoke about what it means to be Oaxacan:

> It's cool! No I'm just kidding [laughing]. I don't I just . . . I have a [lot] of cousins who are kinda I don't know if it's like . . . there's some kind like resistance for them to say, "I'm Oaxacan." I'm proud of being Oaxaca a *oaxaqueña*; I'm proud and I'm not . . . after hearing like how we're like the minorities in Mexico or, I don't know, like, the system has been kinda unfair to us *me das más orgullo*.

Nayeli's *orgullo*, or pride, was clearly evident. She felt proud of the traditional celebrations such as weddings, and she emphasized her rich Oaxacan culture by describing the ways that Oaxacans dress, speak, and live. She noted that Oaxacan culture is rooted in Indigenous customs and traditions, including Indigenous healings such as *curando de susto* or curing of fright.

Edgar, is originally from the Zapotec pueblo of Tlacolula de Matamoros in the Central Valley of Oaxaca and immigrated to the U.S. at a young age. To him Oaxacan means:

> It means to be, you know, the culture's still there, because over here, even though we're in Los Angeles, we try to do the best we can to still maintain the culture, like the *Guelaguetza* and the foods, you know, they try to make it natural.

In addition, he explained that his family, specifically, his aunts, uncles, and mother, still maintain pride in being Oaxacan. Although Edgar's family mostly speaks Spanish, they have pride in the Zapotec language from Tlacolula. Edgar, however, did not learn the language.

Oaxacan identity, as suggested by Edgar, is often anchored by immigrants and their children who often distinctly maintain real and imagined connections and commitments to their homeland and recognize themselves and act as a collective community through a range of socio-religious and other public expressions. Although Edgar recalls little from his community of origin and has not been back since his childhood, he is surrounded by culture and tradition by way of his mother's occupation as an employee in a well-known Oaxacan restaurant which lines its walls with memoirs of his home community and the Zapotec civilization. His connection to his identity is, in part, informed by a state-based yet southern-regional identity that implies a

densely Indigenous and impoverished region (Telles, 2014). Other interviewees like Marco who had not traveled to Oaxaca, for example, revealed that being Oaxacan involves the celebration of patron saints and Virgins, "because they're holy to us; they're the ones that help us every single day, surviving to get a job, work, driving, getting your clothes, everything." During the summers, Alex enjoys spending time at his mother's pueblo of Tlacolula and his dad's pueblo of Santiago Apóstol, where he gets to experience various festivities. Oaxacan youth identity transpires through meaningful relationships to their self-worth, independent of national-origin.

> Yazmin embraced her Mexican identity and gave great significance to Oaxacan identity: Even if I'm not from Oaxaca, I'm like, oh, yeah, I'm from Oaxaca, you know. My parents are from Oaxaca; why shouldn't I be, too? I've always wanted to identify myself with a simp [sic] not simpler culture but a more, I don't know, how you say it, friendly? No, no. I don't know how to describe it, but a place where they don't try to overcomplicate things and where family is the most important, so that's what I liked, so that's what I want to identify myself with.

Yazmin has strong feelings about national and pan-ethnic identities, such as Mexican and Hispanic, viewing them as too "broad." Moreover, she feels that U.S. society is wasteful and that Americans are preoccupied with meaningless issues to the extent that, ideally, she would rather live in Oaxaca, where she feels that life and culture are much simpler and where she can exercise her future political profession. In addition, Yazmin stated that, although she does not look like the typical *oaxaqueña*, she grew up in a pueblo in Oaxaca, living a simpler life, and that her grandparents and others in her pueblo are neither vain nor selfish. She noted that she enjoys the simple nature of her Oaxacan pueblo and family.

Resisting Oaxacan identity subscription and not looking like the "typical *oaxaqueña*" as indicated by Nayeli and Yazmin, invokes a colonial past that classified Spanish, Indigenous, and African racial phenotypes and that of their intermixing into a compare and contrast taxonomy of self-proclaimed Spanish superiority over inferior Indigenous, African, and their mestizo and mulatto offspring (Banks, 2005). This persistent racialized view renders skin color-to-geographic discrimination where people classified as dark skinned are likelier than other skin tones to perceive racial discrimination, an observation most visible in Mexico's South-Southwest region that include states like Oaxaca where large segments of Indigenous and Afro descendents reside (Telles, 2014). Taken together, the byproduct of colonization can illustrate a

transcendence of a racio-spatiality that downpours in U.S. society through the Indigenous namesake of "*oaxaquita*," "*oaxaco*," or "*oaxac*," heightening a racio-spatial marker pursuant of colonialism, unbound by genesis or geography (Perez et al., 2016; Sanchez, 2018; Vásquez, 2012). Embedding Yazmin's statement into the colonial legacy gives significant meaning to her atypical Oaxacan look and further re-emerges in the interview when she describes an incident where her father's Oaxacan identity is scrutinized by someone else for his "light skinned" complexion because he does not fit the stereotyped Oaxacan. Despite this conveyed Mexican-origin enthnoracial narrative, Yazmin upholds her identity while disrupting the Oaxacan resemblance.

Zapotecs. Zapotecs are modern-day descendants of Mesoamerican Indigenous peoples who originated from the Mexican state of Oaxaca and who inhabit the Central Valley, Northern and Southern Sierra, and Isthmus regions (Acosta Márquez, 2007). Zapotecs are overwhelmingly located in the Central Valley region of the state, adjacent to Oaxaca City, the capital. According to the 2010 Mexican census, Zapotecs comprised a total of 371,740, representing the majority of the Indigenous population in the central region area (INEGI, 2010). Zapotecs are mainly situated in the district of Tlacolula, where 62.2% of the population above 5 years of age speaks Zapotec (Coronel Ortiz, 2006).

All interviewees were heritage Zapotecs, specifically from the Central Valley region of Oaxaca. With the exception of one student, all interviewees had heard of the word Zapotec. The interviews revealed two main findings in which Zapotec identity was expressed: through ethnic identity and language acquisition. In the former, however, most students did not explicitly identify as Zapotec. Some were unsure whether they were Zapotec, three explicitly spoke about their Zapotec identity, and others did not identify themselves as Zapotec. Pedro, Jose, Edgar, Melissa, and Eddy did not clearly state nor deny a Zapotec identity; yet, they defined the meaning of Zapotec. For instance, Pedro stated, "Being *zapoteco* is more like a group, and Oaxacan is more like a state." He added that being Zapotec is unique based on the way that Zapotecs live. Similarly, Jose explained:

> Zapotecs have their own ways; it's a separate thing. People from Mexico act differently than you do in other places, so, like in this place, like when you hear *zapoteco*, it's like you imagine people who are old 'cause it's more [sic], and then they're conservative and

> in their thoughts and their beliefs, and they're really caring and you just could imagine things there [in Oaxaca], it's different than like the rest of the people.

Essentially, Jose distinguished Zapotec culture from traditional Mexican culture, thinking that Zapotecs dress differently and are "old school" compared to Mexicans. Melissa noted that Zapotecs are "people that lived way back then, and it is like part of a place in Oaxaca or Mexico." Similarly, Irene stated:

> It's from this tribe from a long time ago where I was like . . . Zapotecs created their own words [that] are different than Spanish; the way they say it, well, they have different . . . they don't have different cultures, but I mean they do things differently . . . they're Oaxacans, also, but they have it differently, so, yeah, I don't really know.

Eddy mentioned that it is appropriate to call someone Zapotec based on his or her town of origin. He said, "They call them [Zapotecs] like, I don't know 'cause, I guess, like someone you know, you'd call them that 'cause it's like they're from the same place you are."

Lucas not only mentioned that he is Zapotec but also that he is proud of his Indigenous identity. He stated, "*Sí*" (yes) because, "*La verdad no sé; es que eso [zapoteco] viene desde nuestros antepasados, entonces nos quedamos con eso. Es un orgullo*" (In reality, I don't know, that [Zapotec] comes from our ancestors so that stays with us, it is prideful). Rosario also considered herself Zapotec, but not completely. She was not sure whether she could fully embrace her Zapotec identity, stating, "I'd say half [laugh] because I understand it; I don't know [laugh]." Finally, Yazmin wanted to consider herself Zapotec and explained:

> I want to believe I am [Zapotec], you know. I sometimes I don't feel like it because I live here and I lead such a very different cultural life. But whenever I do get into contact with some part of that, like when we went to Oaxaca and I saw a little bit of that or . . . for Thanksgiving we went to have it [Thanksgiving] with a bunch of people that, I guess, you can say who were from Oaxaca and they would speak in that [Zapotec] language, and I really wanted to learn how to speak it. But my mom was like, "Part of our family, they forgot how to speak it," and I was like, "So there's nobody that can teach us anymore?" and I felt really sad when she said, "Yeah, there's nobody, really."

Two students were hesitant to explicitly identify as Zapotec, although their interviews revealed that they and their immediate family members were fluent in Zapotec. For Nayeli, the term Zapotec was new, and she was not aware that Zapotec was considered an ethnic identity.

A week before the interview, while attending an Indigenous Oaxacan graduate student panel at a local university, Nayeli was introduced to the idea of Zapotec:

> I actually don't know 'cause I don't know what Zapo [sic], that was something new I learned on Saturday. I didn't understand when the professor introduced the first set of panelists as *mixtecos* . . . and then he introduced the second set as . . . *zapotecos*.

Nayeli grew up thinking that *zapoteco* was a *dialecto* (dialect), and, although she speaks Zapotec, she never considered her identity to be Zapotec. Similarly, although Irene was a Zapotec speaker, she did not seem comfortable with using Zapotec as an ethnic identifier. She explained, "I don't really know because I don't really speak it [Zapotec] as much as other people. But one thing for sure is, I'm more Mexican, but I don't really know about *zapoteco*."

The articulation of Zapotec identity based on a shared community of origin and as being distinct from Mexican culture is encompassed by formal and non-formal Indigenous knowledges ranging from tending to land to healing practices which are transmitted from one generation to the next. Additionally, these knowledges have localized content and meaning that are highly people-, land-, and nation-specific (unrelated to nation-states) and that embody *familia*, *pueblo*, and *comunidad* (Urrieta & Martínez, 2011). Despite the literal Spanish to English language translation of these words, for example, *familia* often invokes intense committed, dynamic, and malleable relationships. Although the *Guelaguetza* is commonly known as a dance festival, in the Zapotec language, *guelaguetza* refers to a localized autonomous and self-governing system of structured reciprocity for the benefit of the greater community (Coronel Ortiz, 2006). These social structures can nurture the conditions of self-awareness and belonging to a specific group.

A second notable way in which students talked about Zapotec was through language. Most spoke about the idea of Zapotec as primarily a language. Four students stated that they did not know Zapotec; however, four others spoke or understood Zapotec to some degree. For Rosario, being Zapotec was contingent upon her ability to speak the language. According to her:

> Oaxacans speak *zapoteco*, which is like they pretty much in that region speak *zapoteco*, but they speak their own different versions of *zapoteco*, which is pretty cool because it's a dialect and it's kind of dying down, so, I mean, I'm able to understand it, which is pretty interesting; and my brothers and sisters, they can't understand it at all.

Rosario also mentioned that her parents intentionally spoke Zapotec at home as a way to teach her and her siblings the language. "Oh, my brother and sister, when, um, my dad tells my sister, like, 'Go get the broom,' but he says it in *zapoteco*, and my sister is like, 'What? What?'" Rosario learned Zapotec by listening to her parents' conversations.

Similarly, although Melissa's parents did teach her Zapotec, she stated, "It's just that I don't say it right." She does, however, understand it. Her father spoke to her in Zapotec, but she found herself replying in English or Spanish. For Melissa, the Zapotec language is "good, too, because . . . it's a tradition . . . the people from where you're from know it [Zapotec], and it's something very special." For others such as Irene, Lucas, and Nayeli, Zapotec was their first language. All three were forthcoming in discussing their native language. Irene stated, "My first language was *zapoteco*, and my second language was Spanish, and my third was English. We usually just talk more in Spanish or *zapoteco* in my house." Lucas mentioned that he learned Spanish in Mexico when he began formal schooling and that English came later, once he arrived in the U.S. In addition, he talked about the richness and diversity of Zapotec:

> *Sí, porque, la verdad, allá en Oaxaca, hay muchos pueblos que hablan zapoteco, hay muchos pueblos que están alrededor de Oaxaca y hablan puro zapoteco, pero son diferentes zapotecos, tienen diferentes, cómo se llama . . . diferentes sonidos, diferentes significados* [Yes, because, in reality, over there in Oaxaca, there are many pueblos who speak Zapotec, there are many pueblos that surround Oaxaca, and they only speak Zapotec, but they are different Zapotecs, they have different, how do you say . . . different sounds, different meanings].

Nayeli, who is completely fluent in Zapotec, spoke about her Zapotec language use and depicted how she and her mother always spoke Zapotec in public:

> I think that's one thing my mom my parents have; like, "Be proud of where you're from." I have some family who they kinda, like, not embarrassed but they try not to speak *zapoteco* out in public. Oh, my mom, she's like, "No, that's what we speak, that's what you're going to." Like, on the bus we're always being asked, "Oh, that's not Spanish. I'm sorry, what language is that that you're speaking?" Oh, and we answer, um, 'cause we speak *zapoteco* everywhere, like on the bus and anywhere in public. Where my mom's like, "Don't be ashamed of who you are, don't be ashamed of who you are." I just, I don't know; it's just like being Indigenous, it's 'cause Oaxacans, I guess, we are

> Indigenous and, like, just the whole idea of being Indigenous . . . has that connotation where they're less, kind of.

Unlike Nayeli, other students neither understood nor spoke Zapotec, but some of their parents or grandparents did. Although Zapotec fluency differed across families, and students generally acknowledged the loss of the Zapotec language, many demonstrated their willingness to learn the language if given the opportunity to do so. Eddy mentioned that he had heard his father speak Zapotec with his friends, "Yeah, like, sometimes I've heard him speak it", but his mother did not speak Zapotec. Pedro also noted that his father speaks Zapotec and that his mother does not understand the language. Although the use of Zapotec was limited in his home, Pedro showed an interest in learning: "'Cause sometimes I go there [to Oaxaca] . . . I want to understand what they are saying and speak with them." Similarly, Yazmin hoped to learn Zapotec and expressed disappointment when she learned that none of her family members knew Zapotec. She stated, "Yeah, they don't speak the language connected to that one [Zapotec] anymore, so I felt really sad that none of my family anymore can speak it or speak a language similar to that."

Mexican society leads a double posture that strains Indigenous people to not lose their "dying" languages when in fact their language rights are socially and institutionally violated (Hamel, 2008). Although Indigenous languages are constitutionally protected these hold unequal power relationships against Spanish and English; the government mainly officiates in Spanish and only selectively permits Indigenous languages to preside over special events such as international mother language day. Moreover, the way that Mexican-born and U.S. born students refer to the Zapotec language as a *dialecto* or dialect throughout the interviews, illustrates the deceptive way that languages are considered dialects since "different," non-dominant groups, are primarily situated in language as a vehicle for the representation of selves and others (Despagne, 2010; Pennycook 1998). The representation of the Indian other has, since colonization, been both an emblematic and pragmatic method to subjugate Indigenous languages and peoples that has arguably garnered strength since Mexico's national identity building, uplifting mestizo identity and allowing youth to emphasize Zapotec identity as a people of the past and deemphasize Zapotec language as proper. However, the yearning of learning Zapotec among diasporic youth may support Indigenous approaches that interrupt and transform the ideological legacy of Indigenous languages (Meek & Messing, 2007).

Teachers' Understanding of Oaxacan Students

Students were asked if they thought that teachers understood what it means to be Oaxacan and most stated, "No." Nayeli went into some detail about how teachers were unaware of their Oaxacan students:

> I don't think so 'cause they [teachers] would never . . . I am pretty sure we shared in the beginning of the year when we fill out "all about me" forms where we're from, like, specifically what country, I mean, what state or country. I was never asked by a teacher, "Oh, you're from Oaxaca, like, oh, how is? . . . tell me about your culture." Or when I would tell them that I spoke three languages, it was never like, "Ohh, so Oaxaca, like, tell us more about it." Like, it was never . . . I think again we did have some instances where we were like, "That teacher doesn't like us; she's racist," but it was never because we're Mexican, that's why she [the teacher] doesn't like us.

Nayeli noted that teachers were oblivious to her Oaxacan identity and she simply accused some teachers of being racist even though she did not show evidence of it. Others did not mention that they perceived their teachers as racist, but Edgar felt that teachers think of Oaxacans as essentially the same as other Latinx. "They [teachers] probably . . . just see them the same, you know. Like, the Latino type; they probably see them, like, . . . the same."

Jose sensed that teachers have some understanding of what it means to be Oaxacan. He felt that this was due to there being a critical mass of Oaxacans at his high school:

> A lot of teachers are aware, too, 'cause, I mean, we're, like, a good group [sic], we have a good, a good number of students who are Oaxacan. So, yeah, they talk to their teachers about it, and the teachers are aware of some things.

Jose added that it is good for teachers to know about their Oaxacan students because it creates a connection. When students determine that teachers understand what it means to be Oaxacan, it increases their self-worth. Alex mentioned that some teachers understand what it means to be Oaxacan simply because these teachers are Hispanic:

> They [teachers] know the different states of Mexico and how different cultures can be different from one another but how sometimes they can be similar. So if you're, like, Oaxacan, that would be like a certain type of culture, and that's how they [teachers] would know.

Alex explained how he knew that some teachers are aware of Oaxacan culture. "Well, sometimes, if we're reading a textbook, they [teachers] would mention Oaxaca and how, like, back then, they would have there the ancient Mexicans and all that, how they live, and we would learn about different parts of Mexico." Later, he explained how learning about Oaxacan culture in class "makes you feel good that you know about your history." He also stated, "Internally, you know that they [teachers] are talking about your great ancestors, so you feel that you kind of know what the teacher is talking about 'cause you can relate to it." At various points during the interview with Yazmin, she detailed how two of her teachers were supportive of her culture:

> My Spanish teacher did at least [understand what it means to be Oaxacan]. And there's another girl here at school, too, [who is Oaxacan], so when we had . . . there's two Spanish teachers that I've had, and one of them, when I told her, like, what my project was when I presented it, she was like, "Oh, wow, it's a really pretty culture," like, not just pretty but beautiful and interesting, to say the least, and she really liked it, and she's like,
>
> "It's sad to see that a lot of these things aren't out for the public to see." And my other teacher knew about it [Zapotec culture], I guess, 'cause he's traveled to Mexico, he was born there. And he was like, "Yeah, that's a really beautiful culture." And when he found out that, of all the students he's had, only two of them were ever descended from people from Oaxaca, he was like, "Wow, that's kind of sad."

Yazmin also noted that she experienced excitement when she was able to share her Zapotec heritage in class. She also spoke about the support of her Spanish teacher and the interest in Zapotec culture that was generated in her classmates:

> I actually did a project on that [Zapotecs]. And I really wanted the teacher to give me that one [class project] and she did 'cause it's actually part of our background, our cultural background, where my family, my mom, once talked about how her family was descendent from that [Zapotec culture] at some point, and my dad was, too, but on a lesser extent. I did a really big project on them [Zapotecs] and about their life, and I believe, wasn't Monte Albán part of their city? Yeah . . . and we went there once, and I was like, wow. They were smarter than people here at the time [giggle].

Yazmin once made a dish similar to *pozole*, or maize stew, as a tribute to her Zapotec heritage, which greatly affected her teacher and which generated peer interest and curiosity. Her teacher was surprised by the diversity of cultures in Mexico. Irene noted how many teachers in her school understood what it means to be Oaxacan:

> I guess one out of, like, 40 [teachers] because some have gone over there and actually visit Oaxaca and they know some cultures, especially Spanish teachers, they know some parts over there and what the foods are like and the, uh, visiting it, so.

She also explained that teachers who visited Oaxaca said great things about it, e.g., "It's really nice; they have good cultures, good food, and it's really nice."

Although it is not clear how the teacher might have structured the classroom assignment, when Yazmin presented her Zapotec and *pozole* project, she had the liberty to do her own investigative work in preparation for her project. Giving Indigenous students the freedom to substantially engage their own ancestral cultures, knowledge systems, and institutional schooling contexts may play an important role in creating culturally relevant resources (Urrieta, 2016). Ancestral understandings of student ethnic groups increase positive feelings which appear to convert into improved educational participation. Therefore, students' perceptions of teacher responsiveness to their millennial culture present a reasonable relationship to enhancing educational opportunity (Luna, Evans, & Davis, 2013). Presenting a unit on Indigenous peoples of the Americas or "ancient Mexicans," as Alex narrated, may be one approach to introduce material on the subject. Alberto's (2017) account reported that the presentation of a map or "an alternative imaging of the Americas" (p. 247), was a significant bridge that connected her Zapotec Yalateca identity to her school classmates and curriculum. As such, it is important for schools to create spaces whereby Indigenous migrants and non-migrants can engage in collective action and cultural sustenance; to open up discourses and actions in which social identities are created and re-created through the institutionalization of practices where immigrants are recognized as Oaxacans and as Indigenous people. These diverse collective practices generate recognition of cultural, social, and political identities (Rivera-Salgado, 2005).

Discussion

There are two indicators that predict Indigenous ethnic identity: ethnolinguistic identity, and the absence of Indigenous labels; both are related to Indigenous ethnic identity formation

found in Oaxaca's Central Valley. Overall, school children and youth in Mexico do not self-identify as Indigenous or with an ethnolinguistic identity and are well aware of Indigenous linguistic prejudice (López-Gopar, 2009; O'Donnell, 2010). Researchers who conducted studies in Mexico with Zapotec heritage school children also considered these students to be Indigenous solely based on their Zapotec linguistic capabilities or lack thereof (López-Gopar, 2009). In Zapotec communities of the Central Valley, it is common to find people referring to themselves as *paisanos* or community members, rather than members of an ethnoracial group. In addition, Zapotecs may use pueblos of origin as distinguishable markers. For instance, someone might be called *bartoleño* to signal an individual's membership to the San Bartolomé Quialana pueblo. The word Zapotec is not used to reference community members by the same community or other Zapotec communities. Zapotecs make mention of their language in *castellano* or Spanish by describing it as *idioma* and *dialecto*, literally meaning language and dialect. The word Zapotec is absent in these communities and usage of the label has been largely adopted by anthropologists, linguists, and government officials.

The youth interviewed for this study based their Zapotec identity on their Indigenous language speaking abilities. Youth who expressed that they spoke, at one time spoke, or who understood Zapotec were likely to identify as Zapotec. The youth who had only limited speaking skills in Zapotec felt that they were only part Zapotec, based on this limitation. Others did not identify with or felt that they could not be Zapotec because they did not speak the language nor had family who could teach them. Although Zapotec ethnic identity seems to be related to Zapotec speaking abilities, even high levels of speaking ability do not always activate Indigenous ethnic identity. One youth struggled with considering herself Zapotec, even though she was born in a Zapotec-speaking community, was taught be proud of her Zapotec language, and spoke Zapotec in public. Therefore, when inquiring with youth about Zapotec identity, mixed results were reported and in some cases youth adopted *dialecto* to be synonymous with Zapotec language. Further, the limited number of studies on Zapotecs in the U.S. do not suggest that Zapotecs self-identify with such labels (Smith, 1995).

Although the youth largely did not identify as Zapotec, they expressed great importance to their Indigenous Oaxacan identity. Youth associated Oaxacan identity with being Indigenous because it is rooted in Indigenous customs and traditions. In addition to participating in various heritage festivities, youth participated in their high school's activities and cultural groups that

promoted Oaxacan customs that reinforced and strengthened their identity. Cultural groups are composed of first and second generation youth, which explains why Indigenous Oaxacan identity is strong for youth. Cultural groups can serve to ensure that Oaxacan identity is passed on to future generations. Finally, many youths who were interviewed revealed that Oaxacan identity is more vital than Mexican and Mexican-American culture and in some cases Oaxacan youth felt the need to prove their identity when its authenticity was challenged by a Oaxacan peer.

All together, findings illustrated that Zapotec youth captured a wide variety of ethnic identities that interrupted bicultural models or models that confine identity by two distinct cultures that are at times infused to create a third "reality." False identity dichotomies like biculturalism do not begin to capture the full extent of multicultural identities that have been previously absent. Importantly, identities like Oaxacan that are unrelated to the array of Mexican or U.S. identities, are meaningful to youths' sense of self and cultural orientation. Youth may use several self-labels such as Mexican-American, Oaxacan, or even Zapotec which are not only telling of the great racioethnic diversity of students in U.S. schools, but importantly serve as factors that play a role in the schooling experiences of youth.

Youth's Oaxacan identity was presumably more accessible than Zapotec but, importantly, determined when youth found themselves in social contexts that tolerated and embraced Oaxacan identity. According to interviewees, the degree to which Oaxacan youth chose to affirm their ethnic label varied upon perceiving favorable social conditions for their identity. Alternatively, unfavorable disparaging of Oaxacans indicates that Indigenous identity is at least partially and implicitly informed by youths' acknowledgement of the negative enduring colonial ancestral undertone. Irrespective of ethnoracial boundaries, Zapotec youth articulate how "the system" is unfair to them and how Indigenous people are stratified as "less," perpetuating the longstanding anti-Indigenous bias that is mediated by popular discourse. This gives rise to stereotypes based on the past that re-emerge in the presence of a stereotyped group, i.e., Oaxacans are *bajitos* and *morenitos*, evoking stigma and possible identity forfeiture. It is apparent, then, that the process by which the youth indicated a Zapotec and Oaxacan identity is complex and multilayered.

Conclusion

Critical Latinx Indigeneities (Blackwell et al., 2017), as a hemispheric approach to understanding indigeneity, helps to uncover the colonial systemic experiments of "education" that have served to rid Indigenous people of their "savagery" and to disposes them of their lands whether by complete eradication or assimilationist projects. Paradoxically, Indigenous youth continue to find ways to retain and enhance heritage connections by engaging in significant cultural activities such as powwows, *Guelaguetzas*, sweat lodges, music groups, familial ceremonies, and other practices (Cruz-Manjarrez, 2013; Kenyon & Carter, 2011; Schweigman, Soto, Wright, & Unger, 2011). Community members and parents often socialize youth into these practices as strategies to keep traditions alive; overall supporting youths' pro-social behaviors, self-determination, and community belonging (Mesinas & Perez, 2016). In schools, although some teachers express empathy for Indigenous students by highlighting the great Indigenous civilizations in their curricula, it is imperative to make purposeful instructional and institutional opportunities that value Indigenous lives, not by generalizing a narrative of European "discovery" and Indigenous "fidelity" that evades the role of race and racial equity that continues to play-out; now transposed as a socio-economic hierarchy, but instead move toward teacher and school awareness of Indigenous youths' strengths to facilitate sociocultural lives responsibly. A case in point lies in a mural across from Tongva Park that depicts five men "gathered at a fresh water stream: a friar in Franciscan cowl and two Spanish conquistadors face two Native American men in loincloths, one seated and the other kneeling, both sipping water from the stream" (McGahan, 2017, para. 3). While the underlying content may be contested, it is important to address Indigenous ethnoracial awareness in schools given that it provides an opportunity to redress colonialist Indigenous education and gives teachers the ability to make a significant impact on students' lives.

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Multilingual Mexican-Origin Students' Perspectives on Their Indigenous Heritage Language

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Abstract

This article focuses on the reported experiences of three focal students who participated in a Spanish/English dual language program in their southern California school district throughout their elementary and middle school years. All three students identify as Mexican-origin and speak Spanish, English, and the Indigenous language of Zapoteco and have different relationships with their languages. The framework of Critical Latinx Indigeneities (Blackwell, Boj Lopez & Urrieta, 2017) is used to explore the practices engaged in by the students, including language use and transnationalism (Sánchez, 2007), as well as the investment to learn and use a language as part of their identity (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000). Even though dual language programs provide much needed linguistic supports for language maintenance, perhaps more importantly, they provide support for ideological shifts towards language maintenance rather than transition to English-only instruction. However, the three students experienced a segmented and limited focus on Spanish language development in middle school compared to their elementary school experience. The authors discuss implications for outside school spaces that can support authentic language use, in addition to school-sanctioned language programs promoting multilingualism.

Key Words: Transnationalism, Zapoteco, Critical Latinx Indigeneity, Dual language education, Investment

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24974/amae.13.2.430

Introduction

> Rosa's mamá: *Porque les digo a ellos- un día vamos a regresar a nuestro pueblo, ¿no? Y pues regresamos y pues puro inglés, ahora si que ni español. Y pues, no. Ahí tenemos tíos, parientes, abuelos, y pues ¿como no te van a entender? No, no ponle que aprender pues. Aprender para comunicarse. Es lo que, lo que yo pienso, que es lo mejor para mi*.
> [Because I tell them- one day we'll return to our town, no? And well, we'll go back and only English, not even Spanish. And well, no. There we have aunts/uncles, relatives, grandparents, and well. They won't even understand you? No, no get to learning then. Learn in order to communicate. It's what I think, what I think is best.]

The above quote is from a mother describing how important it was for her children to continue being able to speak Zapoteco, in addition to Spanish, while also becoming fluent English speakers. This paper looks at the educational experiences, linguistic use, and perspectives of three multilingual Mexican-origin students with either one or two parents of Zapotec heritage around their language use and schooling experience. The students participated in a dual language program in their southern California school district throughout their elementary and middle school years and are fluent Spanish and English speakers. Additionally, they all have different relationships and fluency with the Indigenous Mexican language of Zapoteco. This study considers what each language provides the youth access to and how their heritage languages connect them to others who speak the same languages – in México and in the Los Angeles area.

We use the framework of Critical Latinx Indigeneities (Blackwell, Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017) to explore the idea of Indigeneity within the context of the lives of students who speak Zapoteco as a heritage language but receive schooling in the US in English and Spanish. We also explore the idea of language use, development, and maintenance from the lens of investment (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000), which is a poststructuralist approach to language learning. Of relevance to this exploration is the context of the schooling of these students: a dual language program within a school district providing this additive language option from kindergarten through twelfth grade. While dual language programs provide much needed linguistic supports for language maintenance, perhaps more importantly, they represent an ideological shift, as compared to other bilingual programs, towards language maintenance rather than transitioning students to English-only instruction. We discuss implications for outside

school spaces for incentivizing language use for authentic purposes, in addition to school-sanctioned language programs promoting multilingualism.

Critical Latinx Indigeneities and Language Use

Indigeneity and Transnationalism

In a contemporary re-thinking of the idea of Indigeneity, scholars describe the concept as not static, but rather dynamic, similar to the idea of identity itself (Alberto, 2017; Blackwell, 2017; Boj Lopez, 2017; Saldaña-Portillo, 2017; Sánchez-López, 2017; Urrieta, 2017). Blackwell, Boj Lopez, and Urrieta (2017) identified the need to "examine how Indigenous migrants from Latin America are transforming notions of Latinidad and indigeneity in the US" (p. 126). They named a framework of Critical Latinx Indigeneities (CLI), which addresses the questions about transnational meanings of race, place, and Indigeneity raised by the presence of an Indigenous diaspora from Latin America across multiple countries and overlapping colonialities.

The focus on transnationalism in CLI overlaps with other literature around transnationalism as a lens for understanding the experiences of many children of (im)migrants[1]. Education researchers such as Sánchez (2007a&b) have discussed the phenomenon of more children raised in families maintaining their connections to their countries of origin. Additionally, researchers have urged educators to consider more deeply the experiences of transnational children and youth and note the learning experiences of students outside of schools (Sánchez, 2007b), such as the international perspectives they develop (Sánchez, 2001). Morales (2016) discussed the worldliness and breadth of experience demonstrated by the children in her study, having traversed diverse spaces in different geographic locations. Sánchez and Kasun (2012) pointed out the invisibility of these transnational experiences to the teachers of these (im)migrant students.

Similarly, Ruiz and Barajas (2012) noted that Mexican Indigenous students have been overlooked by educators until very recently. Sánchez and Machado-Casas (2009) identified that a growing number of Latinx households are composed of Latinxs from an Indigenous background. In Mexico, "more than one in ten Mexicans come from a family in which an indigenous language is spoken" (Fox, 2006, p. 39). Ruiz and Barajas (2012) explain that in the

[1] Please see Pacheco (2009) for a discussion of the word (im)migrant and a critique of the problematic nature of the term 'Latin American immigrants' which refers to these populations as immigrants in their own land of origin and fails to consider long-time migration patterns before the political Mexico-US border separated families.

process of incorporation into new communities in the US, racial hierarchies that were experienced in Mexico are also present in the US and often affect the treatment of Indigenous *Mexicanos*, including discrimination against *lo indio* (Indigenous forms) by other Mexican (im)migrants. However, "far from being passive recipients of racist beliefs and behaviors, indigenous transnational communities bring with them cultural wealth…" (Ruiz & Barajas, 2012, p. 127). As part of this cultural wealth, an identified aspect of Indigeneity is *comunalidad*, or a cultural pattern of collectivity (Martinez Luna, 2010; Urrieta, 2017). For example, Sánchez-López (2017) discussed his own experience growing up in the Los Angeles area after having been born in Oaxaca and identifying as Zapoteco. He described the political unity and solidarity with Latino-identified youth. Other scholars have examined the traditional responsibilities that Mexican Indigenous community members have for collective participation in their home cities requiring them to return periodically to Mexico to carry out those duties (Stephen, 2007). Ruiz and Barajas (2012) identified multiple themes coming from ten interviews conducted with Indigenous families and US school personnel, three of which are particularly relevant to this study: 1) The need for Spanish instruction; 2) The importance of teaching Indigenous languages; and 3) Affirmation of Mexican Indigenous children's identities.

Mexican Indigenous Languages in the US and Invisibility

A prominent theme when exploring Mexican Indigeneity in the US is that Mexican Indigenous students seem to blend in with the general Latinx population and remain "*ocultos* (hidden), omitted, or ignored…" (Machado-Casas, 2009, p. 84). Many of these students' families are Spanish-speaking, in addition to speaking an Indigenous language. In contrast to the high school students in Barillas-Chón's (2010) study, who were recent arrivals to the US, the students in the present study have experienced their entire schooling in the US, so are more "invisible" as Indigenous students. In the context of the US, the marginalized language of Spanish becomes the focus of language maintenance if there is an opportunity for students to participate in bilingual programs. Indigenous languages, such as Zapoteco, Mixteco, or Purepecha, are unnoticed or devalued, particularly in the school context (Barillas-Chon, 2010; Morales, 2016; Munro, 2003; Perez, Vasquez, & Buriel, 2016).

Macedo (2000) argued that in the US, the bilingualism of students of color is constantly under assault, and that racist colonial linguistic and cultural practices often found in schools contribute to the marginalization of Latinx students. Macedo's colonial bilingualism framework

helps situate the larger social and political context that students must continuously navigate, as well as the various colonialities of linguistic/cultural minorities in the US. The linguistic and cultural violence that Indigenous Latinx students and other youth of color continuously experience often contributes to their educational alienation (Barillas-Chon, 2010).

Most emergent bilingual students (or English learners as they are still more commonly called) in this country are identified as Spanish-speakers. Among the English learner student population, almost 80 percent are Latinx native Spanish-speakers (Kohler & Lazarín, 2007). But even within this number, it is not clear for how many students Spanish may not be the only language other than English that they speak. Students identified as speakers of languages other than English are rarely provided more than three to four years of primary language instruction, if provided bilingual education at all. In fact, bilingual education still most often supports movement toward monolingualism (García & Kleifgen, 2018).

Fifteen years ago, López and Runsten (2004) noted that there were approximately 350,000 Indigenous Oaxacans established in California, and around 180,000 living within the southern area of the state. In Los Angeles, Zapotecs are the most representative Indigenous community that migrated from the Valles Centrales and Sierra Norte regions in Oaxaca (López & Runsten, 2004). Blackwell (2017) puts the number of Indigenous Oaxacans in Los Angeles at approximately 120,000. Munro (2003) suggests that many Zapoteco speakers are undocumented. Therefore, it is not evident how many Zapoteco speakers are in the US. Zapoteco is a language found largely in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico, but also Guerrero and Puebla. There are approximately 58 Zapotec languages or dialects, each of which may be difficult for speakers of the others to understand. There are over 400,000 speakers of Zapotec languages in Mexico today (Simons & Fennig, 2018).

For many Indigenous communities, developing multilingualism is vital, especially because speaking Spanish connects them to a broader Mexican community, both within Mexico and in the US (Machado-Casas, 2009). Multilingualism allows one to retain the values, beliefs, and characteristics of more than one culture (Sánchez, 2007a, 2008). Trueba (2004) also emphasized that for (im)migrants maintaining one's own language(s), as well as learning English, is not a luxury but a need. Other researchers have agreed that language is important for providing cultural and identity validation as well as to help maintain connection with families back in Mexico (Besserer, 2000, 2004; Machado-Casas, 2006; Rivera-Salgado, 1999; Stephen,

2007). In the US context, if there is opportunity for language maintenance and development, it is for Spanish, particularly through the growing number of dual immersion programs.

Dual Immersion Schools and Investment in Language Use

Dual immersion is a type of bilingual education model that promotes bilingualism and biliteracy development along with high academic achievement and multicultural understanding (Howard, 2005). Unlike other bilingual education models which only serve English learners, dual immersion programs bring together students of a target language, in this case Spanish, and speakers of the majority language (English), so that all students are learning both languages together. Typically by the final year of elementary school (often fifth grade), 50% of instructional time is devoted to each language. Even in a location such as California, which essentially banned primary language instruction through the passage of Proposition 227, the allowance of annual waivers signed by parents provided the possibility for students to continue receiving a bilingual education. While dual immersion programs have increased in popularity across the country, they remain less typical than the more normative transitional model of bilingual education. They also often do not extend beyond the elementary school level.

Dual immersion models structurally emphasize the goal of multilingualism for emergent bilingual students and the maintenance of the heritage language, rather than transition into English. Many language scholars and researchers have more recently taken a poststructuralist approach to language learning, recognizing that learners must feel "invested" in becoming speakers of a target language, rather than feel motivated, which is based in a more cognitive perspective (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000). The idea of investment (Norton, 2000) relates to a speaker's notion of the self and the role that speaking a particular language plays in one's self-identity. 'Investment' takes a more sociocultural approach that language learning is context-dependent and situation-based, always taking into account power relations, learning opportunities, and ultimately, how speaking the language aligns with who the person wants to be. For those speakers of languages other than the two languages taught in the program, there must be other opportunities to increase the potential for investment in being a speaker of an additional language, such as Zapoteco.

Method

This is a longitudinal case study, similar to Ek (2009), following a small number of focal students participating in a dual immersion program in a small school district in southern

California. Interviews were conducted in 2010 (5th grade) and 2013 (8th grade) with the students and their mothers. Through a narrative analysis of the interview transcripts, we examine the participants' constant or changing perspectives regarding their languages and how their schooling (or other influences) has affected their relationships with Spanish, English, and Zapoteco.

Initial Study – Fifth Graders in Dual Immersion School (2010)

Zitlali Morales examined the learning ecology of a Spanish-English dual immersion elementary school (Carver Language School, a pseudonym) in southern California focusing on the language ideologies embodied in practices within the school and by different participants including the principal, teachers, students, and parents (Morales, 2010). The fifth grade was chosen as the focus in order to ask participants about their experience at the school since kindergarten. Observations of both fifth-grade classrooms took place over the course of the academic year (2009-2010), and ten focal students and their parents were chosen to be interviewed. Focal students were chosen who practiced a variety of linguistic practices at home but who all came from Latin American heritage. (All of the students identified as Mexican-heritage except one student whose parents came from El Salvador).

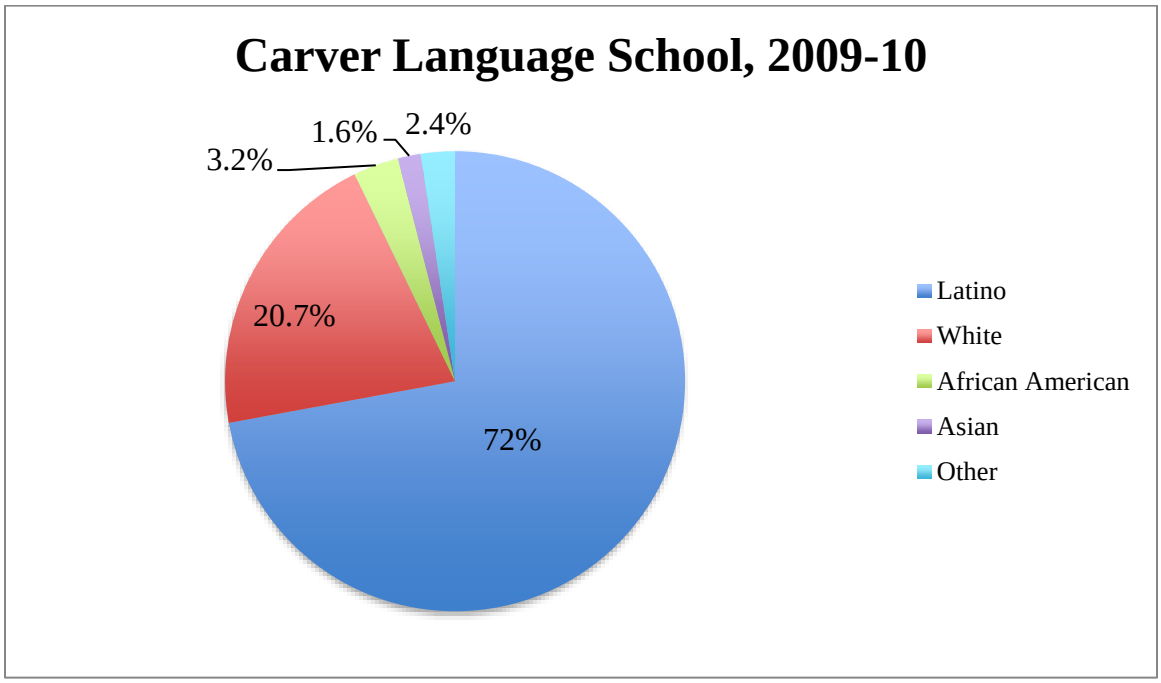

Figure 1. Student Racial Demographics of Carver Language School, 2009-10

Almost half of the school's K-5 student population were designated English learners (49%), and the majority of students were identified as Latino. Forty percent of the students in the school were classified as socioeconomically disadvantaged. The neighborhood in which the school site is situated had historically been a Latinx immigrant population with Spanish-language signage, for example. However, there was no data on the linguistic diversity of these English learner students at the school, and it was evident that this population was actually very heterogeneous – linguistically, socioeconomically, etc., with a large percentage of students whose families hailed from Oaxaca and spoke Zapoteco as a heritage language. Table 1 presents some brief information about each of the focal students. Many of them had traveled to and experienced their parents' country of origin.

Table 1

Focal students from 5th grade to 8th grade

Name	Parental Origin	Travel to Mexico	Languages
Rosa	Both parents from Oaxaca	Born in Oaxaca, visits regularly	Zapoteco Spanish English
Jesús	Both parents from Oaxaca	Travel to Oaxaca, visits regularly	Zapoteco Spanish English
Jeannie	Both parents from El Salvador	Not been to El Salvador	Spanish English
Lilia	Father's family from Jalisco, Mother's family from Mexico City	Travel to Jalisco and Mexico City once	Spanish English
Enrique	Mother's family from Jalisco	Travel to Jalisco once	Spanish English
Lourdes	Both parents from Oaxaca	Travel to Oaxaca a few times	Spanish English

Kevin	Mother from Oaxaca, Father from Puebla	Not been to Mexico	Spanish English
Jessica	Both parents from Puebla	Travel to Puebla, visits regularly	Spanish English
Ricardo	Mother's family from Durango, Father's family from Jalisco	Travel to Durango once	English Spanish
Edwin	Both parents from Oaxaca	Travel to Oaxaca, visits regularly	Zapoteco Spanish English

Note. Student names who are underlined were interviewed as 8th graders, and those names in bold are the focus of this analysis.

Following Focal Students to 8th Grade and Data Analysis Using CLI Framework

Morales interviewed five girls and five boys from the two fifth grade classrooms in the original study, as well as one parent of each student. Following-up with participants during their eighth-grade year, Morales reached out to the ten original participants, but was only able to secure interviews with seven, as well as the parents originally interviewed. Interviews for the first study were conducted at the school site, since the focus of the original study was the dual immersion program and the school itself. Interviews as eighth graders were not conducted at the middle school, but rather at a location of their choosing. Participants chose sites at various cafes in the area of the school after the conclusion of the school year.

All of these students attended a K-5 dual immersion school together, and then went on to a dual language program option in their middle school (James Madison Middle School, or JMMS). Since the JMMS student population was made up from different elementary feeder schools, the students who had attended Carver went to middle school with students who had not experienced a dual immersion program. Additionally, because the middle school schedule was made up of different periods for different subjects with different teachers, the experience of the students in the dual language option was much less cohesive than their elementary school's program. The Spanish instruction they were receiving was in the form of two courses offered in Spanish: Spanish language arts and social studies.

This analysis uses a Critical Latinx Indigeneities (CLI) framework focusing on the three students interviewed as eighth graders who identified Zapoteco as a language they spoke. In dual immersion schools, there is a purposeful effort to recruit students who begin elementary school as predominantly speakers of the heritage language, in this case Spanish, and other students who are monolingual English speakers. As fifth graders, students had been instructed in both Spanish and English for five years, so they were fluent in both languages. Yet, students had varied preferences for the two languages, in addition to Zapoteco. Because the focus of the study was on the languages of the students rather than ethnic identity or Indigenous affiliation, the students were not asked if they identified as Indigenous. In fact, students' Zapoteco-speaking abilities had come as a surprise to the researcher focused on the experiences of the students in the Spanish-English dual language program. However, this important aspect of these students' lives and abilities became central to explore and to document its invisibility in their school curriculum, as discussed in Morales (2016). Certainly, from an etic perspective, speaking Zapoteco and participating in cultural practices or important events in their communities – both in California and in México – could mark these students as Indigenous. However, the students themselves did not necessarily identify this way.

The follow-up interviews focused on movement: across geographic spaces, contexts and purposes for language use, and changes over time. Questions included similar topics to what was asked during the first study, with some additional questions asking about students' experience with the middle school and their plans for high school. All of the students planned to attend the district high school and continue the dual immersion option, even though this just meant taking additional classes in Spanish. Morales conducted the follow-up interviews, speaking primarily in Spanish, in order to converse with students in the target language of the dual immersion program. But the researcher explained to the students and their parents that they could respond in either Spanish or English. The second set of interviews were transcribed by a research team which includes the two co-authors. After the interviews were transcribed, the authors analyzed each transcript for emerging themes. The fifth-grade interviews were consulted first, a codebook was created, and the eighth-grade interviews were then analyzed for similar themes. Through a narrative analysis of the interview transcripts, we examine the participants' constant or changing perspectives regarding their languages and how their schooling (or other influences) has affected their relationships with Spanish, English, and

Zapoteco. The interview excerpts included in this manuscript are reported in the original language spoken. Interviewee responses have been translated from Spanish. None of the interviews were conducted in Zapoteco.

Researcher Positionality

Zitlali, Lydia, and María Fernanda are Spanish/English bilinguals. Zitlali was born and raised in the Midwest by immigrant parents from the state of Jalisco, México. She is the oldest of four daughters and spoke Spanish as her first language. She does not speak the Zapoteco language and interviewed the students and their mothers in Spanish and English. Lydia was born and raised in Chicago and attended one of its first dual immersion (Spanish and English) elementary schools. She is the daughter of Guatemalan immigrant parents and conducted her dissertation work in the Western Highlands of Guatemala, focused on a secondary school with a bilingual and intercultural curriculum in an Indigenous Mayan language-speaking community. María Fernanda was born in Sinaloa, Mexico, but immigrated with her family to the southwest side of Chicago when she was ten months old. She is the oldest of three daughters. Her first language is Spanish, and she often took on the role of translator for her parents. She is currently a pre-service bilingual teacher. While the lack of familiarity with the Zapoteco language is a limitation of the analysis, the three authors strongly believe in bilingual education, heritage language maintenance, and the increased visibility of Indigenous students among students from Latin American descent in our schools.

Findings

Zitlali met Rosa, Edwin, and Kevin as fifth graders participating in a dual immersion school; they were all focal students in the study where she observed them in their Spanish and English language arts classes. However, the one-on-one interviews focused on their linguistic backgrounds and practices outside of school, and she learned that Rosa and Edwin's families were from Oaxaca and had various levels of fluency in the Zapoteco language(s). These two students were each the youngest children, and all of their older siblings had been born in Oaxaca, in Zapoteco-speaking communities. Both had visited their towns of origin in Oaxaca with their families to participate in community events and had these comparative experiences of life in large, urban Los Angeles. Kevin's family background was distinct; he was the older of two boys. He did not identify Zapoteco as a language he was familiar with as a fifth grader, and he had never been to Mexico, having been born and raised in the Los Angeles area. In fact, his

mother also spoke only Spanish and English. However, as an eighth grader, Kevin shared that he played in a band of traditional Zapotec music, which his mother encouraged. Kevin's mother divulged that this language – which she called *dialecto*[2] ("dialect") – is a language that her own father speaks, but that she never learned.

As fifth graders, all three students spoke, read, and wrote in Spanish and English as part of their school curriculum. Zapoteco was not a language they used in school; opportunities for Rosa and Edwin to learn and speak Zapoteco came in familial contexts and their trips to Oaxaca, as elaborated in Morales (2016). A fourth student (Jesús) also had Zapoteco as a heritage language but was unable to be interviewed as an eighth-grade student. Rosa, Edwin, and Kevin all continued in the dual language program through middle school. This was a very rare schooling opportunity that this district provided, particularly in a post-227 California context. In the sections that follow, excerpts from the 5th grade interviews are presented first, followed by the 8th grade interviews.

Table 2

Focal 8th grade students for this analysis

Rosa	Zapoteco, Spanish, English	Born in Oaxaca, youngest of 8 children, started school in Mexico
Edwin	Zapoteco, Spanish, English	Youngest of 4 children, only child born in the US (others born in Oaxaca)
Kevin	Spanish, English	Older of 2 siblings, born in the US, never traveled to Mexico

Rosa: Language for Economic Utility as well as Beauty

Rosa attended preschool in Mexico and then continued in kindergarten in the US. She had moved to California with her mother and seven older siblings to join her father who had been working in the US for twenty years, mainly in the restaurant industry. Rosa's parents, grandparents, and older siblings are all speakers of Zapoteco. When interviewing Rosa's mother, she explained that she had learned Spanish at a later age, 19, when she went to work in the capital city of Mexico. Rosa's family still had a house and land in Oaxaca and regularly

[2] Perez et al. (2016) explained that the term *dialect* continues to be used to refer to Indigenous languages, even by Indigenous people themselves – with the implication that they are not legitimate languages.

travelled back to their hometown to visit. In fact, one of her older brothers had studied computer engineering in the US, but then decided to return to Oaxaca where he opened a computer cafe.

In both the fifth- and eighth-grade interviews, Rosa chose to respond to the interviewer in Spanish. Rosa's fifth-grade teacher considered her to be one of the students most proficient in Spanish, perhaps in part because she had begun her education in Mexico. It initially came as a surprise to the interviewer when Rosa shared that she spoke Zapoteco.

> Zitlali: *¿Entonces, cuál es tu primer idioma?* [So, what is your first language?]
>
> Rosa: *Español, no, sí, español, y luego otro idioma, que casi no... Primero es español, luego segundo es un idioma que es, que usamos en el pueblo, se llama Zapoteco… Mi tercer, um, mi tercer idioma es inglés.* [Spanish, no, yes, Spanish, and then another language, that I don't really... First, it's Spanish, then second is a language that is, that we use in the town, it is called Zapoteco... My third, um, my third language is English.]

Rosa went on to identify other Zapoteco-speaking students in the fifth grade, including her best friend, Marisol, and Edwin in the other class. Since Rosa was attending a dual immersion school where she was learning to read and write both Spanish and English, the interviewer asked her about the place of this other language.

> Zitlali: *Wow. Entonces, ¿como ves, es como un idioma secreto, o?* [Wow. So, like, it's like a secret language, or?]
>
> Rosa: *Un idioma, así normal, pero casi no, no no, casi muchas personas no lo hablan. Y más aquí.* [A language, just normal, but hardly, no, no no, hardly many people speak it. Especially here.]

Rosa claimed Zapoteco as an *idioma* or language, rather than a *dialecto,* as some other interviewees did. She recognized that not many people spoke it in the US. Indeed, the researcher had not identified Rosa as a Zapoteco-speaker in advance of the interview. Rosa was then asked if she spoke Zapoteco with family or others.

> Rosa: *Otras personas no.* [Not with other people.]
>
> Zitlali: *¿No? ¿Nunca? Okay.* [No? Never? Okay.]
>
> Rosa: *A veces saben, a veces no. Y este. Ah. Pero con mi familia, con mis primos, con mis tios, sí saben zapoteco.* [Sometimes they know, sometimes they don't. And um. Oh, but with my family, with my cousins, with my uncles/aunts, they know Zapoteco.]

Having such a large family allowed Rosa many opportunities to speak Zapoteco at family gatherings in the US. However, as a fifth grader, Rosa did not seem to use the language in a larger community context, with people outside of her family.

When asked about whether she thought it important to continue to attend a dual language program, Rosa's answer was job-related. She stated that in the future, any job would require both English and Spanish. The interviewer asked next if Rosa thought it important to speak Zapoteco.

> Rosa: *Para mi sí. Si un día vuelvo a México o vivo allá, trabajo cuando sea grande. Puedo este, como se llama, a los turistas que vienen allá. Cuando te preguntan cosas. Nomás les respondes o les dices que hablamos en zapoteco y ellos te entrevistan y todo. Hay veo mucho en México.* [For me it is, if one day I return to Mexico or live over there, work when I'm older. I can uh, how do you call it, to the tourists that come over there. When they ask you things. You can just respond or you say that we speak in Zapoteco and they interview you and everything. I see that a lot in Mexico.]

Similar to Spanish, in this response Rosa connected speaking Zapoteco to financial opportunities. However, she described making money from tourists who would pay to hear Zapoteco spoken, the implication being that Zapoteco was anachronistic, or an oddity (Urrieta, 2017). Additionally, her answer to the question of why she should continue to speak this language was dependent on whether she and her family moved back Mexico, even though Rosa spoke Zapoteco with her family in the US, too. At that time, Rosa had just visited Mexico the previous year. Zapoteco seemed to be connected geographically to her parents' hometown.

In the interview three years later, Rosa was asked whether she spoke Spanish better than when she was a fifth grader and if her Spanish use had increased or decreased.

> Rosa: *Yo creo que sí. Hay más palabras que conozco mejor*, so, yeah, ha-ha. [I believe so, yes. There are more words that I know better, so, yeah, ha-ha.]
>
> Zitlali: *¿Y hablas más español ahora, menos español o igual?* [And do you speak more Spanish now, less Spanish, or the same?]

> Rosa: Uh, *yo digiera*[3] *que menos español, pero, lo conozco más, pero no lo hablo tanto.* [Uh, I would say less Spanish, but, I know it better, but I don't speak it as much.]

This answer aligned with the idea that as Rosa kept taking Spanish as a subject area, she continued to develop her formal Spanish language skills, including writing and expanded vocabulary, since she was reading grade-level texts. But her response demonstrated the effect of continuing to learn Spanish in school in a segmented way. In elementary school, the whole school community, including teachers and staff, spoke Spanish in addition to English. But in the middle school, only students that opted into the dual language program took classes that were taught in Spanish. Spanish usage was not the norm for most students or teachers. When probed, Rosa shared that she liked Spanish language arts but not the class itself because it was long, and they received too much homework.

When asked why it was important for Rosa to continue speaking Spanish, she stated a similar reason as in fifth grade – for financial or job-related opportunities in the future.

> Rosa: Well, *a veces en el futuro cuando tú apliques a un trabajo es bueno porque hay muchos trabajos en que hay muchos* like *güeros y no saben español entonces necesitan a gente que hable español.* [Sometimes in the future when you apply for a job it's good because there are a lot of jobs where there are a lot of white people and they don't know Spanish so they need people who speak Spanish.]

During interviews with Rosa, she was willing to speak about race and observations she made about her classmates, including how she perceived race impacting their willingness to be friends with her. In this instance, however, Rosa suggests that there are jobs where Spanish-speaking is needed that could not be obtained by white people (*güeros*). This comment is made despite the fact that Rosa had been attending school with students of different racial backgrounds who have all been learning and speaking Spanish for many years. Yet, she still associated Spanish-speakers with non-white people, or framed white people as non-Spanish speakers. The researcher also asked about whether it was important to keep speaking her language, Zapoteco.

> Rosa: *Sí, para el futuro también, sería yo creo que es bonito. So, yo lo seguiría hablando.* [Yes, for the future, too. It would be, I think it's beautiful. So, I would continue speaking.]

[3] "Digiera" is not a grammatically correct word in Spanish; many young speakers of Spanish or Spanish learners do not always say the tenses in the grammatically correct way. In this case, the interviewer understood Rosa to mean "*diría*" or "I would say," as it has been translated.

Rather than attaching financial opportunities to speaking Zapoteco, Rosa cited its beauty and its place in her future. However, English had become a language she also spoke in Oaxaca.

> Zitlali: *¿Hablas zapoteco o español o los dos cuando vas a viajar a Oaxaca?* [Do you speak Zapoteco or Spanish or both when you travel to Oaxaca?]
>
> Rosa: *Ah, los dos y también inglés.* [Uh, both and also English.]
>
> Zitlali: *¿También inglés?* [English too?]
>
> Rosa: *Sí. Ah, porque también tengo a mi hermano allá así es de que él habla ingles también, so, yo-yo enseño ingles a- como tengo amigos allá*. So *también les enseño inglés.* [Yes. Uh, because I also have my brother over there, and he speaks English as well. So, I- I teach English to, see I have friends over there. So I also teach them English.]

While Zapoteco had been most connected to her family and to her parents' hometown, the context was changing. Now that a person with whom she primarily spoke in English lived in Oaxaca, she associated this location with English as well. This aspect of transnationalism underscores the portability of cultural practices (Moll, 2011). Even though Rosa's mother had been quite explicit about the need for her children to retain Zapoteco in case they returned to live in Oaxaca (opening quote), Rosa had become invested in speaking English in addition to Spanish even in Mexico. Speaking and teaching English to her friends perhaps gave her status or social capital, just as her trilingualism served her needs as well.

Edwin: Embarrassment, Comfort, and the Necessity of Different Languages

Edwin was the youngest of four siblings and the only child born in the US. His sisters and brother were much older than him and were born in Oaxaca, Mexico. They all spoke Zapoteco, Spanish, and English. Edwin's family had lived only blocks away from his elementary school but then moved about fifteen miles away (to the "Valley" area of Los Angeles) because his parents were able to afford to purchase a house out there. This had increased Edwin's travel time to school, and Edwin explained that he often ate breakfast in the car and was extremely tired at the end of his long days. However, it was that important to his parents for Edwin to continue attending Carver. One of his older sisters—the one closest to him in age—had also gone to Carver and was at the time of the fifth-grade interview, about to enter into UCLA as a freshman.

Opting to speak in English, Edwin recounted some of his experiences in Oaxaca (Morales, 2016). He had talked about these experiences very animatedly but spoke with more

hesitancy about his ability to speak Zapoteco. He explained that he was embarrassed to speak Zapoteco fearing the words would come out wrong. In fact, Edwin engaged in non-reciprocal code-switching practices (as described in Zentella, 1997) when visiting Oaxaca – often responding to his relatives in Spanish when they would speak to him in Zapoteco. Edwin's mother had explained that both she and her husband came from a town where the dominant language was Zapoteco, but schooling was provided solely in Spanish. When Zitlali spoke to Edwin's mother, she spoke in Spanish. However, Edwin's mother explained that it was not until she immigrated to the US that she learned to speak Spanish fluently.

Zitlali: *¿Usted aprendió en la escuela?* [You learned it in school?]

Edwin's mamá: *Hasta cuando llegué aquí.* [Not until I arrived here.]

Zitlali: *¡De veras! Güau, porque lo habla muy bien.* [Really! Wow, because you speak it very well.]

Edwin's mamá: *Gracias. Apenas estoy aprendiendo también*. [Thank you. I'm barely learning it as well.]

Zitlali: *¿Cuándo vino aquí fue a la escuela para aprender español y el inglés?* [When you came here, you went to school to learn Spanish and English?]

Edwin's mamá: *Según inglés pero no aprendí nada de inglés. Solo aprendí el español.* [Supposedly English but I didn't learn any English. I only learned Spanish.]

Having lived in a town where Zapoteco was primarily spoken, Edwin's mother had not been invested in becoming a Spanish-speaker in Mexico. It was not until she took English classes in the US that Edwin's mother learned to speak Spanish, for the purpose of communicating with other Mexican (im)migrants (as participants in Machado-Casas, 2009). The US context necessitated knowledge of both of these dominant languages. Rosa's mother had been urged to learn Spanish due to economic necessity. For Edwin's mother, the necessity of learning Spanish came from a need for *apoyo* – which, as Barillas-Chon (2010) argues, is a communal support and information-sharing that comes from social connections with fellow (im)migrants from Mexico. This reality was another advantage to both women having their children enrolled in a dual language program, focused on the development and maintenance of both English and Spanish.

At the time of the eighth-grade interview, the researcher made sure to inquire about recent trips to Mexico. However, Edwin lamented that he had not been to Mexico in a long time. While his parents continued to travel to Oaxaca for two weeks on an annual basis in

October, Edwin could not go with them due to a strict attendance policy at JMMS. While his parents were in Mexico, Edwin stayed home with his older siblings. He reminisced about his last trip to Oaxaca for his sister's wedding.

> Edwin: Oh we usu- …when I was little, we usually go for October to celebrate over there. And there would be like festivals over there, there would be like a mini carnival over there, and we would see bullriders and like mini-rides and there would be fireworks. And like, I would go, there would be like mini carnival games. And, and it's really fun. It's just that I haven't been there in a while, so I don't know how it is right now. But before yeah, and we would go to, to like the little town over there. Spend ti- spend quality time with family. It's very fun. I miss it…

Edwin spoke with much nostalgia and expressed feelings of missing out, due to having a traditional school schedule in the US. The researcher continued asking him about JMMS.

> Edwin: Challenging because in sixth grade- I learned math in Spanish and throughout fifth grade, and then once I entered sixth grade it was all in English. So I- it took me a while to like translate all the words into what it was. And I had more teachers, more classes, more homework and... it was kind of hard for me. And in seventh grade I got used to it but like I made some like bad decisions, I wouldn't study for tests and it really it did affect me a lot, especially in math. But, eighth grade was- it was easy. I-I-I went through it, it was easy. I got better test scores than before... I just learned from my mistakes.

Although Edwin explains his difficulty with school as due to his own decisions, he also described the segmentation of his schooling experience, and the lack of support moving instruction in Spanish to English for particular school subjects. Since remaining in the dual language program was optional, the researcher asked why he had chosen to continue in it.

> Edwin: I want to stay in it because I heard that it help me, it'll help me a lot later in life, and that la-later in high school because there's a higher chance I might get into like a- it can help me in my resume to like college and all that. It's, it's very helpful. And it's, it's I just like learning two languages, knowing two languages and um... it helps you a lot. It gives you more support, I feel.

As Edwin explained how remaining in the dual language program would help him in the future, the examples he gave were very utilitarian in nature, such as helping him get into college.

Additionally, while Edwin recognized his own bilingualism, he failed to acknowledge that he was actually trilingual.

> The researcher then probed specifically about his knowledge of the Zapoteco language.
>
> Edwin: Yeah, I have like the accent so I don't really talk, but I understand every single word.

This response was similar to the one Edwin provided in fifth grade. He alluded to the challenges in speaking the language, but expressed confidence in his receptive abilities. Similar to what Lee (2013) noted about students' hesitation to use indigenous languages, Edwin seemed reticent to speak Zapoteco due to the embarrassment of having accented speech. The researcher continued by asking if his siblings also still understood Zapoteco.

> Edwin: Yeah, yeah, they all know, but I'm the only one that doesn't know it. I do, but like sometimes I want to say but it doesn't come out the way I want it, and like my words just get scrambled up in my mouth and nothing comes out in the end.

Edwin's description of his trilingualism was not self-assured; he seemed to experience frustration at his "scrambled" words or inability to express himself the way he desired. However, the opportunities and incentives for Edwin to speak Zapoteco to monolingual Zapoteco speakers were limited, particularly due to the challenge that missing school in October posed for him. The researcher also asked about his Spanish language development since fifth grade.

> Edwin: No, I think it went, I think I kind of forgot to speak Spanish. It's the fact that everything I learn, there's only two- well in yeah, there's only one class each year that I had to speak Spanish in, and that was in Social Studies, other than Spanish class, but that was mostly reading. And like, I kind of just stopped speaking Spanish. I only spoke it at home but that was just like simple. And then once I got to eighth grade, that's when I learned more. And then I kind of caught up. But then at the same time, I didn't. So yeah, my Spanish went little, like "eee".

Edwin made this last pronunciation while putting his index finger and thumb together, demonstrating this language decreasing in size. Similar to Rosa, the shift to learning Spanish in school for only two periods out of eight created a significant structural difference in how his Spanish language development was being supported. There was no incentive to speak Spanish informally throughout the day with classmates who were not enrolled in the dual language

option. Thus, even in the best of circumstances – enrollment in a dual language option in middle school – there was inadequate support to prevent Edwin's Spanish from becoming "little". The amount of mediation that the dual immersion elementary school (including structural context and teacher pedagogies) provided against the hegemonic language ideologies favoring English (Morales, 2010) were not being recreated in the middle school. But Edwin did appreciate his schooling and the rare opportunity he realized he was receiving:

> Zitlali: *¿Qué piensas de la educación bilingüe?* [What do you think about bilingual education?]
>
> Edwin: It's, it's very nice. It's challenging but it-it helps, it helps. And it's just fun that I get to learn different subjects in different languages. And now when I get to high school, it'll probably be the same thing and it's, it's helpful. It just helped me throughout the years. I didn't realize I was in an immersion program until fifth grade, I thought I was just going to school like, just like that. I didn't realize that some other schools just had English and some other schools just have Spanish. So, I'm very lucky to be in it.

Edwin articulated how fortunate he was to have this rare educational opportunity, to study in two languages but did not similarly express a desire for learning Zapoteco in a school setting.

Kevin: Authentic Language Learning and Investment in Zapoteco

Kevin followed a different trajectory than the first two students in terms of his language use, particularly Zapoteco. He was the older of two sons, both born in the US. His mother hailed from Oaxaca and his father from Puebla. When asked for his preference of language to use during his fifth-grade interview, Kevin answered "Spanglish," and the researcher accommodated his request, asking questions in both languages.

> Zitlali: *Sí, ¿y este cuál idioma hablas con tu familia?* [Yes and uh, what language do you speak with your family?]
>
> Kevin: *Yo, yo les hablo en inglés, pero ellos me contestan en,* wait*, me contestan en, en* Spanish. [I, I speak to them in English, but they respond in, wait, they respond in, in Spanish.]
>
> Zitlali: *¿Tus papás?* [Your parents?]
>
> Kevin: Yeah.
>
> Zitlali: *Y tu hermanito, ¿en que idioma hablas con él?* [And your little brother, what language do you speak with him?]

Kevin: Spanglish.

Zitlali: ¿Spanglish? *¿Y que idioma hablas mejor?* [And what language do you speak better?]

Kevin: English!

Zitlali: *¿Cuál idioma prefieres?* [What language do you prefer?]

Kevin: Spanish.

Zitlali: *¿Y con quien más hablas español? O sea, donde en tu vida hablas español? Con el futbol?* [And with who else do you speak Spanish? Or rather, where in your life do you speak Spanish? With soccer?]

Kevin: *En todos los lados,* [Everywhere.]

Zitlali: *¿En todos lados? Y tambien en todos lados hablas inglés?* [Everywhere? And you also speak English everywhere?]

Kevin: *Tambien sí.* [Also, yes.]

Kevin explained that he used both languages regularly throughout different areas of his life with different people. He was the only student who claimed to purposefully mix his languages. Despite having never traveled to Mexico, he had authentic uses for Spanish in his life, including communication with his father's parents and other family members who lived nearby.

Zitlali: *¿Es importante para ti hablar español e inglés?* [Is it important to speak both Spanish and English?]

Kevin: *Sí.* [Yes.]

Zitlali: How come?

Kevin: 'Cuz *mi mamá todavía no sabe mucho inglés y tampoco mi papá. Entonces tengo que hablarles en español.* Like most of the time. ['Cuz my mom still doesn't know much English. Or my dad. So I have to speak to them in Spanish. Like most of the time.]

Kevin explained the importance of maintaining his Spanish language skills, due to his parents' Spanish monolingualism. As the oldest child, Kevin had taken on some translating responsibilities in his household (please see Orellana, 2009 regarding common characteristics of child translators or paraphrasers).

Kevin: *Le ayudo con el papeleo con mi papa porque dice, "¿Qué es esa palabra? ¿Qué es esa palabra?" Me gustaba algunas veces* sometimes. *Yo era como su diccionario* or something like that. *Pero ahora que ya, pero ya que ganamos la computadora, me dice, ya no me tienes que ayudar.* [I help with the paperwork with my dad because he says, "what is this word?

> What is this word?" I liked it sometimes sometimes. I was like his dictionary or something like that. But now that, but now that we won the computer, he tells me, you don't have to help me anymore.]

In addition to playing clarinet in the school band, Kevin described playing for a band outside of school that played Mexican music. However, the researcher did not delve further, to ascertain what type of Mexican music the band played. Instead, the conversation shifted to where Kevin's grandparents lived and whether he had ever been to his parents' places of birth. Kevin explained that his paternal grandmother lived in the Los Angeles area, but since he had never traveled to Mexico, he had never met his maternal grandmother, who continued to live in Oaxaca.

When interviewing him as an eighth grader, Kevin chose to respond in Spanish; Kevin had developed more investment in his identity as a Spanish-speaker. Zitlali asked Kevin about his Spanish use and development, including if there were people in his life with whom he *only* spoke in Spanish, peers in particular.

> Kevin: *Solamente los de la banda, y, um, solamente los de la banda.* [Um, just the ones in the band, and, um, just the ones in the band.]
>
> Zitlali: *¿Qué piensas de cómo tu español se ha desarrollado? ¿O sea, crees que hablas mejor español ahora que cuando estabas en quinto año de Carver?* [What do you think about how your Spanish has developed? I mean, do you think you speak better Spanish now than when you were in fifth grade at Carver?]
>
> Kevin: *Creo que sí porque ya se unas más palabras en español. Y, eh, yo me estoy comunicando más con las personas. Cuando estaba en quinto grado no estaba en la banda y no habla mucho español, solamente en la casa o con mi abuelita que vive aquí en* (inaudible) *Island. Y, um, pero ya cuando me metí en la banda, ya, ya, empecé a hacer más amigos. Y ya se como hacer mas amigos donde sea porque antes estaba muy callado y no, y no me gustaba hacer amigos, y,* um (laughs). [I think so, yes, because I know some more words in Spanish. And uh, I'm communicating more with people. When I was in fifth grade I wasn't in the band, and I didn't speak much Spanish. Just at home or with my grandma who lives here in (inaudible) Island. And um, but when I got involved with the band, I, I started making more friends. And I know now how to make friends anywhere because before I was pretty quiet and I didn't, I didn't like to make friends and um (laughs).]

Kevin attributed his increase in Spanish-speaking to his involvement with his band, despite the fact that he was attending a dual immersion school in fifth grade where fifty percent of instructional activities were conducted in Spanish. He also reported speaking more Spanish with peers, rather than just with family members, such as his grandma. Participating in the band then provided Kevin a context for him to use Spanish for the authentic purpose of making friends.

Significantly, Kevin had been the only student of the three who had not identified Zapoteco as one of the languages that he spoke as a fifth grader. However, as an eighth grader, he surprised the interviewer by sharing that through his engagement in the band, he was learning a language in addition to Spanish and English, although he could not name the language at first.

> Kevin: *Bueno allá en la banda también tocan, este toca, este hablan, ay no se como se llama el idioma este. Mmm, pero lo hablan mucho y luego a veces les entiendo cómo si dicen algo, una palabra en el idioma.* [Well, there in the band they also play, they play, they speak- geez, I don't know what this language is called. Um, but they speak it a lot and then sometimes I understand them. Like if they say something, a word in the language.]

Zitlali tried to guess what language was spoken by members of Kevin's band.

> Zitlali: *¿Portugués? ¿Italiano? ¿Francés?* [Portuguese? Italian? French?]
>
> Kevin: *No, no es. ¿Zapoteco?* [No, it's not that. Zapoteco?]
>
> Zitlali: *Oh! Zapoteco.* [Oh! Zapotec.].
>
> Kevin: *No sé. Lo que hablaba mi abuelita. No recuerdo lo que dijo mi mamá.* [I don't know. What my grandma spoke. I don't remember what my mom said.]

Even Kevin was unsure of the name of the language spoken by his band members. He explained that it was the language that his own grandmother spoke, and the interviewer inquired further.

> Zitlali: *Entonces estás aprendiendo un poquito.* [So, you're learning a little bit.]
>
> Kevin: *Un poquito. Muy poquito. Yo no hablan mucho. Hay solamente, hay una señora siempre anda hablando así. Y los niños, "en español por favor, no te entendemos," y, um, eso es todo.* [A little bit. Very little. I don't spoke it much. There's only, there's a lady she's always talking that way and the kids, "in Spanish please, we don't understand you," and um, that's it.]
>
> Zitlali: *¿Tu abuela habla zapoteco?* [Your grandmother speaks Zapoteco?]

Kevin: *No, mi abuelita que está aquí no.* [No, not the grandma that is here.]

Zitlali: *¿Ella no?* [Not her?]

Kevin: *No. Solamente la otra, pero ella sigue en México.* [No, only the other one. But she remains in Mexico.]

Kevin explained that a particular lady in the band spoke Zapoteco, and some of the young people requested that she speak in Spanish because they did not understand her. Zapoteco was indeed spoken in Kevin's family, but not by family members who lived in the US. Kevin was one of the few focal students who had never been to Mexico, and the researcher asked whether he would like to some day. Kevin explained that he did not have money to get his passport, let alone the flight there. Compared to the other two students, Kevin's family was not in a position (financial or otherwise) to travel to Mexico. Yet, Kevin had become invested in a Zapoteco-speaking identity via his participation in the transnational practice of playing Oaxacan music, similar to what Sanchez and Machado-Casas (2009) note that "some students may live a life of transnationalism… [though] they may actually never set foot in [the] origin community" (p. 6-7). Moreover, Kevin's participation was a clear example of *comunalismo,* as the band brought together individuals of diverse ages, from different Mexican towns, in order to engage in this particular cultural practice.

When interviewing Kevin's mother, Zitlali inquired about her desire for Kevin to learn a language in addition to Spanish and English.

Kevin's mamá: *¡Claro que sí me gustaría! Dicho este mis padres hablan otro dialecto. Es dialecto. Y esto, ahorita esta involucrándose un poquito con la gente que es de ahí de donde es mi papá y entonces le digo que trate de aprender un poquito ese dialecto y también otro idioma si se puede. Entre mas idiomas hable yo creo que es mejor para él …también para el futuro, ¿verdad?* [Yes, of course I would like it! Actually, my parents speak another dialect. It's a dialect. And right now, he is getting a little bit involved with the people that are from where my dad is from, and so I tell him to try to learn a little bit of that dialect and also another language if possible. The more languages he speaks, I think it's better for him… also for the future, right?]

Zitlali: *Sí. ¿Y de donde es su papá?* [Yes. And where is your dad from?]

Kevin's mamá: *Mi papá es del estado de Oaxaca. Nosotros también, pero donde nosotros crecimos no se habla ese dialecto. Entonces, mi papá tuvo que salir, de ese, de su, su lugar*

> *donde vive, de pueblo de donde él nació y se tuvo que ir para donde nosotros vivimos. Y ahí no, nadie lo habla entonces se perdió…esa lengua verdad. Pero es muy bonita. Y aquí se reúnen muchas personas que hablan ese dialecto. Y entonces estamos tratando de ir más con ellos. Involúcrarlos más para esa cultura también de ellos.* [My dad is from the state of Oaxaca. We are too, but where we grew up, that dialect is not spoken. So, my dad had to leave from that, from his, his place where he lived, from the town where he was born. And he had to go to where we live. And there no, nobody speaks it. So it was lost… that language, right? But it is very pretty. And here many people get together who speak that dialect. And so we are trying to go more with them. Involve them more for that culture that's also theirs.]

Not only did Kevin's mother identify her heritage language as a dialect but narrated the language loss that had occurred in their family due to their movement from one place in Mexico where Zapoteco was spoken to another where Spanish was dominant, as described by Munro (2003) is a common occurrence. However, she articulated a strong desire to reclaim it by spending time with people *in the US* who spoke her father's language. And perhaps more important than the language, Kevin's mother expressed a desire to involve Kevin in a culture that is "also theirs". Her narration is an example of how speaking Zapoteco can index membership in this Indigenous community but is not the only cultural practice that is an expression of Indigeneity, as argued by Muehlmann (2008).

Discussion & Implications

Using a Critical Latinx Indigeneities framework, we examined Rosa, Edwin, and Kevin's narratives for expressions of investment in their various languages, aspects of transnationalism, and examples of *comunalismo*. We found that despite some changes in their linguistic practices or preferences over time, Zapoteco and Spanish were useful to the students in different contexts, in addition to English; they demonstrated investment in these identities of Spanish speaker, Zapoteco speaker, and English speaker to various extents. Zapoteco often remained a hidden language for these students, and there was great variability in their proficiency (Perez et al., 2016), with some of the students having more access to the language in their immediate families. Edwin specifically expressed embarrassment or inadequacy about his mixed language practices.

Even though the three students continued in the school district which supported their retention and development of Spanish, their schooling did not explicitly support their Indigenous identity (Ruiz & Barajas, 2012). Additionally, the actual Spanish language arts class was experienced by the students as challenging. Conversely, the fact that Kevin had developed some awareness (and speaking ability) in Zapoteco from fifth to eighth grade via his participation in a Oaxacan music community demonstrates the importance of outside-school contexts that support investment as Zapoteco speakers as part of a larger set of cultural practices in this Indigenous community in urban Los Angeles supporting Indigenous identity and belonging (Perez et al., 2016). Latinxs in the US are primarily associated with two dominant (European) languages – English and Spanish – which serves to marginalize Indigenous languages, which also takes place in Mexico (Muehlmann, 2008). The multilingual and diverse linguistic background of some Latinx students is not acknowledged and often not even known in school settings (Barillas-Chon, 2010; Munro, 2003).

Sánchez-Lopez (2017) suggested that Oaxacan youth want their history and culture taught in school, similar to other scholars who encourage Indigenous communities' cultural and linguistic knowledge to be recognized and valued in schools, rather than silenced and stigmatized (Casanova, O'Connor & Anthony-Stevens, 2016). In the words of Perez and colleagues (2016), "The school is a cultural institution that can support, ignore, or denigrate its students' heritages and sociocultural backgrounds" (p. 268). We envision possibilities for connection via language to all the spaces that students may want to maintain and develop – in the US, in Mexico, and especially in the communities where they or their parents are from. But real learning and practice of languages takes place when there is investment (Norton, 2000). Thus, there need to be opportunities outside of school to learn, develop, and maintain languages in community settings. Similar to other scholars' recommendations, we suggest that educators and the education system in general need better ways of recognizing the linguistic abilities of youth as assets (Barillas-Chon, 2010; Casanova, O'Connor & Anthony-Stevens, 2016; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012) and drawing on or leveraging the languages of culturally and linguistically diverse youth (Martínez, Morales, & Aldana, 2017). Instead, the US school system constrains students when it prioritizes not only the English language but the particular variety that is standard or mainstream American English. In this "best case" situation, where the students were structurally encouraged through this dual immersion setting to maintain one of their

minoritized languages, it was only the Spanish language that was assumed as the sole language needed for these Latinx students to retain and promote their cultural identity.

While dual immersion programs have helped to shift expectations of language maintenance of emergent bilingual students by using their linguistic backgrounds as assets in the classroom, dual immersion programs largely treat Latinx students as Spanish language speakers. All three students revealed a desire to learn or maintain Zapoteco. However, their academic environment has not nourished this desire. Rather, their academic environment has helped cultivate the importance of *only* two languages. Ruiz and Barajas (2012) also noted some initial findings from a small study in California about the language education of Mexican Indigenous students in a similar context where students were enrolled in bilingual programs. The parents were supportive of their children learning and maintaining both Spanish and English. When provided the option, parents often choose multilingualism for their children and maintenance options, despite schools not often offering opportunities for Indigenous language supports. This speaks to the legitimate criticism of equating language with a culture or taking it as a marker of authenticity or proof of Indigeneity (Muehlmann, 2008). In the neocolonial context of California, Kevin's participation in the band playing Oaxacan music led to interest in the Zapoteco language and investment in a Zapoteco-speaking identity, in addition to his claim of improvement in his Spanish-speaking abilities. Within this particular context, Spanish related to a broader sense of Indigeneity and Indigenous community as an authentic means of communication in this group.

Although there has been an increase in research about Indigenous populations from Oaxaca moving to the US (Cruz-Manjarrez, 2013; Escala Rabadán & Rivera-Salgado, 2018; Klaver, 1997; Stephen, 2007), the literature remains slight about these youths' educational experiences (Ruiz & Barajas, 2012). Sánchez and Machado-Casas (2009) identified that "many children and families who actually lead a transnational lifestyle, engag[e] in a wide transnational social space that includes continued contact and interaction with their countries of origin, a non-linear back and forth between different worlds, sometimes across physical borders and sometimes within spaces that only include difficult social borders" (p. 10). For these students, language helped them maintain ties across time and space with family members and their ethnolinguistic communities in both Mexico and Los Angeles. Language does not equal identity, but it is a valuable marker particularly because it supports engagement with specific communities, *as Spanish does*. Language shifts and language loss happen over time, which speaks

to the need to encourage investment in identities as speakers of diverse languages, especially in politically stratified spaces. Schools are vital spaces for this work, but they are not the only spaces for language investment work; transnational cultural practices in community are equally vital for the promotion of Indigenous language retention.

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Linguistic Motherwork in the Zapotec Diaspora: *Zapoteca* Mothers' Perspectives on Indigenous Language Maintenance

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Abstract

This article explores Indigenous Mexican mothers' perspectives on multilingualism and Indigenous language maintenance in their children's lives. Drawing on interview data from a larger qualitative study of language and ideology among multilingual children in Los Angeles, California, the article examines the perspectives of four Zapotec mothers who have children in a local public school with a Spanish-English dual language program. The interview data highlight what these women *think* and *do* with respect to the maintenance of the Zapotec language in the lives of their school-aged children. Critical Latinx Indigeneities and the feminist notion of *linguistic motherwork* are used to highlight the intersectional nature of these women's efforts to construct and sustain indigeneity in diaspora.

Key Words: *Indigeneity; Multilingualism; Gender; Zapotec; Indigenous language maintenance*

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24974/amae.13.2.431

Introduction

Zenaida: *Cuando yo llegué aquí, no sabía hablar tanto español.* (When I arrived here, I didn't speak much Spanish.)

Ramón: *¿Cuando llegó a Estados Unidos?* (When you arrived in the United States?)

Zenaida: *Sí, cuando yo llegué aquí, sabía mucho más de mi idioma que español. Pero yo acá llegué aprendiendo español y un poquito de inglés*. (Yes, when I arrived here, I knew more of my language than Spanish. But here I started learning Spanish and a little English.)

The quotation above is from an interview with Zenaida[1], an Indigenous Mexican woman who is raising children in the United States. In the interview excerpt, Zenaida reveals that she did not speak much Spanish before moving to Los Angeles, California from the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca. As she explains, it was only here in the United States that she learned Spanish, as well as some English. When she first immigrated here, Zenaida spoke more of what she calls "my language," by which she is referring to Zapotec—or *Zapoteco*—the language spoken by the Zapotec people of southern Mexico.

In this article, we explore Indigenous Mexican mothers' perspectives on Indigenous heritage language maintenance in their children's lives. Drawing on interview data from a larger qualitative study of language and ideology among multilingual children in Los Angeles, California, we examine the perspectives of four Zapotec-origin—or *Zapoteca*—mothers who have children in a local public school with a Spanish-English dual language program. The interview data highlight what these women *think* and *do* with respect to the maintenance of Zapoteco in the lives of their school-aged children.

We draw on a Critical Latinx Indigeneities (Blackwell, Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017; Saldaña-Portillo, 2017) framework in order to situate these women's perspectives and experiences within longer histories and overlapping contexts of colonialism and coloniality across the racialized geographies of Mexico and the United States. Building on linguistic anthropological scholarship on *language ideologies* (Irvine & Gal, 2000; Kroskrity, 2004; Silverstein, 1979), we examine these women's attitudes and beliefs about the maintenance of Zapoteco in relation to

[1] All participant names are pseudonyms.

larger societal and institutional structures, processes, and discourses. In particular, we draw on the feminist notion *of linguistic motherwork* (Ek, Sánchez, & Quijada Cerecer, 2013) to frame the ways that these Indigenous mothers' language ideologies get embodied and enacted in their reported language socialization practices, and to highlight the intersectional nature of their work constructing and sustaining indigeneity in diaspora.

Indigenous Latinx Families and U.S. Schools

There is a growing population of Indigenous Latin American migrants, particularly from Mexico and Central America, here in the United States. As these Indigenous Latinx migrants raise families in this country, their children increasingly come into contact with U.S. educational institutions (Urrieta, Mesinas, & Martínez, this issue). Despite their growing numbers in U.S. schools, however, Indigenous Latinx children are often rendered invisible (Machado-Casas, 2009; Martínez, 2017; Perez, Vasquez, & Buriel, 2016; Urrieta, 2013). Unfortunately, when Indigenous Latinx children are recognized in U.S. schools, this recognition often takes the form of overt discrimination, stigmatization, and social marginalization (Barillas-Chón, 2010; Machado-Casas, 2009; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012).

Researchers, including the contributors to this special issue, have helped to shed light on the educational experiences of Indigenous Latinx parents and children in the United States (Barillas-Chón, 2010; López & Irizarry, 2019; Mesinas & Perez, 2016; Ruiz & Barajas, 2012; Urrieta, 2013; Vasquez, 2012). While some of this research has focused specifically on Indigenous Mexican mothers' ideologies related to language and education (Velasco, 2014), as well as on the relationship between schooling and maintenance of the Zapotec language (Pérez Báez, 2012), the growing presence of Indigenous Latinx students in U.S. schools and their continued erasure from educational discourse and policy warrant additional inquiry into their educational experiences. Of particular interest to us in this article are the diverse multilingual practices, experiences, and perspectives of Zapoteca mothers who raise children attending U.S. schools. Because these mothers and their children are positioned as "part of a 'Latino' or 'Mexican' population that is assumed to be linguistically and ethnoracially homogeneous" (Martínez, 2017, p. 87), their indigeneity and their Indigenous languages are effectively erased. They are "essentialized and racialized as 'Latino,' and imagined to be *only* bilingual" (Martínez, 2017, p. 87). In this article, we seek to disrupt these forms of erasure by contributing to a more robust and critical understanding of Indigenous Latinx families. In particular, we hope to

contribute to deeper and more nuanced understandings of Zapoteca mothers' perspectives on the maintenance of the Zapotec language in their children's lives.

Framing Indigenous Linguistic Motherwork

Our inquiry into the perspectives of Zapoteca mothers is grounded in the linguistic anthropological literature on *language ideologies*—or socially situated attitudes, beliefs, and feelings about language (Silverstein, 1979). A key insight from this literature is the notion that language ideologies can be both *articulated* and *embodied* (Krosrkity, 2004). We are particularly interested in how these mothers' perspectives on Indigenous language maintenance get embodied in their *language socialization* practices—or the ways they socialize their children *through* language and *to use* language (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2004; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017).

However, because these women's language socialization practices are both raced and gendered, we adopt an intersectional feminist lens to examine their perspectives. In particular, we draw on the notion of *linguistic motherwork* (Ek, Sánchez, & Quijada Cerecer, 2013). Building on the concept of *motherwork*, which Black feminist Patricia Hill Collins introduced to highlight the gendered and raced dimensions of parenting (Collins, 1994), Ek, Sánchez, and Quijada Cerecer (2013) define linguistic motherwork as "the practices that Latina mothers engage in to maintain and develop their children's heritage language and literacy" (p. 202). The construct of linguistic motherwork allows us to examine these mothers' perspectives in ways that recognize and honor their intersectional experiences as women of color who contribute their labor towards the maintenance of the Zapotec language.

Of course, these women's language socialization work takes place within the complex transnational contexts of Indigenous diaspora. For this reason, we draw on Critical Latinx Indigeneities (Blackwell, Lopez, & Urrieta, 2017; Saldaña-Portillo, 2017) as a framework for making sense of their related perspectives. As Saldaña-Portillo (2017) described, Critical Latinx Indigeneities (CLI) is "a transnational commitment to understanding modes of Indigenous identification as shifting depending on the colonial particularities of their birth, and to the specific, contemporary conditions of the coloniality of power across the hemisphere" (p. 139). A CLI framework "examines mobility as a global Indigenous process of displacement" (Blackwell, 2017, p. 158) and it "considers the shifts in racial formations and the ways Indigenous peoples are racialized differently across and between different settler states" (p. 158). This lens helps us to account for these women's experiences across both Mexico and the

United States, and to consider how their transnational experiences are related to what they think and do with respect to maintaining Zapoteco in their children's lives.

How We Came to This Work

Before describing the methods that we employed, we wish to briefly describe how we came to this work, by which we mean both *what* motivated this particular line of inquiry and *who* we were (i.e., how we were positioned) in relation to the women on whom we focus in this article. In 2010, Ramón began a longitudinal qualitative study of language and ideology among multilingual children at a dual language school in Los Angeles, California. Two of the focal students from this larger study, Alma and Samantha, are of Zapotec ancestry, and Ramón has pursued lines of analysis focused on these multilingual girls' knowledge of Zapoteco since they were in Kindergarten and first grade respectively (Martínez, 2017, 2018). While interviewing Alma and Samantha on the playground one day, Ramón asked them if they knew any adults in their community (other than their parents) who spoke Zapoteco. When Samantha said that she did, Ramón asked to whom she was referring. In response, Samantha pointed to a woman who happened to be walking across the playground at precisely that moment, and said, *"Ella"* ("Her"). The woman in question was Olivia, a Zapotec migrant and mother of children at the school. Through the school's principal, Ramón subsequently met Olivia and three other Zapoteca mothers, with whom he began informal conversations about speaking and maintaining Zapoteco as a heritage language. All four of these women eventually agreed to participate in the interviews that constitute the focus of this article. Below we briefly describe our own respective positionalities in relation to these Indigenous Mexican mothers.

Ramón

I (Ramón) am not of Zapotec ancestry. I self-identify as Chicano, and I have Mexican, Hawai'ian, and Shasta Indian ancestry on my father's side, and Czech, German, and English ancestry on my mother's side. Like my White mother, I have light skin and I am often read as White by people who do not know me. Because my skin color typically trumps other phenotypic features, and because I was raised by a White mother, I have benefited from Whiteness and White privilege in various ways my entire life. While I have come to understand this differently as I have grown older and studied related theory and research, this is something that I have known experientially since I was a child. My father (like my late grandparents and other family members) has dark skin, and he has experienced various forms of racism

throughout his life precisely because he is racialized as brown. Growing up hearing about and witnessing his experiences, I became acutely aware of how my own embodied position and related experiences differed from his. In countless ways, my racialized subjectivity has influenced how I understand and experience the world, and this fact has directly informed how I approach and conduct my research, including how I make sense of the experiences of those who are positioned differently.

As important as naming my Whiteness and White privilege is naming my loss of indigeneity. As Blackwell (2017) notes, many Latinx scholars and activists who work on Indigenous issues "fail to name the powerful loss of their indigeneity" (p. 178). Although I have Indigenous Mexican, Hawai'ian, and Shasta ancestry, I was not raised with a deep connection to any of these Indigenous communities. While I was raised to be proud of my Indigenous heritage, and while this pride has directly informed my interest in the experiences of Indigenous Latinx students and families, I wish to explicitly name the loss of indigeneity that has been part of my own family's experience over the past three generations; to situate that loss of indigeneity within broader contexts of coloniality and longer settler colonial histories of dispossession, genocide, and other forms of anti-Indigenous violence; and to clearly distinguish between my own positionality and the positionalities of those whose racialized and/or cultural experiences with indigeneity directly impact their everyday lives. In particular, I wish to emphasize that I am an outsider to this particular diasporic Zapotec community.

Finally, although being a father has positioned me to make sense of these mother's perspectives in particular ways, I am a heterosexual, cisgender male, and my gendered experiences necessarily preclude understanding these women's experiences from their perspectives. Although these women have welcomed me and invited me to learn more about them and their experiences, I wish to clearly articulate my status as an outsider (along these and various other intersecting dimensions). My awareness of this outsider status has directly informed how I engaged with these women before, during, and after these interviews, as well as how I have sought to make sense of the interview data. Because these women have confided in me and entrusted me with their stories, I feel a profound sense of obligation and accountability in sharing what I have learned from them.

Melissa

I (Melissa) joined the research team in 2016 as a research assistant after I learned about Ramón's longitudinal qualitative study of language and ideology among multilingual children. This study was my first introduction at my graduate institution to a project that included Indigenous Mexican language use and socialization practices. As a first-year graduate student at the time, I was excited and motivated to learn from a faculty member's collaboration with an Indigenous Latinx community in Los Angeles.

I contributed to the analysis of the video data he collected during the interviews with the Zapoteca mothers. As an Indigenous, Oaxacan woman of Zapotec descent from the pueblo of Santiago Zoochila, I am a partial insider of the Zapotec Oaxacan community. My insider perspective allowed me to share background information on how Indigenous people create community and sense of belonging once they migrate to the U.S., the language socialization practices families use to teach their children about their native language(s), and the key role women play in Indigenous communities. Yet, it is important to note that my role as a researcher situates me as an outsider to the community. As a result, I am aware of my simultaneous identities and positionalities as I engage in critical scholarship that relates to Indigenous communities.

Reflections on Our Methods

This paper focuses on data from semi-structured interviews with four mothers of Zapotec ancestry whose children attend the public school where the larger study took place. All four participants immigrated to the United States from southern Mexico. Three—Elena, Olivia, and Zenaida—are from the North Sierra region of the state of Oaxaca, while one—Yadira—is from a Zapotec community in the neighboring state of Veracruz. Ramón conducted a total of two interviews—one with Elena and Yadira, and one with Olivia and Zenaida. During these interviews, Ramón asked the women specific questions about their attitudes, beliefs, and feelings about the maintenance of Zapoteco in their children's lives. Related to the sense of obligation and accountability mentioned above, Ramón sought to establish a certain level of reciprocity during each of the interviews, often sharing relevant information about his own family's background, his experiences with language, and his experiences as a father raising a bilingual child. As a result, the interviews often took a conversational tone.

Melissa subsequently transcribed the video-recorded interviews, keeping in mind the political dimensions of the transcription process (Bucholtz, 2000), including the representational

decisions involved in transcribing other people's speech, as well as the ways in which transcription itself is always already an analytic activity that relies on, reflects, and contributes to the researcher's ongoing theorizing (Ochs, 1979). We (Ramón and Melissa) both then worked together to analyze the interview transcripts. Across multiple coding cycles (Saldaña, 2009), we generated both "top-down" (i.e., a priori) codes and "bottom-up" (i.e., inductive) codes, repeatedly applying these codes to the interview transcripts, and then revising our emergent coding scheme through an iterative process of collaborative sense-making. We should note that we did not view coding as an exhaustive process, nor did we see it as a means for objectively ensuring analytic certainty. Instead, we used coding as a way to make evident our theoretical perspectives on the data (Smagorinsky, 2008). As we made explicit our respective theoretical stances and our experiential knowledge with respect to the content of the interviews, we engaged in ongoing analytic conversations to reflect on, interrogate, and revise our emergent sense-making in relation to relevant theory. A key component of this process involved the use of *analytic memos* (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). We generated multiple analytic memos throughout every stage of analysis. Among other things, we used these memos to document and synthesize emergent themes, generate and reflect on our emergent coding scheme, and make explicit connections to relevant conceptual frames. The findings and analysis that we articulate below emerged from this collaborative and iterative process of putting our empirical data in conversation with embodied and inscribed theory.

On *Thinking About* and *Doing* Linguistic Motherwork in Diaspora

Our analysis of the data suggests that these mothers' perspectives on Indigenous language maintenance get enacted in their language socialization practices. All four of these women said that it was important to maintain Zapoteco in their children's lives, and all four of them reported engaging very deliberately in doing so. Through various means, these women exposed their children to Zapoteco, and they communicated to them the value and importance of this heritage language. Below we provide examples that illustrate these findings.

The Importance of Maintaining Zapoteco

Elena, Olivia, Yadira, and Zenaida all said that it was important for them to maintain Zapoteco in their children's lives. In particular, they noted that the maintenance of Zapoteco was important (1) as part of their children's familial and/or cultural heritage, and (2) in order to

facilitate communication with their family and/or with the larger Zapotec community here and in Mexico.

Familial and cultural heritage. Whether or not they or their children spoke or understood Zapoteco, all four women said that they wanted their children to learn the language as part of their familial and cultural heritage. Just as Zenaida referred to Zapoteco as "mi idioma" (or "my language") in the opening quote, Olivia and Elena also used "mi idioma" to refer to the language. This linguistic heritage is something that all four women reported wanting to pass along to their children. Olivia, for example, commented: *"Para mis hijos, es muy importante que ellos aprendan el zapoteco porque es el idioma con el que nosotros nacimos como sus padres."* (For my children, it's very important that they learn Zapotec because it's the language that we, their parents, were born with.") She went on to say, *"Para mí, sí es muy importante, y es lo que siempre les enseño a mis hijos, que ellos no se olviden de dónde vienen sus padres y el idioma que ellos hablan."* ("For me, it is very important, and that's what I teach my children, so they don't forget where their parents come from and the language they speak.") For Olivia, as for the other three women, there seemed to be a very close connection between hometown and mother tongue, and the maintenance of Zapoteco seemed to be one way to connect her children to her place of origin.

The idea of a place-based linguistic and cultural heritage surfaced as a recurring theme across these interviews, as all four women seemed to articulate the interconnectedness of Zapoteco, place, and indigeneity. Rather than a pan-Indigenous sense of identity, these women tended to focus more specifically on *region* (e.g., the North Sierra of Oaxaca for Elena, Olivia, and Zenaida, and the mountains of eastern Veracruz for Yadira), and, even more specifically, on hometown (or *pueblo*). Indeed, the importance of hometown in relation to language and identity loomed large across all four interviews. These women articulated a sense of *collective* identity and experience that was focused on the Zapotec language and that was tied directly to their hometowns, and this sense of collective identity was sometimes reflected in their use of language during the interviews. For example, all four women used the deictic marker *nosotros* (we), the possessive pronoun *nuestro* (our), and the related morphological verb endings *-amos*, *-emos*, and *-imos* (to conjugate verbs in the first-person plural) when talking about themselves in relation to Zapoteco. While the women sometimes employed these syntactic and morphological features to signal family relationships, they more often did so in ways that

seemed to index a connection to other Indigenous Zapoteco speakers in their respective hometowns. These cultural, linguistic, and place-based notions of collective indigeneity seemed to be central to the heritage that all four women wished to pass on to their children.

Communication with family and community. On a very practical level, but in ways that are directly tied to notions of familial and cultural heritage, all four women emphasized the importance of their children being able to communicate with Zapoteco speakers both here and in Mexico. In particular, wanting their kids to be able to communicate with grandparents back in their hometowns seemed to be an important motivation and rationale for teaching their kids Zapoteco. When asked why she wanted her children to learn Zapoteco, for example, Elena replied:

> *Más que todo por los abuelitos que tienen allá en el pueblo, como los míos. Hay algunos que no entienden, como mi bisabuela, no entiende el español. Entonces hablando con ellos es como no entenderle, ni ellos a ella, ni ella a ellos. Entonces eso sería bonito que ellos se expresaran, pero en el idioma que ellos hablan.*
>
> (More than anything else, because of their grandparents back in our hometown, like mine. Some of them, like my great-grandmother, she doesn't understand Spanish, so talking with them, it's like they don't understand one another. They don't understand her, and she doesn't understand them. So it would be nice if they could express themselves, but in the language that their grandparents speak.)

Here Elena emphasizes the importance of her children being able to communicate with her family back in her hometown in Oaxaca, something that is currently complicated by the fact that her grandparents speak only Zapoteco while her children speak mostly Spanish and English.

Zenaida described how her daughter used to be in a similar situation, but has since learned Zapoteco:

> *Yo, por mí, sí, yo quisiera que mi niña aprendiera así como yo. Es bonito porque ahí ella va a aprender muchos idiomas y se puede comunicar con la gente que no sabe hablar español. Entonces, en caso de mi niña, antes no hablaba zapoteco, pero ahora ya, como ya aprendió, y ahorita ya le habla a su abuelita, y como su abuelita no habla español, habla puro zapoteco.*
>
> (I, personally, would like for my daughter to learn [to speak Zapoteco] like me. It's nice because there she can learn lots of languages and she can communicate with people who don't know how to speak Spanish. Then, in my daughter's case, she didn't speak

> Zapotec before, but now, since she already learned it, and since her grandma doesn't speak Spanish, she speaks to her only in Zapotec.)

In the quote above, Zenaida details how learning Zapoteco enabled her daughter to be able to communicate effectively with her grandmother, who speaks only Zapoteco.

Similarly, Olivia reported talking directly to her children about these kinds of communicative situations involving their family in Oaxaca:

> *Le digo cuando ellos vayan a visitar a los familiares de allá, ellos puedan entender y no se queden sin saber qué les están diciendo o qué…entonces, para mí, sí es muy importante que ellos aprendan.*
>
> (I tell them that when they go visit family from there, they'll be able to understand and they won't be caught without knowing what people are saying to them…so, for me, it is very important for them to learn.)

This kind of meta-pragmatic discourse—or talk about contextualized language use—is one way in which Olivia communicated to her children the importance of learning Zapoteco.

One thing that seemed clear for Olivia, as well as for the other women in this study, is that learning Zapoteco was not an all-or-nothing proposition. On the contrary, these women distinguished between *understanding* and *speaking* the language, and they framed both in positive terms with respect to communicating with family in Mexico. For example, Olivia shared an example of her son returning to their hometown in Oaxaca and relying on his emergent understanding of Zapoteco in order to communicate with his family there:

> *Por ejemplo, mi hijo fue hace un año, la primera vez que fue, a él le hablaban en zapoteco. Respondía en… aunque él contestaba en español, él sabía lo que le estaban diciendo.*
>
> (For example, my son went a year ago, the first time he went, they spoke to him in Zapotec. He responded in…even though he answered in Spanish, he knew what they were saying to him.)

In the above quote, Olivia emphasizes her son's receptive language skills, highlighting the way that his comprehension of Zapoteco facilitated communication even though he did not speak Zapoteco fluently. Indeed, Olivia seemed very proud of her son's ability to understand Zapoteco, adding: *"Y ya, pues, allí ya no se…no se quedaba como diciendo, '¿Qué me dijo?' No, él ya sabía lo que le decían y él contestaba."* ("And, well, he was no…no longer left as if saying, 'What did they say to me?' No, he already knew what they were saying to him, and he replied.") Here

Olivia frames comprehension as an important dimension of overall communicative competence, which is the ability to communicate effectively in specific contexts (Hymes, 1972). Like the other three women, she underscored the importance of learning Zapoteco—whether this learning resulted in productive and/or receptive language skills—in order to be able to communicate with family.

In addition to emphasizing communication with family, these mothers also spoke about the importance of learning Zapoteco in order to communicate with other Zapotec speakers in their community. As Zenaida observed with respect to her children, *"Es importante que ellos aprendan y sepan comunicar con los demás que no saben español."* ("It's important that they learn and know how to communicate with others who don't speak Spanish.") Similarly, when describing her own children, Olivia noted:

> *Y es bueno que sepan…que si ellos llegan a ser alguien, por ejemplo, un abogado, y llega una persona que no habla ni español ni inglés, pero hablan en algún idioma, entonces ellos pueden entenderles.*
>
> (And it's good for them to know…if they become somebody, for example, a lawyer, and someone shows up who doesn't speak Spanish or English, but they speak in another language, then they'll be able to understand them.)

Although only implicit in Olivia's comment above, it seems that she is also pointing to one way in which learning Zapoteco could position her children to help others in their community.

To illustrate a related point, Elena shared the story of a friend whose U.S.-born children went back to live in Oaxaca for a few years, and then returned to the United States trilingual. She emphasized that these children could communicate with others in any of the three languages: *"Ellos se pueden defender y es lo que me gusta de ellos, y es lo que yo quiero para mis hijos, que aprendan eso. En cualquier lugar que vayan, ya están…ya saben los tres idiomas."* ("They can defend themselves and that's what I like about them, and that's what I want for my children, that they learn that. Wherever they go, they already…they already know all three languages.") Elena explicitly notes how learning Zapoteco enabled these children to "defend themselves," and her admiration for these children's trilingual competence seemed to directly inform her goals for her own children.

Finally, because Indigenous people and languages are systematically devalued and marginalized in both Mexico and the United States, proficiency in and knowledge of Indigenous

languages often gets devalued and/or rendered invisible (Martínez, 2017). For this reason, we wish to explicitly emphasize that these women's comments on the value of learning Zapoteco are, of course, also comments on the value of multilingualism. By framing Zapoteco as important for communicating with family and community, these mothers are also explicitly valorizing multilingualism in their children's lives.

The Deliberate Maintenance of Zapoteco

Elena, Olivia, Yadira, and Zenaida all reported deliberately maintaining Zapoteco in their children's lives. In other words, in addition to articulating the importance of maintaining Zapoteco, these women also actively engaged in the maintenance of Zapoteco by deliberately exposing their children to this Indigenous heritage language. While their active efforts towards exposing their children to Zapoteco primarily consisted of *speaking* Zapoteco on a regular basis (both in their children's presence and directly to their children), one of the mothers (Olivia) also reported *reading* to her children in Zapoteco.

Speaking Zapoteco on a regular basis. All four women reported being exposed to Zapoteco themselves as children, and they connected their respective childhood experiences with the language to their decisions to expose their own children to conversations in Zapoteco on a regular basis. Of the four women, Yadira was the only one who reported not speaking Zapoteco fluently. When asked if she spoke Zapoteco, Yadira replied, *"Sí, yo, este, entiendo el zapoteco, todo lo entiendo, pero para hablarlo, me cuesta trabajo hablarlo."* ("Yes, I, um, understand Zapotec, I understand everything, but it's hard for me to speak it.") As Yadira went on to explain, her personal history of partial language attrition is rooted in the discrimination that she and her family experienced when they moved from their Zapotec hometown in rural Veracruz to Mexico City. Notice how she describes these discriminatory experiences in the following exchange:

Yadira: *Mis papás, cuando vivíamos en México, ellos, este, hablaban mucho, pero cuando nosotros, cuando nosotros le queríamos, le preguntábamos a mi mamá que cómo se hablaba o como qué significaba, mi papá se enojaba que nos hablara en zapoteco.*
(My parents, when we lived in Mexico City, they, um, they would speak [Zapotec] a lot, but when we, when we wanted, when we would ask my mom how to speak it or what something meant, my dad would get mad at her for speaking to us in Zapotec.)

Ramón: *¿A poco? ¿Por qué?*

(Really? Why?)

Yadira: *Porque en México hay más, este, discriminación.*

(Because in Mexico City there's more, um, discrimination.)

Ramón: *En contra de…*

(Against…)

Yadira: *De la gente que venimos de provincia. Allá si, por ejemplo, nosotros hablamos otro idioma que no fuera el español, voltean a vernos como diciéndote, "Te perdiste aquí, tú no cabes aquí." O si nos ven con huaraches o más de rancho. Entonces sí ya como que hay más discriminación en la Ciudad de México.*

(Against people like us who come from the countryside. There, for example, if we speak another language other than Spanish, they turn around and look at us as if to say, "You're lost here, you don't belong here." Or if they see us wearing Indigenous sandals, or if they see that we're from the countryside. So, yes, it's like there's more discrimination in Mexico City.)

Ramón: *Y en contra, específicamente, de la gente…*

(And, specifically, against people who are…)

Yadira: *De la gente indígena.*

(Against Indigenous people.)

As Yadira explains in the transcript above, her father went so far as to discourage her mother from speaking Zapoteco to Yadira and her siblings. While this is an understandable strategy for protecting his family from anti-Indigenous discrimination, Yadira suggests that it also, unfortunately, contributed to her current challenges speaking the language.

Despite not speaking Zapoteco fluently, however, Yadira articulated a commitment to exposing her own children to the language on a regular basis. One way that she reported doing this is by participating in conversations with her husband. She shared, for example, that her husband often speaks to her in Zapoteco in the presence of their children. While she said that she mostly speaks in Spanish during these conversations, she noted that her children are beginning to understand some of her husband's Zapoteco words and phrases. In our view, Yadira's active participation in these bilingual conversations with her husband not only communicates the value and importance of Zapoteco to her children, but also increases her children's opportunities for exposure to the language. In addition, by eliciting and responding to

her husband's Zapoteco utterances, she likely provides subtle forms of scaffolding that support her children's comprehension and acquisition of the language. Finally, it is worth noting that Yadira and her husband chose to give their daughter a Zapotec name. This seems like a very powerful way of reclaiming indigeneity and communicating the importance of Zapoteco across generations.

The three other women in this study—Elena, Olivia, and Zenaida—all reported speaking Zapoteco on a daily basis. Like Yadira, they reported having regular conversations in Zapoteco with their husbands. In fact, Elena said that she and her husband communicate in *"puro zapoteco"* (i.e., exclusively in Zapoteco). Similarly, when asked if she spoke Zapoteco with her husband at home, Olivia replied: *"Sí, para nosotros, todo en la casa es zapoteco, todo."* ("Yes, for us, everything at home is Zapotec, everything." It is important to note, however, that these women's conversations in Zapoteco also extend beyond the home. As Zenaida noted: *"Lo hablo en la casa y a veces lo hablo en la calle. Cuando me saludan en zapoteco, yo les contesto también en zapoteco."* ("I speak it at home and sometimes I speak it when I'm out on the street. When people greet me in Zapotec, I also respond to them in Zapotec.") Whether at home or in other settings, these mothers reported exposing their children to Zapoteco by speaking the language in front of them on a regular basis.

In addition to speaking Zapoteco in the presence of their children, Elena, Olivia, and Zenaida also reported speaking directly to their children in Zapoteco. Olivia, for example, shared that she speaks more Zapoteco with her children than she does Spanish, and she noted that her children understand her and respond physically to her verbal commands. Zenaida also reported speaking with her daughter in Zapoteco, and she said that her daughter understands and speaks the language. In her words, *"Sí, yo hablo con mi niña zapoteco, y ella lo entiende y lo habla bien."* ("Yes, I speak Zapotec with my daughter, and she understands it and speaks it well.") As these three women explained, their children have increasingly asked them quesions about Zapoteco as they have grown older. In particular, they note that their children ask them how to say individual words and phrases in Zapoteco. Needless to say, these everyday moments of explicit language teaching also involve speaking directly to their children, and thus constitute additional exposure to the language.

Reading in Zapoteco. Although speaking Zapoteco on a regular basis was the primary way that these mothers reported exposing their children to the language, we would also like to

briefly highlight that Olivia reported *reading* in Zapoteco with her children. In fact, when she arrived for her interview with Ramón, Olivia brought—without any prompting on Ramón's part—a copy of a book that her brother and father had co-authored with two other men. The book, which had parallel sections in Spanish and Zapoteco, focused on the history of their hometown back in Oaxaca, its founding, cultural traditions, and geography. Olivia seemed proud to share the book with Ramón, and she described how she used it to teach her children about her hometown:

> *Y mis hijos, allí cuando tengo tiempo, cuando ya terminamos todo lo que tenemos, entonces nos sentamos y me dicen, "Léeme un cuento, una historia." Porque viene en español y en zapoteco.* (And my children, whenever I have time, when we're finished doing all that we have to do, then we sit down and they say, "Read me a tale, a story." Because it's written in Spanish and Zapotec.)

Of course, by reading this book aloud to her children, Olivia is not only teaching them about her hometown, but also providing them with additional exposure to the Zapotec language itself. Moreover, by providing them opportunities to engage with Zapoteco in its written form, she is exposing them to the sound-symbol relationships that will likely enhance their overall learning of the language. In our view, this is a powerful literacy event that contributes to the intergenerational maintenance of Zapoteco in Olivia's family.

To reiterate, Elena, Olivia, Yadira, and Zenaida all articulated the importance of maintaining Zapoteco in their children's lives, and all four of them reported deliberately maintaining Zapoteco by actively exposing their children to regular input in the language. In other words, these women reported thinking about and doing the work of Indigenous heritage language maintenance. Our analysis of the interviews suggests that what these women think about Zapoteco in their children's lives directly informs what they do about Zapoteco in their children's lives. In other words, they seem to be motivated to do certain things (e.g., speak Zapoteco to and/or in the presence of their children, explicitly teach it to them) because of their attitudes, beliefs, and feelings about the language. From a language ideological perspective, we can frame both their *thinking* and *doing* as ideologically mediated. What they think about Zapoteco, for example, is not simply a reflection of their individual attitudes and beliefs, but also a reflection of larger cultural, institutional, and social structures, processes, and discourses. And what they do about Zapoteco—in other words, socializing their children to speak

Zapoteco and socializing them through Zapoteco—can be understood as an enactment of their ideologies since language ideologies can be both *articulated* and *embodied* (Krosrkity, 2004). Below we draw on an intersectional feminist lens and a Critical Latinx Indigeneities framework to theorize how these women's ideologically mediated language socialization practices are gendered and raced across overlapping colonialities in Mexico and the United States.

Linguistic Motherwork Across Overlapping Racial Geographies

By thinking about and deliberately engaging in the maintenance of Zapoteco in their children's lives, Elena, Olivia, Yadira, and Zenaida have created familial and cultural infrastructure to support the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous linguistic heritage. We argue that their efforts in this regard constitute "linguistic motherwork" (Ek, Sánchez, & Quijada Cerecer, 2013)—critical enactments of their language ideologies that serve important language socialization functions, and that contribute to the construction and maintenance of indigeneity within the context of diaspora. This work reflects the historically gendered division of cultural labor across both Mexico and the United States, while also highlighting the important role that women play in Indigenous communities.

It is important to emphasize that these women engaged in this everyday linguistic motherwork in the absence of the forms of institutional support, such as dual language education, that exist for sustaining Spanish in the United States. In addition, we should underscore that they engaged in this work within the larger context of overlapping patriarchies. As some scholars have noted, various everyday forms of structural violence are experienced in the spaces and bodies of Indigenous women (Zaragocin, 2019). To be sure, this connects to the issue of Indigenous heritage language maintenance in multiple ways. Blackwell (2017), for example, observed: "With the added layer of gender discrimination, Indigenous women often have little formal education and are more likely to be monolingual Indigenous-language speakers when they arrive to the United States" (p. 160). This is one way of making sense of Zenaida's experience speaking only Zapoteco before immigrating to the United States, and then learning Spanish after arriving to Los Angeles. A CLI lens helps us resist simplistic interpretations of her experience. Rather than view her learning Spanish for the first time in Los Angeles as either disrupting U.S. imperial logics, or reflecting Spanish colonial logics, or connecting to patriarchal logics, we can understand it as being simultaneously related to all of the above.

Given that CLI frames Indigenous mobilities in relation to colonial histories and contemporary contexts of dispossession and displacement, and given that this framework focuses our attention on shifting racial formations across (settler) colonial contexts, we can understand these women's diasporic linguistic motherwork as contributing to larger histories of Indigenous resistance and resilience within and across the territories that now comprise the nation states of Mexico and the United States. Across both colonialities, their indigeneity is erased (albeit in different ways). As Bonfil Batalla (1987) argued, Indigenous Mexicans are a *civilización negada*—a denied or negated civilization. Through ongoing historical processes of erasure and related ideologies of *mestizaje*, Indigenous Mexicans are discursively relegated to the past and imagined to have been completely assimilated into the *mestizo* majority. When these Indigenous people migrate to the United States, they experience a similar (yet different) kind of erasure related to the U.S. settler colonial narrative of Indigenous extinction (Saldaña-Portillo, 2017). According to the colonial logic of *terra nullius*, U.S. Northern Tribal peoples (including the Tongva people, who are Indigenous to the part of Los Angeles where these Zapoteca mothers arrived) are imagined to be extinct—indeed, as Saldaña-Portillo notes, they are narrated into extinction. This narration of Indigenous extinction facilitates and perpetuates the discursive framing of the United States as a "nation of immigrants." This, in turn, makes it possible to frame Indigenous Latinx migrants (including the Zapoteca mothers from this study) as simply another group of immigrants.

Ironically, of course, for many Indigenous Latinx migrants, their historical and contemporary marginalization as Indigenous people in Mexico and Central America is largely what has driven them to migrate to the U.S. settler colonial context. Once arrived in the United States, however, they are positioned as foreigners—racialized as "brown" Latinx immigrants, but not as "red" Indigenous people (Saldaña-Portillo, 2017). The settler colonial racial logic of the United States effectively strips them of their indigeneity and encourages their assimilation into the existing U.S. racial order. As Blackwell (2017) argued, this same logic has historically informed the racialization of the southwest since the United States seized the territory from northern Mexico. Commenting on the period immediately following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, Blackwell noted: "Ironically, Mexicanization was also a survival strategy for many Native peoples under the newly imposed, and violently enforced, settler colonial racial regime" (2017, p. 159). The peoples Indigenous to California, such as the Tongva,

often deliberately blended into the Mexican population in order to escape White American violence in the newly seized territories. For the mothers in this study, some degree of Mexicanization is also arguably an option. The dominant racial logic in the United States allows for and encourages their assimilation and disappearance into a larger racialized Latinx category.

However, by virtue of continuing to speak and/or understand Zapoteco, and by passing this language down to their children, the women in this study disrupt the U.S. settler colonial project of narrating Indigenous extinction. And by arriving here in the United States as Indigenous people, they expose the official Mexican myth of Indigenous assimilation through mestizaje. They are living, breathing (and speaking) proof of 500 years of Indigenous *survivance*—of *resilient indigeneity* (Casanova, this issue) in resistance to historical and contemporary projects of colonization, colonialism, and coloniality. By exposing their children to Zapoteco, and by speaking and/or understanding the language themselves, these women are embodying and enacting resilient indigeneity. Indeed, as Yadira's experiences illustrate, Spanish, despite being a colonial/colonizing language, can serve as a powerful vehicle for Indigenous survivance (Morales, Saravia, & Pérez-Iribe, this issue). Moreover, as we mentioned above, maintenance of Zapoteco is not an all-or-nothing proposition for these women. On the contrary, they articulate a broad definition of what counts as speaking Zapoteco, and they frame *understanding* the language (even without speaking it) as both positive and possible—as a worthy and attainable goal for their children. In this way, these mothers reject notions of linguistic purity (Muehlmann, 2008) that, like related notions of cultural and genetic purity—or what Saldaña-Portillo (2017), following O'Brien (2010), refers to as the "colonial calculus of blood quantum"—serve to perpetuate the myth of Indigenous extinction and support the project of Indigenous dispossession and displacement. The notions of Indigeneity that these women construct and sustain, though emerging within (settler) colonial contexts, explicitly disrupt (settler) colonial racial logics.

Finally, a CLI lens helps us contextualize these mothers' emphasis on the importance of Zapoteco with respect to their familial, cultural, and hometown heritage. Recall, for example, that Olivia reported wanting her children to learn Zapoteco so that they could understand where their parents come from. Her linguistic motherwork in this regard (e.g., reading the Zapoteco book about her hometown) can be seen as a set of spatial practices related to larger geopolitical and historical processes and phenomena. As Blackwell (2017) notes: "Historical

dislocation makes Indigenous identity and language a matter of cultural survival, and many migrants aim to build translocal notions of Indigenous place that tie themselves and their children back to their pueblos of origin, its feast days, and civic responsibilities and cultural practices" (p. 160). These women's efforts to make connections between their own hometowns and their children's lives can be seen as forms of translocal place-making. Along with the various other examples of their linguistic motherwork described above, such practices constitute powerful contributions to the diasporic construction and maintenance of indigeneity.

Conclusion

In sharing their perspectives on the maintenance of Zapoteco in their children's lives, Elena, Olivia, Yadira, and Zenaida revealed the complex and nuanced dimensions of their language ideologies and related language socialization practices. We argue that their everyday linguistic motherwork contributes to the construction and maintenance of indigeneity in diaspora, providing a powerful example of resilient indigeneity within the context of overlapping colonialites across the racial geographies of Mexico and the United States.

In our view, this study contributes to scholarly understandings of language socialization and linguistic ideologies among Indigenous Mexican families. By highlighting an under-studied population, this study also contributes to deeper and more robust understandings of multilingualism and multilingual families more generally. Indeed, scholarly understandings of multilingualism, multilingual families, and heritage language maintenance that do not include the perspectives of Indigenous Mexican migrants are necessarily partial and incomplete. In addition, our findings and analysis help to disrupt monolithic and essentialist understandings of both Latinidad and Indigeneity in education.

We suggest that this study has important educational implications related to recognizing and incorporating the knowledge and experiences of Indigenous Mexican families in public schools. To begin with, we wish to emphasize that Indigenous Mexican mothers are powerful models of bi/multilingualism for their children, that they can and should be recognized as such by schools, and that they can and should be important partners in culturally relevant/sustaining approaches to pedagogy. Given that these mothers' perspectives help us disrupt essentialist and monolithic notions of Latinx culture, we suggest that they can also help us rethink approaches to culturally sustaining pedagogy that erase and exclude indigeneity. We also suggest that it is worth considering what role schools might play in supporting Indigenous heritage language

maintenance for children and families. For example, what if we provided institutional support for Indigenous Latinx languages in public schools? Following Morales (2016), we wonder what role dual language programs might play in this regard.

Of course, while we think these possibilities are worth considering, we also wish to urge caution in this regard. In our view, any efforts to support Indigenous language maintenance should proceed only with the leadership and full participation of Indigenous Latinx families and communities. Any support that schools might provide should begin not with the assumption that schools need to take the lead, but rather with a commitment to helping Indigenous Latinx families connect with the resources that already exist in their own communities, such as hometown associations, philharmonic bands, churches, and grassroots and non-profit organizations. To invoke a popular metaphor, we do not mean to suggest that schools cannot have a seat at the table, but rather that they should not sit at the head of the table. There are things that schools are not best positioned to do, and there are respectful and productive ways for schools to join the conversation and ask for a seat at the table. First and foremost, schools should recognize that there is already a table to join. In other words, schools should recognize and learn about the cultural knowledge, resources, and expertise that exist in Indigenous Latinx communities, including the kinds of familial and cultural infrastructure that the four mothers in this study actively constructed to support the intergenerational transmission and maintenance of Zapoteco. With this as a starting point, schools can follow the lead of Indigenous Latinx communities in ways that support Indigenous Latinx children and families.

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Critical Latinx Indigeneities: Unpacking Indigeneity from Within and Outside of Latinized Entanglements

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Abstract

This article engages an important, but difficult conversation about the erasure of indigeneity in narratives, curriculum, identities, and racial projects that uphold settler colonial logics that fall under the rubric of Hispanic, Latina/o/x, and Chicana/o/x. These settler colonial logics include violence by these groupings against Indigenous people, or *indios*, that has been part of Mexican and U.S. history in the Southwest. We examine Hispanic, Latina/o/x, and Chicana/o/x settlers' complicity with myths that support white settler futurity, including through social studies curricula and contemporary discourses of the U.S. as a nation of immigrants. The problematics of *Hispanidad* and *Latinidad* are also engaged as part of officialized U.S. state regulation and as an expression of *mestizaje* based on indigenism (*indigenismo*). *Indigenismo* worked hand-in-hand with mestizaje and functioned not so much as a celebration of racial mixture, but as state eugenicist programs of Indigenous erasure throughout Latin America, and by extension in Latino communities in the U.S. Finally, we provide diverse examples of how this process works to advance a theory and praxis of Critical Latinx Indigeneities to decolonize Latinidad and mestizaje in order to envision Indigenous futurities within and outside of the Latinized entanglements of the present.

Keywords: Indigenous, Mestizaje, Latinidad, Indigeneity, Critical Latinx Indigeneities

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24974/amae.13.2.432

Introduction

Research studies and media coverage have for years heightened attention to the growing Latinx population in the U.S., including of children in schools. But, by simply noting the increase in population size, they rarely recognize the growth in Latinx diversity. Indigenous Latinxs make up some of that increasing diversity and for better or worse they often become engulfed in the larger regulatory narratives of experience in the U.S., such as Hispanic or Latinx, that tend to disappear and assimilate Indigenous peoples. However, even within these larger categorical entrapments, intra-Latinx racism continues to position Indigenous Latinx families and children, as the invisible or inferior Other (Machado-Casas, 2009).

In this article we argue that mestizo violence against Indigenous people, or *indios*, is not new and has always been part of Mexican and U.S. history in the Southwest and also as part of larger white settler colonial processes (Olguín, 2013). The term *indio* (Indian), for instance, is usually loaded with collectivized negative associations and often also used as an insult. To highlight this anti-*indio* violence, we engage an important, but difficult conversation about the erasure of indigeneity in narratives, curriculum, identities, and racial projects that uphold settler colonial logics that fall under the rubric of Hispanic, Latina/o/x, and Chicana/o/x. Specifically, we will explore how Spanish, Mexicans, Mexican Americans, Hispanos, Tejanos, Californios, and others have been settlers on Native lands and can become complicit with myths that ensure settler futurity (Tuck & Gaztimbide-Fernández, 2013) through the social studies curriculum and through contemporary Hispanic and Latinx discourses about the U.S. as a nation of immigrants. Relatedly, we also explore the problematics of Hispanidad and Latinidad as a part of officialized U.S. state regulation, but also as an expression of mestizaje based on indigenism (*indigenismo*), the main ideology, state tenet, and intellectual project for regulating Indigenous communities throughout Latin America (and by extension the U.S.), that worked hand-in-hand with mestizaje and functioned not so much as a celebration of racial mixture, but as a state eugenicist program of Indigenous erasure (Alberto, 2016).[1] Finally, we will advance a theory and praxis of Critical Latinx Indigeneities—CLI (Blackwell, Boj López, Urrieta, 2017) to decolonize Latinidad and mestizaje in

[1] We are not arguing that Latinx people are not subject to racism and white supremacy. Instead, in this paper we highlight Latinx intragroup racism/discrimination. We believe this is necessary for nuanced educational policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and practice.

order to envision Indigenous futurities within and outside of the Latinized entanglements of the present.

CLI as an Analytic Frame

Critical Latinx Indigeneities (CLI) can be useful to explore and forefront the experiences of Indigenous Latinx families and education. According to Blackwell et al. (2017), CLI is a lens for understanding the ways gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, class and other oppressions intersect with indigeneity and are produced over multiple colonial contexts, including within schools. CLI recognizes that Indigenous communities and families organize around language, epistemology, transnationalism and youth cultural practice to survive and to confront displacement and migration with creative forms of cultural cohesion (Urrieta, 2016). CLI centers the experiences and epistemes of Indigenous Latinx communities to push the boundaries of regulatory categories. CLI thus creates room for the multilayered discourses and ideologies of local, national, and transnational social and cultural flows both in Latin America and in diaspora.

Until CLI, a collective effort to name and theorize the varied expressions of Indigenous Latinx experiences, which tend to be simultaneously outside of and within dominant narratives of Latinidad, was largely absent (Blackwell at al., 2017). CLI fills this need by critically engaging and critiquing enduring colonial logics and practices that operate from different localities of power and the violence targeted at Indigenous Latinx families and communities, including state and police violence, cultural appropriation, economic exploitation, gender violence, social exclusion, and psychological abuse—including forms of violence inflicted in schools. CLI also centers the various forms of resistance, including activism, rage, healing, love, and communality that inform Latinx Indigenous experiences, including in and through education.

Multiple scales of analysis in CLI allow us to consider overlaps and differences of multiple Indigenous migrant groups and U.S. Native nations, including from policies of genocide in countries like Mexico, Guatemala, or Honduras, to hybridization with U.S. racial hierarchies and U.S. Native dispossession and sovereignty. For example, consider the complexity of the Garífuna peoples of Honduras, who identify largely as Indigenous but are of African, Carib, and Arawak ancestry, and who also share an affinity with a broader sense of Blackness. Since the 2009 military coup, the Garífuna are being dispossessed of their coastal lands through extractivist development (colonial) policies that are promoting tourist corporate interests with

the aid of multinational banks, the military, and the Honduran mestizo elite (Loperena, 2017). The Garífuna along with other Indigenous groups and poor mestizos form part of the refugee and asylum seeking exodus caravans currently fleeing Honduras. The Garífuna travel with thousands of other refugees and asylees through Guatemala's and then Mexico's normative nationalisms, and the racial structures regulating Indigeneity and Blackness, which for the Garifuna mean a complicated and complex experience of their indigeneity. Ultimately, they reach the U.S. with its own settler colonial racial formations and logics that regulate Indigeneity and race relations, where the Garífuna are not likely read as Indigenous, but as Black bodies. The Garífuna would likely be criminalized due to their crimmigration, but also be subject to anti-Blackness in three different national contexts. CLI allows us to look at both the local and larger scales across their trans-migration, as well as the asymmetrical relations of power and hybrid hegemonies that form through multiple colonial experiences converging in new places, as we think about the changing meanings of race, place, indigeneity, and blackness in their experiences.

CLI is thus an "interdisciplinary analytic that reflects how indigeneity is defined and constructed across multiple countries and at times, across overlapping colonialities" (Blackwell et al., 2017, p. 126). CLI's examination of multiple racial structures and the hybrid hegemonies that are formed in transmigration allow us to understand how indigeneity is re/shaped in local as well as hemispheric scales (Blackwell, 2017). According to Blackwell (2017, p. 159) CLI:

> …addresses how indigeneity is produced differentially by multiple colonialities present on Indigenous land where different Indigenous diasporas exist in a shared space. It refuses the way migration scholars fail to see the "receiving countries" as Indigenous territories and nations, reenacting the terra nullius of settler colonialism. Thus, Critical Latinx Indigeneities works against the erasure of the Indigenous peoples and homelands that are transited and settled on. Further, it examines mobility as a global Indigenous process of displacement...It considers the shifts in racial formations and the ways Indigenous people are racialized differently across and between different settler states.

CLI therefore addresses how Indigenous peoples are created as colonial subjects and re/positioned in their countries of origin and in receiving countries, including through re/defined gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, class, and other categorical understandings. Barillas-Chón (this

issue) highlights attention to language and labor incorporation in relation to CLI as issues tied to racial hierarchies that often function as proxies for indigeneity in different contexts.

CLI further calls attention to ways communities negotiate ongoing movement to maintain identity, and ways of knowing, being, and doing while at the crossroads of complex intersectional nuances, intergroup oppression, and enduring multiple colonialities of power. CLI is critical of mestizaje and whitening discourses across disciplines, including in Chicanx Studies, and argues for the inclusion of multilayered discourses and ideologies, while thinking of how power is distributed along ethnicity and race across contexts. Finally, CLI also challenges U.S. settler colonial logics of erasure by adjuring Indigenous migrants to consider the tensions, responsibilities, and opportunities of relations with U.S. Native nations, including solidarity ties and the restructuring of transnationalism while catering to Indigenous-to-Indigenous relationships and alliances within the respected boundaries of U.S. Native nations' sovereignty (Blackwell et al., 2017; Ramírez, 2006). CLI ultimately serves as a bridge that draws from coloniality (Quijano, 2000), settler colonial studies (Wolfe, 2006) and critical indigenous studies (Moreton Robinson, 2016; Tuck and Yang, 2012) that highlights how multiple colonialisms (caste, rogue, settler, etc.) overlap, interact, and reproduce power. CLI very purposefully focuses on Latinx Indigenous populations in order to draw attention to both the unique educational challenges faced alongside the well-documented issues of inequity, generally.

Old and New Encounters

Heeding CLI's call for complexity, here we explore Indigenous and mestizo historical proximity as well as Indigenous migration from the South to the North to show that this "new" phenomenon of what we call "Indigenous Latinxs" is and is not new. People referring to themselves as Spanish, Mexicans, Mexican Americans, Hispanos, Tejanos, Californios, etc., have been in relation with Native peoples for hundreds of years, and those relations have generally not always been harmonious. Spanish and Mestizo violence against Indigenous people, or *indios*, was/is part of these old and new settler colonial contexts of encounter (Olguín, 2013).

Native peoples have been dehumanized under Spanish, Mexican, and U.S.-Anglo-White settler colonialism. Verástique (2000) contends that the historiography of the Hispanic invasion of Mesoamerica and later its northern territories (U.S, Southwest) "has come to be known as 'the problem of the Indian'" (xv). Early colonial debates argued either for or against Indigenous peoples' humanity, often identifying Natives mostly as a "problem" as Hispanics positioned

themselves as superior. According to Saldaña-Portillo (2016), the most notable debate was between Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda and Bartolomé de las Casas at the convened Junta de Valladolid in 1550[2]. Sepúlveda argued that Natives were not rational beings (*gente de razón*) and were naturally suited for enslavement, servitude, or extermination. De las Casas argued for Natives' undisputable rationality and their natural right to possessions, self-government, and Christian evangelization. Without an official judgment over the debate, according to Saldaña-Portillo, Indigenous peoples became positioned at an infantile stage of humanity either as nomads and barbaric (*indios bárbaros*) or as pagan Indians (*indios gentiles*), usually settled, with the potential to be assimilated through Catholic indoctrination (*adoctrinados*). As minors, *indios gentiles* were placed under the tutelage of Spanish administrators, military, Catholic priests, or *encomenderos*, or Spanish people who had the right to request labor or tribute from Indigenous peoples, who treated Natives according to their racialist and spiritual views of them (Verástique, 2000; Saldaña-Portillo, 2016).

Violence was justified against indios bárbaros who warred or resisted Hispanics, enforcing submission or extermination (Saldaña-Portillo 2016). Indios bárbaros in the Southwest included those Cotera & Sandaña-Portillo (2014, p. 559) refer to as "equestrian" Tribes like the Comanche, Seri, Navajo, Apache, Yaqui, Utes, and other nations that did not completely succumb to Hispanic dominion and raided Spanish, Mexican, and later white settlements for livestock for their profitable and interrelated trade economies. Indios gentiles eventually settled in Catholic missions, in segregated barrios (neighborhood) within Spanish and later Mexican pueblos, or in their own *pueblos de indios* (Indian republics) as independent nations, such as the Pueblo Indian nations of New Mexico, and throughout Mesoamerica, such as the city of Tlaxcala. Detribalized Indians, often Indians captured and sold into slavery in Hispanic and mestizo households also formed part of the Indigenous populations in the Southwest. Referred to as *neofios* (neophytes), or *genízaros*, these Natives became Spanish-speaking and largely lived according to Hispanic customs, but with distinct collective memories of their Indigenous origins (Gonzales, 2017). Meticulous Spanish records, including maps, surveys, and censuses consistently identified people according to their caste, which included

[2] Saldaña-Portillo (2016) engages this debate extensively in chapter one (Savages Welcomed) of her book *Indian Given: Racial geographies across Mexico and the United States* (Duke University Press).

categories such as Spanish, mestizo, indio, negro, mulato, etc., indicating that despite the social distance, different racialized groups were in proximity of each other.

Demise in the Indigenous population occurred in the first century of Spanish dominion and up to 90% of Native depopulation occurred through displacement, disease, and harsh working conditions in some regions (Einfield, 2001; Stannard, 1992). Displacement occurred through forced labor in distant mining regions or for harvesting crops, and also by incorporating Natives into the Spanish invading frontier armies. For example, contingents of Tlaxcalans and Tarascans (P'urhépechas) travelled north with the Spanish armies to advance their frontier expeditions and eventually settled into towns as far north as New Mexico (DeLay, 2008). *Barrio de Analco* in Santa Fe, New Mexico is an example of Tlaxcalan migration and resettlement from South to North. The mining areas in Zacatecas and Chihuahua also drew migration, including of Indigenous people into the edges of colonial expansion (Thornton, 2012). Northern Natives like the Yaqui were also later forced to settle into villages after violent military clashes against Mexican armies, while others were dispersed, or relocated to aid in warring, labor, and resettlement efforts against other Indigenous peoples (Evans, 2007).

Spanish authorities consolidated Indigenous pueblos through *reducciones* or *congregaciones* due to depopulation, unless they were already in pueblos large enough to remain their own entities. *Repúblicas de indios* (Indian Republics), were guaranteed legal rights, privileges, and protections (Ramírez Zavala, 2011), including a *cabildo indio* (self-elected municipal council) and religious council, which held collective landholdings (*ejidos*) through the *leyes de Mercedes* (Spanish land grants) (Einfield, 2001), and the right to petition and file grievances. Smaller pueblos under *barrio* status also enjoyed protections, but, were under the "care" of local parishes or a nearby Spanish (*cabecera*) town. Spain justified *congregaciones* on the basis of Indigenous numerical decline, but these mostly served the purpose of Indigenous land dispossession and consolidation for control and indoctrination.

In *Genealogical Fictions*, Martínez (2008) highlighted that the term mestizo surfaced in Mexico in the 1530s and was initially synonymous with illegitimacy, meant "mixed" and was associated in Spain with zoological vocabulary, the mixing of animals. However, racialized caste hierarchies eventually became complicated and while Indigenous people were considered "pure," they were legally minors and subject to tribute and labor regimes, while mestizos were not and some mestizos eventually acquired access to restricted elite spaces. *Mestizaje* as an

intermediary buffer zone between indio and white (Criollos and Peninsulares) became inherently implicated in the continued economic marginalization, racism, and social/cultural erasure of Indigenous peoples. Mestizos came to occupy a middle, often both hostile and romanticized, space between Mexicans of European descent and Indigenous peoples. Ceceña and Barreda (1998) stated:

> Actually, the mestizo culture has grown at the expense of the indigenous one and has no interest in recuperating it. To do so would deny their own superior authority over natural and human resources and would limit their possibilities for exploitation, thus affecting their profit margins. Thus, their predatory spirit reaches into the cultural realm. (p. 51)

Mestizaje is at the crux of economic exploitation and the accumulation of wealth on the part of Latin American elite, usually at the expense of Indigenous dispossession and labor exploitation.

According to Hernández Castillo (2001), Indigenous women's wombs are the epicenter of mestizaje as an absorbing process into whiteness. She explained that *mestizaje* is about racism and historical erasure under the guise of inclusivity in Latin America:

> Whereas in other contexts racism has been characterized by its segregationist impulse, in some Latin American nations where mestizo identity has been the crux of nationalist identities, the discourse on the need for 'racial interbreeding' has deeply racist connotations.(29)

Indigenous women's bodies were/are exploited and literally raped in nation-building projects. While mestizaje absorbs indigeneity into the nation, according to Castellanos (2017), it is also "contingent on remembering, at times memorializing, the Indian" (p. 778), to assert national belonging. To be clear mestizos were/are not inherently evil (as "predatory spirit" suggests), but had and have an investment in a normative mestizaje that privileges them and positions them as superior to their romanticized and disavowed Indigenous cousins, much like whites are not inherently racist (by nature), but have an inherent and protective investment in the normativity and property of whiteness in U.S. society (Harris, 1993).

Enfield and O'Hara (2010) stated that between 1620 and 1670 economic hardship, agricultural crisis, and out migration from Indian pueblos was due to the great difficulty of meeting expected tributary demands. Land dispossession was also fueled by the growth of opportunistic haciendas, *latifundios*, *fincas*, and *ranchos*—single large agribusiness landholdings or

livestock enterprises—dependent on Indigenous, Afro-descendent, and increasingly mestizo landless labor. Indigenous peoples, however, resisted Spanish and mestizo encroachment through *pleitos,* juridical grievances and demands for disputed lands restitutions by the Spanish Crown (Einfield, 2001). From 1670 to 1821 debt peonage and sharecropping increased between pueblos and local haciendas and Indigenous landholdings were even more heavily reduced. Enfield and O'Hara (2010) identified the eighteenth century as the most acute in terms of encroachment, squatting and landgrabs on Indigenous lands by landless mestizos and rancheros.

In the eighteenth century, Spanish land grants were also authorized in the northern territories (today the US-Mexico borderlands) and without Native people's consent. Nuevo Santander (South Texas and Tamaulipas), the province of Tejas (1758), and Alta California were "granted" during that time period. In addition to the fortunes that might be made in these new territories by warring against indios bárbaros and the appropriation of their economies, there was also the rationale of fighting for the "secular humanity" and conversion of gentile Indians by Spanish friars (Saldaña-Portillo, 2016, p. 64). Mission enterprises in California, Arizona, and Texas were subsidized and undertaken. Whether through physical violent encounters or a type of benevolent Christian racism, Native peoples were largely dispossessed of their original homelands and settled into Spanish pueblos, presidios (forts) and missions, or massacred.

In 1821, Criollos, or individuals of "pure" Spanish descent born in the Spanish colonies, secured political power with Mexican independence from Spain, and Indigenous people did not fare well under the new republic. Under Agustin de Iturbide, all terms associated with colonial castas (castes) were eliminated and the term *indio* was slowly replaced with *indígena* as a generic and homogenizing reference to Indians (Ramírez Zavala, 2011). The 1824 Mexican Constitution upheld the equality of all *vecinos* (citizens) and the protection of individual private property rights. Constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples' citizenship, however, revoked the protective status of repúblicas indias, setting off a push by liberal elites (criollos and mestizos) for the dispossession of Indigenous pueblo lands (Vandervort, 2006). One way Indigenous people resisted the onslaughts on their communal lands was by overlooking their unsympathetic local or state governments and travelling directly to Mexico City, often by foot, to petition the central government and courts on their pueblo's behalf. A Laguna Pueblo Indian delegation, for example, traveled to Mexico City in 1830 to present their case to federal authorities when Hispanic local political leaders overlooked settler trespassing into their

communal lands (Vlasich, 2005). By the 1840s, however, indio became symbolic of backwardness in Mexico, viewed as an obstacle to economic progress, representing primitiveness, and targeted to be abolished.

The U.S. Anglo invasion of the Southwest brought on a new colonial regime onto the previous Mexican and Spanish ones (Gómez, 2018). Anglo settler colonialism imposed itself on top of the caste system in the Southwest. The myth of terra nullius, or the idea that the land was empty, open, and free for territorial occupation and colonization was and continues to be fundamental to US-Anglo legal mechanisms, such as the doctrine of discovery, used to dispossess Indigenous peoples (Calderón, 2014). Settler colonialism, according to Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013), is a form of colonialism where the invaders, through violent processes, come to stay and to replace the Natives by instituting structures of Indigenous erasure and matrices of social relations and conditions that define life in enduring ways that are "reasserted each day of occupation" (p. 73). For Wolfe (2006), the structure of settler colonialism destroys to replace, including the original peoples, through the logic of elimination. Native people in this logic become a dying race, people of the past, and erased from the public conscious. For Calderón (2014), settler ideologies of Indian absence and presence effectively erase the complexity of Indianness through settler grammars that ensure settler futurity.

For settlers, the West was savage, wild, and available to Anglo-white civilizing projects, such as Manifest Destiny (Horseman, 1981; Calderón, 2014b) and Mexicans (and by extension today's Latinxs) like Native Americans, were dehumanized through Anglo-Saxon race ideologies (Gómez, 2018; Menchaca & Valencia, 1990). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that Mexicans in these regions are also settlers even when Mexican people were collectively racialized as inferior by whites (Gómez, 2018). In a pseudo-religious, racist mindset, Mexicans were viewed as un-industrious, un-Christian, amoral, and genetically inferior, half-breed "Indian/savage" people unworthy of occupying vast amounts of land (Horseman, 1981). Men were especially dehumanized "...as a breed of cruel and cowardly mongrels who were indolent, ignorant, and superstitious, given to cheating, thieving, gambling, drinking, cursing, and dancing" (Gutiérrez, 2001, p. 204). Such dehumanizing discourses justified Texas Independence (1836) and later the US-Mexican War (1846-1848). James K. Polk justified the war by declaring that Mexicans were "feeble and lacking in self-respect" and not worthy of occupying the land (Horsman, 1981). These racial ideologies later impacted the Mexican community in the U.S.

through segregation policies, exclusion from the full political process, land dispossession, and denial of access to resources. Amongst the Mexican *vecinos* (citizens) in the invaded Southwest were Indians, and although they initially were granted citizenship as were other "Mexicans," it was later revoked as they were incorporated into U.S. racial schemas of indigeneity.

Wild West, frontiersmen, pioneers, and Anglo colonist and settler images abound in the officialized curricula of settler states (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). The U.S. was established with a white supremacist structure from its foundation based on settler nationalism (Calderón, 2014). The U.S. depends on settler nationalist narratives, myths, discourses, and ideologies that support its national identity as good, fair, and exceptionalist. Saldaña-Portillo (2016) stated that through the 1790 Indian Intercourse Act, Congress appropriated for the U.S. government the right to Indian lands and transitioned the transfer of these from contract to treaty. Saldaña-Portillo (2016) concludes that "These treaties were no less fraudulent in their coercive inducements to pressure Indians to surrender their lands" (p. 63), and the process of Indian land dispossession, in the settler mindset, was conducted legally and fairly. In *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1830), the U.S. Supreme court granted the government "ultimate dominion" over land, and Indians the "right to occupancy", but not to ownership of the land. In settler logic, Natives, through treaties, "voluntarily" agreed to cede lands. Settler colonialism is thus normalized as fair, just, and part of a civilizing mission. White settlers eventually appropriated "nativeness" for themselves and now claim to have the "Indigenous ancestry" that forms the basis of American exceptionalism (Calderón, 2014) and that undergirds nativist discourses. "American" is thus normalized to white Americans, as is citizenship. Faced with a minority majority future population, today, "make America great again," really means make America white again.

Taxation became an institutional practice for land dispossession in the Southwest. Au, Brown and Calderón (2016, p. 88-89) wrote:

> One of the main mechanisms put in place to speed up the disenfranchisement of Mexican landholdings [in the US Southwest] specifically was taxation. Estrada et al. (1981) tell us that "the Spanish-Mexican traditional practice had been to tax the products of the land. Under the new Anglo regime, land itself was taxed." (106). Because taxes no longer depended on what the land produced, farmers with less access to capital were unable to meet the new increased taxes, causing many to lose their land

> (Estrada et al., 1981). This taxation scheme was in some ways similar to the Allotment Act (also known as the Dawes Act) of 1887, which shifted communal tribal land holdings into private individual parcels, the result of which was the inability of individual tribal members to pay taxes on lands, thus paving the way for the purchase of these lands by Whites.

Au et al. (2016) thus claimed that taxation schemes are "a part of a sustained ideological and policy practice put in place by Whites to gain territory" (p. 89). These schemes continue to impact Native Americans and also impact other communities through gentrification and other more deliberate ways of dispossessing to this day. Taxes and hiking taxes are thus used to take over property, and over land. Urban renewal, imminent domain, land acquisition, compulsory purchase, resumption, and expropriation of private property have become part of "settling in."

This context of multiple and intersecting forms of colonialisms (Spanish, Mexican, Anglo-White) in Mexico and the Southwest we explored is fundamentally important to understand how Latinxs have and continue to become complicit with the futurity of settler colonialism and against their U.S. Native and Latinx Indigenous kin, despite the fact that they have been similarly impacted and affected by U.S. Anglo settler colonial structures and processes. Indeed, it impacted how Latinxs came to receive land, the type of schooling they received, as well as their access to political representation. We are not arguing that Latinxs did not and do not continue to experience racism. At least in this historical context, Latinx experiences were mediated by what legal scholar Laura Gómez (2018) referred to as their off-white status, shaped by the racial caste ordering of the region and their position as not Black and not Indian in the U.S. Anglo settler colonial context.

Replacement Curriculum, Settler Grammars, and White Futurity

Critical Latinx Indigeneities encourages an engagement with settler colonialism. Using the concepts of *settler colonial curricular project of replacement* and *settler grammars*, we will next examine California and Texas curricula that 1) include Latino history but maintain Indigenous absence and inferiority and 2) invoke and often celebrate Spanish settler colonialism to highlight the silent tension between mestizo/Hispanic/Latino and Indigenous relations. Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013, 75) referred to schools as instruments of settlement that explicitly and implicitly justify the theft and occupation of Indigenous land through their concept of *replacement curricula*. Replacement, according to Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013),

"aims to vanish Indigenous peoples and replace them with settlers, who see themselves as the rightful claimants to land, and indeed, as indigenous" (p.73). For Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013), the *settler colonial curricular project of replacement* soothes settler anxieties over Indigenous land displacement and genocide and invests in white futurity.

Advancing anticolonial and decolonial analyses of settler colonial curricular replacement, Calderón (2014) identifies the *settler grammars* in social studies curricula that depict Native peoples as absent, relics of the past and the U.S. as a "new" state, a "nation of (European) immigrants." Calderón explained that the nation of immigrants ideology asserts that Indigenous peoples are also immigrants (i.e. Bering Strait migration) and their migration is simply part of a national immigration narrative, and not one of origins in what we call the Americas, effectively destabilizing Indigenous land claims. In settler grammars, beliefs of (white) settler superiority over Natives justify the "inevitable" replacement of Indigenous peoples, especially over the "emptiness" of their purposefully created "absence," allowing settlers access to territory and to "nativeness" itself; thus, whites become the "natives" of a "new" and superior nation while Natives are occasionally conjured up to make specter-like and problematic curricular apparitions.

Curricular depictions of Latinxs or Hispanics are minimal and are usually limited to either settler or immigrant origins. Conquistadors and explorers like Juan Ponce de León, Cabeza de Vaca, and Juan de Oñate, as well as Catholic missionaries such as Junípero Serra are depicted as the precursors to modern-day Latinxs. Juan de Oñate is notorious for his brutality against the Acoma Pueblo, especially for overseeing the killing of 800 people in the pueblo, for imprisoning dozens of Acoma girls in Mexico City convents, and for having men's foots cut off. At a time when confederate statues generate controversy and many such monuments have been removed, effigies that celebrate Spanish conquest (atrocity) largely remain.

Indeed, to some Hispanics, Latinxs, even when they consider themselves mestizos, Spanish is the side of their heritage that they most identify with, glorify, and that they defend, often displaying anti-Indian hatred against Native people and against Latinxs that demand that symbols of conquest be banished (see the controversy around the Santa Fe fiestas in New Mexico that celebrate the Spanish Entrada into the region). Spanish priests, such as Junípero Serra in California, Eusebio Kino in Arizona, and their mission enterprises in the Southwest, including the famous Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, are also largely celebrated in social studies

texts. Serra was even heralded as a hero of sorts for the Hispanic community in Spanish media when he was canonized by Pope Francis during his papal visit to the U.S. in September of 2015.

While California curriculum maintains dominant Anglo settler grammars, the grammars of previous colonialisms bleed through. For example, the California Missions (4th grade) curriculum encourages students to build model missions and promotes a celebration of Spanish California, offering insight into why Junípero Serra remains a prominent historical figure despite the controversies that surround his legacy. Curricular inclusion of the missions and men like Serra upholds multiple settler projects (Spanish & Mexican), yet these projects remain subservient to Anglo settler colonial nationalism.

The California History/Social Science Framework (CA-HSS) was revised in 2016 due to an increased outcry against the uncritical perspective of the 4th grade Mission curriculum (Gutfreund, 2010). The revision includes a less celebratory view of the missions yet it nevertheless maintains language that frames the Spanish legacy as a benefit, sustaining a teleological view of history that assumes societies inevitably improve from primitive to civilized by necessarily removing Indigenous peoples who cannot overcome their primitiveness (Brayboy, 2005; Smith, 2008). For example, the section, "Missions, Ranchos, and the Mexican War for Independence," (Chapter 7, grade 4) of the California History-Social Science Framework arguably promotes Spanish cultural transmission as not, in and of itself, violent:

> Spanish culture, religion, and economic endeavors—combined with indigenous peoples and practices—all converged to shape the developing society and environment during Spanish-era California. With so few colonists, Spanish authorities believed they could transform Indian peoples into loyal Spanish subjects by converting them to Christianity, introducing them to Spanish culture and language, and intermarriage. The introduction of Christianity affected native peoples, many of whom combined Catholicism with their own belief systems. Vastly outnumbered by native peoples, missionaries relied on some Indian leaders to help manage the economic, religious, and social activities of the missions. Colonists introduced European plants, agriculture, and a pastoral economy based mainly on cattle… Under the guidance of Fray Junipero Serra, 54,000 Indians became baptized at the missions where they spent anywhere from two to fifty weeks each year, laboring to sustain the missions." (pp. 74-75).

The discursive choices in the passage above carefully delink Spanish cultural imposition from violence. In spite of the changes, the CA-HSS does not go far enough to name the California Indian genocide (Fenelon & Trafzer, 2014). For Tinker (1993), cultural genocide is "the effective destruction of a people by systematically or systemically…destroying, eroding, or undermining the integrity of the culture and system of values that defines a people and gives them life" (p. 6). The CA-HSS thus do little to interrupt the discourse that cultural exchange was beneficial.

Missing from the CA-HHS is Indigenous peoples' own perspective. The CA-HSS Framework (2016) notes, "The historical record of this era remains incomplete due to the limited documentation of Native testimony" (p. 75). Strangely, the CA-HSS crafters cannot imagine that the many California Indians not only have oral histories, but their own archives on this period (such as the Amah Mutson Tribal Band). Instead, this serves as an example of the way Indigenous absence as a settler colonial logic works. Before moving to condemn the impact of the Mission system on Indigenous peoples, the CA-HSS works to sustain the Spanish civilizing mission brought to Indigenous peoples: "However, it is clear that even though missionaries brought agriculture, the Spanish language and culture, and Christianity to the native population, American Indians suffered in many California missions" (p. 75). Differently stated, the CA-HSS tells teachers that while this Mission system caused Indigenous peoples' suffering, the Spanish brought many good things (i.e. agriculture, language, culture, and Christianity). Conquistadors and priests along with the forts and missions are thus heralded as early attempts at European "civilization." However, before the onslaught of white settlers their attempts at "civilizing" fall short, but still create a buffer zone between the "primitive" Indians and the ultimate superior white settlers. It is also in this in between state, as mestizo, as off-white (Gómez, 2018), that the project of mestizaje was cultivated. The CA-HSS preserve this, affirming the foundation for rejecting Indigenous peoples and indigeneity, thus not giving diverse Latinx students the opportunity to examine intra-difference and complexity in historical contexts.

The CA-HSS framework does offer some context about the violence suffered by Indigenous peoples in California:

> The death rate was extremely high; during the mission period, the Indian population plummeted from 72,000 to 18,000. This high death rate was due primarily to the introduction of diseases for which the native population did not have immunity, as well as the hardships of forced labor and separation from traditional ways of life. (p. 75).

Even so, the CA-HSS offer scant context to the even more brutal genocide inflicted on California Indians by the U.S. Benjamin Madley (2016), historian of Indigenous genocide shares that in 1890, historian Huber Howe Bancroft wrote of the genocide of California Natives: "The savages were in the way: the miners and settlers were arrogant and impatient; there were no missionaries or others present with even the poor pretense of soul-saving or civilizing. It was one of the last human hunts of civilization, and the basest and most brutal of them all" (Howe Bancroft in Mandel, 2016, p. 3). Bancroft's statement reminds us of varying forms of colonial violence and genocide that oscillated between cultural genocide (Spanish civilizing mission) and the physical genocide of Anglo settler colonialism. The CA-HSS thus allows us to consider how the multiple layers of colonialism are embedded within curriculum in a way that affirms the latest and most dominant mode of settler colonialism. While it allows for some critique of previous colonial forms and less of Anglo-US settler colonialism, the CA-HSS's "inclusion" of Spanish and Mexican history depicts Indians as past primitive remnants that gave way to Californians today.

Considering complex historical entanglements, Mexican American students' experiences with Texas Independence, goes a step further than the California mission curriculum by explicitly promoting identification with Anglo settler colonialism. "Remember the Alamo!," is part of a larger Anglo-settler invasion narrative that is framed as an independence struggle against an oppressive Mexican government and "pseudo-savage," mixed Indigenous and Spanish heritage people (Horseman, 1991). Piety around the Battle of the Alamo, the physical and symbolic site of The Alamo and Anglo "martyrdom" has become representative of "Texian" and by default U.S. (i.e. Anglo) freedom (Flores, 2010). This historical perspective is standardized in the state curriculum (and broader national Social Studies curricula because Texas and California textbook adoption has a major influence in text adoption nationwide) that is taught in lessons to Mexican American and other students of color in ways that position them in a contentious space where they are bringing their own personal histories, including counter narratives of Anglo settler logics of invasion against the normative curriculum of Texas' independence.

In these contentious positionings, Mexican American students along with all students are sometimes asked by teachers whose side, Texians (i.e. Anglos) or Mexican (i.e. bad guys), they would be on. This positioning is often explained as an attempt to be "critical" and inclusive of

diverse perspectives; thus, placing students before a binary choice in their identification and allegiance processes. Positioning Mexican American students against themselves, their parents, or ancestors (so to speak) is a dichotomous colonialist framing of the Texas Anglo invasion of Texas that further obscures the multiple and hybrid forms of colonialities that Critical Latinx Indigeneities seeks to make lucid (Blackwell, 2017). Such colonial logics include additional settler colonial structures beyond those that impacted and impact Mexicans and Mexican Americans; the Anglo struggle to maintain the Black enslavement that provided the labor force for the settler state, the forced acculturation and genocide the Alamo represents as a Spanish mission itself, and the murder, expulsion, and erasure of Native peoples from Texas especially by the Texas Rangers under Anglo domination. In these interlocking instantiations of colonial logics, their overlaps, entanglements, and hybrids, the myth of terra nullius, Spanish conquistadors and priests, Anglo settlement, Westward expansion, and Manifest Destiny, Native peoples are dispossessed to the degree that Texans today (regardless of race) generally believe that there never were many Natives to begin with; the land was indeed "empty." This is not true, Native peoples in Texas include Alabama Coushatta, Lipan Apache, Comanche, Coahuilteca, Kikapoo, Comecrudo, Caddo, Carrizo, and the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo amongst others.

The "Remember the Alamo!" curriculum therefore limits students to a binary positioning of White Texan "good guys" and Mexican "bad guys." Students of color are asked explicitly or implicitly to situate themselves either in support of Anglo domination (whether they are Anglo themselves or not) through the white settler colonial curricular project in Texas, which included African enslavement and Native American dispossession; Or, risk being part of the few, usually Mexican students who in an effort to maintain some public form of dignity express support for Mexico and Mexicans at the expense of suffering the indignities of being ridiculed and dismissed, even by their teachers. Within these whitestream contentious classroom spaces and school contexts, students' identities are shaped within limited possibilities geared to structuring support for white supremacy and white settler nationalism.

Mexican and Mexican American students often learn to internalize the villainization (oppression) of Mexicans through the Alamo curriculum, usually by rejecting their own culture, identity, and language (Urrieta, 2004); by ignoring Black enslavement, while learning that Native Americans (by omission) are missing from the curriculum and the history of Texas altogether, or by justifying that Indians seemed better off in the Spanish missions than later under Anglo

white supremacy. White settler colonialism is thus normalized as fair, just, and part of a civilizing mission (again!). Settlers, white settlers in particular appropriate "nativeness" for themselves in Texas, as they do at the larger national scale, and claim to be the "true Texians". Similarly, Tejanos also stake claim to land ownership and origins (over Native Americans) in Tejas and in contention with white settlers. Tejanos invest in their real or imagined genealogical connection to Spain (or other European origins) and their settler legitimacy by affirming land ownership through the land grants endowed by the Spanish Crown, and without Native consent.

The curricular examples we just reviewed use particular settler colonial historical perspectives to (consciously or unconsciously) reposition Hispanics, Latinxs as settlers (again!), either as conquistadors and missionaries or as newly arrived immigrants, in ways that support white futurity. Critical Latinx Indigeneities' challenge to incorporate a settler colonial analysis (amongst others) indicates for us that any social justice Latinx equity agenda and critical ethnic studies curriculum must start by recognizing settler status (i.e. as Spanish, Mexicans, Mexican Americans, Hispanos, Tejanos, Californios, etc.), and that generations of Latinxs and Latinx im/migrants live and arrive on the homelands of sovereign Indigenous nations. Being guests on Native lands brings with it responsibilities that begin with a land acknowledgement, and the possibility of new relationships of tension and solidarity with Native Americans in the pursuit of social justice (Boj López, 2015). A Latinx equity agenda in education must start by acknowledging and challenging the *settler colonial curricular project of replacement* and the *settler grammars*, such as those we reviewed and others, that continue to erase and displace Native/Indigenous peoples, and that incorporate Latinxs as early, yet primitive settlers in the development of the "superior" white settler state. Finally, CLI challenges collectivist Latinx agendas for equity and citizen-incorporation to upfront the recognition that we as Latinxs and im/migration scholars often collude with the myth that the U.S. is a nation of immigrants, which by default delegitimizes Indigenous origins, land claims, and sovereignty.

Nation of Immigrants Myth

Critical Latinx Indigeneities would suggest that any meaningful discussion about immigration and citizenship in the U.S. cannot be divorced from a broader context of colonialism because the "nation of immigrants" myth replicates the settler colonial logic of erasure and the elimination of Indigenous peoples. Nation of immigrants ideology, according to

Calderón (2014a), by default asserts that Indigenous peoples are also immigrants who migrated to the "Americas" via the Bering Strait and their migration is simply part of a larger national immigration narrative. This contention destabilizes Indigenous land claims because it puts Native peoples' "nativeness" into scientific dispute and denial. Nation of immigrants discourse relies on terra nullius, the idea that the land was/is vacant and available to (some) immigrants who are seeking better lives and fortunes (i.e. American Dreams). Therefore, the enduring myths of a "land of opportunity" and of "living American dreams," as often taught in schools reproduce doctrine of discovery discourses whereby occupation and settlement are justified through the idea that the U.S. remains a land, space, place to be explored or to find fortunes (i.e. discovered), a blank slate on which immigrants (including Latinxs) make and remake lives and transnational communities. The narrative of living out dreams in the U.S. often become "Un Orgullo Hispano" immigrant, rags to riches stories of "making it in America" on Spanish media, especially by middle class Latinx immigrants and early Cuban exiles, that intentionally and unintentionally uphold the "pull yourself by your bootstraps" myth of meritocracy and U.S. exceptionalism.

While the "melting pot" myth has also been used to invoke that the U.S. is a country of immigrants where all (i.e. cultures, races, ethnicities) "mix" into the pot and harmoniously become "Americans," that is not a universal experience or expectation for all. In fact, it is a very violent idea first and foremost because it erases the genocide of Native Americans from the national consciousness and second because it requires assimilation premised on processes of exclusion (i.e. exclusion from citizenship, exclusion from whiteness). The melting pot myth is therefore violent to People of Color because not everyone is meant to be included in the pot. And even though the discourse is meant to encourage assimilation, People of Color, no matter how hard they try to assimilate, will never be considered "true Americans."[3]

Finally, the focus on U.S. immigration policy shines light on our continuing ignorance of coloniality (Quijano, 2000), and its current impact on the Indigenous and Afro-descendent

[3] African Americans, for example, have been excluded historically as sub-human through the dehumanization of the 3/5 compromise and as property, and they continue to be excluded today through the legal system, economically, through police and other forms of violence. This is true for other communities as well. The melting pot myth is also violent toward whites, because they had to give up their European heritage cultures and languages in exchange for the full citizenship, for inclusion into whiteness. Whiteness is powerful and it is protected by structures and institutional power in the U.S. Even poor whites are overwhelmingly more invested in whiteness than in their own potential economic and political alliances with People of Color for social justice.[3]

peoples that are displaced into migration in Latin America. Often referred to as a migrant, refugee, asylee "crisis," the mass dislocation of peoples coming to the U.S. is the result of decades of U.S. foreign policy, of global climate change precipitated by western capitalism, and a form of ongoing global neoliberal (colonial) dispossession. Hernández Castillo (2016) contended that in the neoliberal era, "Indigenous" has become a new identity, "which came into being through the construction of an imaginary community with other oppressed peoples around the world" (p. 4). The emergence of indigeneity as an expression of neoliberal modernity, she attributes as a response to neoliberal capitalism's extractivist policies of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2004) and the subsequent militarization of nation-states, that make Indigenous women, especially activists, the targets of violence and murder. Such is the case of Berta Cáceres, Lenca environmental activist, murdered in Honduras on March 3, 2016 (Loperena, 2017). While neoliberal states have recognized Indigenous culture and identity rights through neoliberal multiculturalism policies in Latin America (Hale, 2004), the governmentality that accompanies the identities that are formed in this process of recognition politics further engulf Indigenous peoples in the participatory citizenship of the neoliberal state (Hernández Castillo, 2016) that ultimately seeks to exploit their labor and/or dispossess them of their homelands. CLI encourages a more nuanced focus on the recent waves of asylum seekers and refugees in the Central American caravans, especially how the Indigenous and Afro-descended within them are dehumanized (racialized) across multiple national contexts in a long history of enduring colonialisms. Like, others in the past, they are considered ineligible for citizenship in the U.S. settler state, even before their arrival, challenging further the myth that the U.S. is indeed a nation of immigrants.

The Problematics of Latinidad as Mestizaje

Critical Latinx Indigeneities encourages an interrogation of Latinidad, in order to begin to deconstruct what we mean by Latinxs and Latinidad, because for better or for worse Indigenous peoples from Latin America are lumped within this category and experience life under this label in the U.S. The need to create a CLI analytic itself and its attention to the experiences of Indigenous migrants and youth is a challenge from the start, first and foremost against the essentialist, stereotypical portrayals of Latinxs in simplistic, festive, uncritical, "fiesta menu" approaches to multicultural curricula in our schools. Even as the collectivized "Brown" people in Chicanx Studies, which emerges from the empowering constructs of "Brown power!"

and "Brown Pride", there is a homogenizing aspect that does not do justice to the diversity of Indigenous and Afro-Latinx experiences within the larger collective brownness (Laó-Montes, 2005). Brownness, for some of us, alludes too much to mestizo-ness and the normative nationalisms that have historically regulated, erased and controlled Indigeneity and Blackness.

Like mestizaje and indigenismo that have tended to be locked at arms' length in the history of most Latin American countries' nationalist discourses, Latinidad and Hispanidad are also colonizing projects of erasure for Indigenous peoples, both migrants and Northern Tribal peoples, in the U.S. When Indigenous migrants arrive from their/our countries of origin, whether they/we like it or not, they/we are associated with Latinidad and usually also with their/our country of origin; some, for the very first time. For instance, some Indigenous communities might not have thought of themselves as Mexican first when they lived in Mexico. As Muehlmann (2013) identified with the Cucapá people in Baja California (cousins of the Cocopah in Arizona), who often referred to mestizos as "Mexicans" and vice versa in her study. Or Luis' friend Juan, P'urhépecha from Capacuaro who after Luis asked him in 2009 what he would be doing for Mexican independence day retorted, "Whose independence?" Even though many Indigenous migrants recreate in the U.S. communities that maintain their identities around their respective pueblos (Alberto, 2017), like a web, Latinized entanglements engulf, are persistent, and the imposed and resisted engulfment within the larger construction of Latinidad is continuous and sometimes difficult to avoid.

For example, when Indigenous migrant children are enrolled at U.S. schools, there is usually a home language survey taken. If a language other than English is spoken at home as their first language, the child is automatically placed either in a bilingual Spanish/English program or in ESL, when these programs are available. For many Indigenous Latinx children, who are speakers of Indigenous languages that means that they will likely be learning in their second language (Spanish), while they learn their third language (English); both languages Spanish and English being colonial languages. Their new U.S.-based racialized association by proxy to Latinidad will then have these children navigate the U.S. school system through a double colonization, first to the most immediate peer group of Spanish-speaking Latinxs who often tease and bully their Indigenous peers (Barillas-Chón, 2010), and also to the grammars of whitestream, subtractive, white settler schooling (Valenzuela, 1999; Urrieta, 2010; Calderón, 2014).

We do not disavow decades of scholarship that shows that the educational field is generally unequal for Latinxs. Latinxs have less access to resources and information such as quality schools, education programs, and access to higher education usually because of segregation, exclusionary practices, and insufficient economic access. However, CLI challenges that not all Latinxs share the same experience in regard to access to resources and information, primarily due to inter-group inequities and oppression that are reinscribed forms of colonialism that create hybrid hegemonies (Blackwell, 2010). In regard to Indigenous Latinxs and Afro-Latinx youth this includes the anti-Indian and anti-Black hatred that often prevails within schools and in the larger mestizo Latinx communities. Although all Latinxs face the potential threat and real life effects of racialization as "Latinxs" if not always, at least at some point in their lives, some Latinxs enjoy more privileged lives than others outside and within the Latinx community. CLI highlights the intergroup diversity that Indigenous and Afro-Latinxs bring and the intergroup inequities that manifested in unequal relations of power, including internalized oppression as well as inter-group oppression that distinguish between the indio, the rascuache and High-spanic, los *de aquí y los de allá*, the queer, los *atravesados*, the Julian Castro and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's, as well as the Susana Martiínez and Ted Cruz's of the Latinx world.

An example of this intergroup oppression of racism and prejudice against Afro-Latinxs and Indigenous peoples (or anti-Indio hatred) by their mestizo, or in the U.S.—Latinx peers is exemplified in Barillas-Chón's (2010) study of the anti–hate speech campaigns aimed at Latinx youth for bullying their Oaxacan peers in the city of Oxnard as well as in other parts of California by referring to them as *"Oaxaquitas."* Other studies corroborate similar findings in which diminutives meant to ridicule Indigenous Latinx youth exemplify the intersection of structural factors that create hybrid hegemonies of racism from Latin America and racism in the U.S. (Blackwell, 2017). These hybrid hegemonies do not only impact Indigenous Oaxacan youth in Oxnard's schools, but are also illustrated by the fact that the Latinx labor market is also highly stratified—as pointed out by Barillas-Chón; these youths' parents mostly migrant farm workers, usually earn less than their mestizo "Latinx" counterparts for the same work (Holmes, 2011). This of course leads to intergroup economic disparities, even at the lowest levels of socioeconomic power. CLI encourages the examination, for example, of the transnational movement of anti-Indian hatred that allows us to delve into a deeper exploration of multiple colonialities, including of how the Latinx category erases Indigenous difference even as it enacts

violence against Indigenous migrants, refugees, and youth. These fissures and contradictions show that Latinx populations are multiracial. CLI demands that this multiracial and multilingual diversity be fully engaged in any agenda for Latinx equity in education as well as in any curricular representations, including in ethnic studies.

Therefore, while the identifier "Latinx" serves many good purposes such as that of enabling organizational, advocacy, policy, and political mobilization within limitations—Latinx/Hispanic also serve as racial formations of state regulatory categories (Omi & Winant, 2015). Latinx, as a regulatory category and signifier, positions and labels a collective into the landscape of the whitestream settler imaginary. In this imaginary Latinxs are homogenized into categorical difference despite our diversity, and it becomes a norming difference, a racial project in order to fit into the white supremacist vertical, racial, settler colonial structure on which this country is founded. CLI demands that we understand that Latinx—although it was created as a more inclusive term than Hispanic by invoking Latin American origin or ancestry—brings with it a broader historical context and sociopolitical landscape of identity that includes these multiple mappings and graphings of coloniality and hybrid hegemonies of power around ethnoracial, class, gender, and sexuality difference. CLI would signal that pan-Latinidad as a collective identity is therefore indeed based on an assumed mestizaje linked with indigenism that obscures and invisiblizes the racial, ethnic, cultural, class, sexuality and religious diversity and structures of power and dispossession in Latin America and of those within this Latinidad in the U.S.

To seriously engage the challenges that CLI represents for ethnic studies curricula, especially in Chicanx Studies, these disciplines must move toward employing critical interdisciplinary analytic frames. Interdisciplinarity allows for local, hemispheric, as well as global scales of analysis like those proposed by CLI, especially as they pertain to the ways that race and its various intersections gets constructed and deployed across multiple countries (or regions) and overlapping colonialities, including through displacement by state structures and the flows of neoliberal global capitalism. CLI encourages the examination of more than one racial structure and an intersectional multi-axis approach that recognizes the multiracial and multilingual diversity of ethnoracial groupings, as well as the multiple genealogies involved in migration. The recognition of multiple genealogies of indigeneity, especially for Chicanx Studies, encourages the disruption of the dated Mexican (Aztec)-centric approach to indigeneity that

often, even today, appropriates and essentializes what it means to be Indigenous with a longing for loss in ways that resemble indigenismo (Spears-Rico, 2015). Indigenismo has worked together with mestizaje as a state eugenicist program of racial whitening (Alberto, 2016). Thus, although the *mestizaje* discourse is empowering for Chicanx, Latinx scholars in the U.S., *mestizaje* also embodies a historical location of racism and Indigenous erasure and in the U.S. a complicity with white settler futurity that is rarely engaged in more profound ways.

Indigenous Futurity within Latinized Entanglements

Pulido (2017) stated that Chicanx Studies is ambivalent about engaging settler colonialism "… due to settler colonialism's potential to disrupt core elements of Chicana/o political subjectivity" (p. 2) such as mestizaje. Pulido continues, "Specifically, it unsettles Chicanas/os' conception of themselves as colonized people by highlighting their role as colonizers. Acknowledging such a role is difficult not only because it challenges key dimensions of Chicana/o identity… but also because of the precarious nature of Chicana/o indigeneity" (p. 2). Conceptual mestizaje thus emerges as what Stoler (2016) would refer to as a seductive and powerful agent of imperial power. Hence, this is a conceptual question that necessitates engagement with settler colonial studies generally, critical Indigenous studies specifically, and more robustly, Critical Latinx Indigeneities. In a similar manner, the claim to Aztlan as an Indigenous homeland in Chicanx Studies naturalizes the displacement of U.S. Tribal peoples because it centers the Mexica migration from Aztlan myth as its sole genealogy of indigeneity. The claim to Aztlan also erases the multiple and varied past and present Indigenous origin stories of various Indigenous communities and fails to recognize and honor the contemporary diversity of displaced Indigenous migrants and refugees from Latin America and their future descendants.

To heed CLI's move in the direction of recognizing varied Indigenous genealogies, we tried early in this article to engage history and complexity by highlighting the complicated contexts of Indigenous/Native and mestizo/Hispanic/Latinx encounters. We explored Indigenous and mestizo/Hispanic/Latino historical proximity not as "new" phenomenon by implicitly alluding only to who we refer to as "Indigenous Latinxs" today, but to the possible varied existences of this "experience" that have existed over centuries through, for example, the Indigenous South to North migration and settlement of P'urhépechas and Tlaxcalans we highlighted in the early Spanish colonial period or through the detribalized *neofio* and *genízaro*

Spanish-speaking Indian communities throughout the Southwest to name only a few cases that might illustrate the complexities of the entanglements. We also highlighted that people referring to themselves as Spanish, Mexicans, Mexican Americans, Hispanos, Tejanos, Californios, etc., forbearers of what today we might call mestizo/Hispanics/Latinxs have been in relation with Native peoples for hundreds of years, and those relations have generally not always been harmonious. Therefore, in the Critical Latinx Indigeneities frame, it is imperative to recognize this complicated and painful history, to recognize the violence targeted at Indigenous peoples by these forbearers as well as their settler status, to take up the challenging of taking on the *settler colonial curricular project of replacement* and the *settler grammars* in order to re-right and rewrite the school curricula, and to decolonize Latinidad and mestizaje in order to envision Indigenous futurities within and outside of the Latinized entanglements of our present.

Moving forward, CLI encourages a focus on Indigenous youth as of utmost importance for our imagined futurities, especially because of the potential for organizing and activism that Indigenous Latinx youth possess due to their exposure to their or their parents' community (pueblo) ties and relational ways of being through *comunalidad,* which is a process of active opposition to colonial dispossession and neoliberalism (Aquino Moreschi, 2013). For example, Indigenous Latinx youth have organized and mobilized in support of various Native causes, including marches in defense of Yanawana, the Coahuiltecan name for water, and traveling to and supporting the Native peoples of Standing Rock in 2016. Diasporic community knowledges provide Indigenous Latinx youth epistemologies from which to critically engage the world that can potentially benefit not just their peers but the larger community in general (Urrieta, 2016), especially in the ways that learning is organized in education and in the potential relational relationships to foment solidarities with both the larger "Latino" community and U.S. Tribal nations.

To conclude, CLI recognizes that Indigenous migrants are not victims, but have always been agentic in directing their own lives and the survival of their communities in diaspora. This has been documented through the organizing of hometown associations and binational organizations that go to great lengths to maintain political and economic ties with their home communities and that instill the identity, cultural practices, often language, and activism on the migrant and U.S.-born youth in their communities (Stephen, 2007; Sánchez, 2018). U.S.-born Zapotec anthropologist, Daina Sánchez (2018) documents this well in her recent and

representative study of Solaga children and youth's involvement in a musical band in Southern California. Her study shows how through the *banda* (or musical band) community, the children and youth expressed ethnic pride, as well as an appreciation for the music, the identity, the traditional and newly emerging cultural practices of the Solaga Zapotec community in Los Angeles. Sánchez (2018) argued that the space to recognize themselves as different in the *banda*, also allowed the U.S. Solaga youth healthier ways to face anti-Indigenous discrimination from the broader Latinx community as well as the anti-immigrant Trump-era hostility of the whitestream settler society. Sánchez's study of Indigenous migrant communities' future generations, indicates the need to situate the migrants' experiences at the unique crossroads of Critical Latinx Indigeneities, precisely where Latinx Studies, Latin American Studies, and Native American and Indigenous Studies cross paths in intersectional ways. We agree, and look forward to Indigenous Latinx youth's futurity, within and outside of the Latinized entanglements.

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She examines how these students' experiences with stigmatization and discrimination relate to their educational outcomes, and the influence multiple contexts have on students' social identities. Her work appears in journals such as the *Research in Human Development, Educational Researcher, Teachers College Record,* and *Latino Studies.*