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## Language policy and bilingual education in Arizona and Washington state

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In this paper, we compare the bilingual/language education policies of Arizona and Washington to show that state-level language policy plays a critical role in shaping the appropriation of federal language policy [No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Title III] and how different state-level language policies impact the district level of policy appropriation. Drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus* and *doxa*, we argue that different types of appropriation, in turn, impact how educators and students orient toward bilingualism. Based on ethnographic research in demographically similar school districts in Arizona and Washington, we juxtapose the voices of students and school faculty from both states to demonstrate how language policies are appropriated and instantiated in distinct ways that may not be predictable based on federal language policy.

**Keywords:** language policy; bilingual education; ethnography; Bourdieu

### Introduction

A central concern in educational policy studies is the extent to which federal language policy promotes or prohibits the use of students' first languages in education. The historical development and re-shaping of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in the United States has been characterized by an ideological ebb and flow between versions of the 1968 Bilingual Education Act (Title VII of the ESEA) that endorse bilingualism as a resource and versions that promote a monolingual focus on English language education for language minorities (Hornberger 2005). The most recent version of the ESEA, the 2002 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), appears to have reduced the space for bilingual education (BLE). While studies on the implementation of NCLB have revealed how it has encouraged educators to abandon or sacrifice the integrity of their bilingual education programs (Menken and Shohamy 2008), this policy has been implemented in different ways in different states.

In Arizona, NCLB has reinforced an already existing state-level push for monolingual education, notably in the form of the anti-bilingual education initiative Proposition 203 (passed in 2000). Meanwhile, in Washington State, bilingual education programs have *increased* since the advent of NCLB. In this paper, we show that state-level language policy plays a critical role in shaping the appropriation of federal language policy and how different state-level language policies impact the district level of policy appropriation. We argue that different types of appropriation, in turn, impact how educators and

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students orient toward bilingualism. Based on ethnographic research in demographically similar school districts in Arizona and Washington, we juxtapose the voices of students and school faculty from both states to demonstrate how language policies are appropriated in distinct ways that may not be predictable based on federal language policy.

## Theoretical orientations

### *Multi-layered language policy analysis*

Educational policy in general (Ball 2006; Bowe and Ball 1992) and educational *language* policy in particular (Ricento and Hornberger 1996) are commonly conceptualized as multi-layered phenomena and processes. Researchers may talk about these 'levels' in different ways – borrowing terms used in economics and sociology (macro and micro) or incorporating terms generated within policy fields (top-down and bottom-up) – but there is general agreement that an understanding of the multiple levels is necessary to fully understand how policy works (D. Johnson 2011). In the field of Language Planning and Policy (LPP), many different conceptualizations have been proffered, but perhaps the one that has generated the most traction is the metaphor of an onion proposed by Ricento and Hornberger (1996). The LPP onion is meant to depict the multiple layers of policy activity, and they emphasize the power and agency of teachers, placing them at the center of the onion. In a re-examination and application of the onion metaphor, Hornberger and Johnson (2007) note the importance of slicing through the onion to illuminate the various layers and also emphasize the agency of language policy actors across contexts.

D. Johnson (2009) characterizes the multiple layers of LPP in terms of processes – creation, interpretation, and appropriation – which can occur at every level of policy making. For example, while upper level policy-makers, say at the federal level of educational administration, are typically positioned as the 'creators' of policy, school districts, schools, and even classrooms can create their own explicit or implicit language policies. Thus, creation, interpretation, and appropriation of policy are all processes that can occur across multiple contexts and levels of institutional authority. To this tripartite definition, E. Johnson (2012) adds 'instantiation' to describe the patterns of language use. He argues that while the notion of appropriation illustrates the way language policies are 'put into action' (i.e. defined and applied by agents across subsequent levels), it is equally important to call attention to the significance of the way language policies are eventually *instantiated*, which references 'the interface between the way a policy is enacted and the ways in which languages are used as a result' (E. Johnson 2012, 58). Regardless of what a policy declares, the instantiation of that policy is realized through the resulting patterns of language use that are filtered through the broader network of social, political, and cultural influences within a given context.

### *Structure and agency in language policy*

Studying language policy as a multi-layered phenomenon inevitably requires empirical data collection in local contexts, which interpret and appropriate policies generated outside and inside of that context. Championing this perspective are ethnographic studies of language policy (e.g. McCarty 2011), characterized as the 'ethnography of language policy' (Hornberger and Johnson 2007). Critical language policy (Tollefson 1991, 2006), on the other hand, has tended to focus on macro-level language policy and characterizes LPP as inevitably ideological and a mechanism of power that marginalizes some languages and their users (typically indigenous or minority) while advancing others

(typically colonial and majority). According to Tollefson (2012b, 4), critical language policy research calls attention to ‘the relationships among language, power, and inequality, which are held to be central concepts for understanding language and society’ (cf. Moore 2002; Phillipson 1992). Incorporating a critical approach, researchers have sought to understand how language policies act as mechanisms of power that impact the educational opportunities of linguistic minorities (e.g. Tollefson 2012a).

These critical approaches have been criticized for underestimating the power of language policy agents who interpret and appropriate language policies in unique, creative, and unpredictable ways (Ricento and Hornberger 1996) and ignoring language policy processes that play out in communities and schools (Davis 1999). While critical language policy research has provided essential theoretical support for the field, ethnographic, discourse analytic, and other ‘on-the-ground’ approaches have illuminated language policy processes and emphasized the power of language policy agents (Menken and García 2010). That said, ethnographic and critical perspectives need not be in conflict since both are committed to an agenda of social justice and educational opportunity for language minorities. Indeed, we contend that the field needs this balance between structure and agency – more specifically, a balance between a critical focus on language policy power and an understanding of the power and agency wielded by language policy agents. Such a balance is aided by utilizing critical social theory in the study of language policy text and discourse, *and*, incorporating ethnographic methods to analyze how those texts and discourses are appropriated in schools.

### ***Language policy and Bourdieu***

We incorporate Bourdieu’s (1990, 1991, 1999, 2004) concepts of *habitus* and *doxa* to help determine how language policy discourses are instantiated in the beliefs and practices inherent in schools. The *habitus* can be characterized as a set of guiding habits that regulate an individual’s notion of culturally appropriate actions or as ‘systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations’ (Bourdieu 1999, 108). The notion of *habitus* describes the generation of cultural expectations and the social practices that reinforce them. For educators and students, the *habitus* propels everyday classroom practices and institutionalizes socio-linguistic norms of interaction while marginalizing alternatives to these dominant norms.

Bourdieu’s concept of *doxa* sheds light on the ‘structure’ that guides the way individuals relate to their social surrounding and rationalize the legitimacy of power relations within and between different groups. The *doxa* encompasses the ‘aggregate of choices,’ which, albeit arbitrary, nevertheless represent ‘that which is beyond question and which each agent tacitly accords by the mere fact of acting in accord with social convention’ (Bourdieu 2004, 168–169). Dominant classes have an implicit interest in perpetuating the integrity of the *doxa* and reinforcing their hegemonic influence as the natural order of things or as orthodoxy.

For example, the *doxa* of a competitive sporting event gives the participants a shared schema for competing and discourages questions about why they are bound by certain rules and physical barriers. During a contest, athletes (generally) operate without questioning the arbitrary nature of the dimensions of the field, number of players, or even the rules. While the athletes can most likely point out specific rules and regulations, it is doubtful that they would be able to explain the inherent impetus behind them (e.g. point values for scoring, physical structure of the playing space, time periods, etc.) – yet,

these types of factors (i.e. policies) directly contour the entirety of social interactions and strategic thought processing within the contest. The established policies for each sport create doxic environments that reward certain behaviors and favor particular skills, which are generally focused on winning.

Like the habitus, the arbitrary nature of the rules is only revealed when the players challenge them, but even these challenges tended to follow familiar paths and adapt to externally prescribed ‘norms of rule-challenging,’ thus reinstating and legitimizing established doxa. As described by Bourdieu (2004, 168), ‘[t]he adherence expressed in the doxic relation to the social world is the absolute form of recognition of legitimacy through misrecognition of arbitrariness, since it is unaware of the very question of legitimacy.’ In regards to education and language, Bourdieu’s description of doxa helps explain how certain policies are rationalized, legitimized, and institutionalized, ultimately resulting in patterns of language use and positioning of language users, which are viewed as ‘natural.’ Doxa, in this sense, guides individuals’ notions of ‘why’ they are doing something, though without an essential understanding of ‘what’ they are doing.

We can apply the notion of doxa to understand how some contexts are structured through policies to either promote or obfuscate a clearer sense of agency within and between groups. While ‘official’ policies determine specific guidelines for acting within a context, they are based on the participating agents’ inherent understanding of *why* they are involved in a certain context, as well as how they are supposed to act; though, how they ultimately act is based on the impetus of the habitus. In other words, even though the participants may not be able to articulate the underlying reasons for *what* they are doing, they can usually suggest reasons for *why* they are involved in such activities.

In any given policy context, the doxa constitutes a sense of structure that helps agents rationalize their actions while simultaneously and subconsciously motivating future iterations of such actions (i.e. what they are doing). While a policy does not necessarily have explicit control over people’s actions, it helps construct the implicit sociolinguistic norms of interaction and language ideologies within a given context (like a school or a classroom). Whereas the habitus guides the actual instantiation of language policies (E. Johnson 2012), the policies themselves contribute to an overall structure to which educators and students must adapt. While individuals might not be able to explain their language practices or underlying ideologies, they are generally able to suggest motivating factors for using language(s) in a certain way within that context. Thus, the doxa provides a rationalization for why individuals are prompted to use language in particular ways – further entrenching the underlying habitus within individuals and bolstering the existing doxa. The graphic in Figure 1 below demonstrates the reciprocal relationship between the habitus and doxa within a given language context (e.g. a classroom).

While Bourdieu’s use of doxa was meant to account for the totality of forces constituting the structure, looking at particular doxic relationships within contexts like schools can contribute to our understanding of how different language policies unfold within similar social, cultural, and economic contexts. Here, we explore how students in similar socio-educational contexts in Washington and Arizona experience the effects of different language education policies. To do this, we examine how the dominant discourses in these policies are interpreted and appropriated in schools among administrators, teachers, and students. In particular, we focus on how the doxic conditions within these contexts prompt educators and students to characterize their own and others’ use of Spanish and English as problems and resources. We argue that while language policies do not *cause* particular beliefs or, even, practices, they do contribute to a doxa

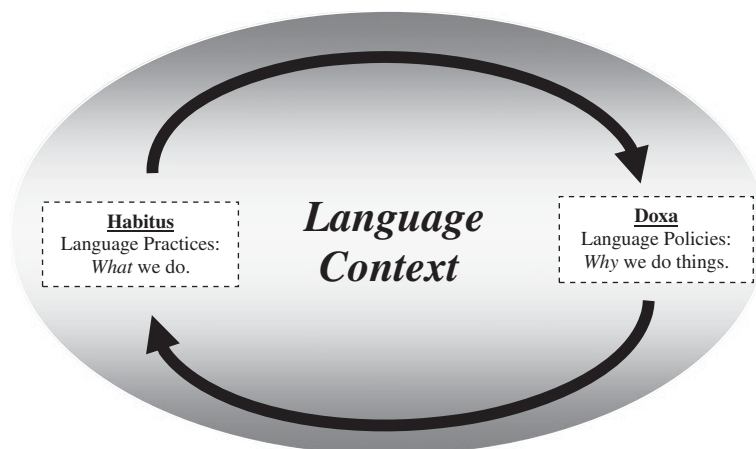


Figure 1. The reciprocal relationship between the habitus and doxa within a given language context.

that privileges (and encourages) particular beliefs and practices (i.e. habitus) that have distinct educational and social implications.

### Research contexts

This discussion focuses on school districts in the US states of Arizona and Washington. Being a state that borders Mexico, it is not surprising that Arizona's Spanish-speaking (and bilingual) population is much higher than Washington's. That said, eastern Washington's vibrant agriculture industry has attracted a large number of Spanish-speaking migrant workers, especially over the past 50 years. This has resulted in a significant number of communities in eastern Washington with a Latino majority population. The data for this study were collected in Arizona's Maricopa County and Washington's Franklin County. The prevalence of Spanish-speakers in Maricopa and Franklin counties is significant and the communities surrounding the school districts in both counties reflect similar social, cultural, and linguistic environments (US Census Bureau 2010a, 2010b; US Census 2011). Although the names of the states and counties discussed here are real, henceforth all names of schools and research participants are pseudonyms.

The data collected in Arizona stem from a three-year ethnographic project in the Milagros School District in Phoenix, Arizona (E. Johnson 2008a). This area has a predominantly Mexican immigrant population, and Spanish is the primary home and community language. The Milagros district is located in a highly industrial sector of Phoenix and comprises four schools, each servicing Kindergarten through eighth grade (approximately 3000 students). While approximately 60% of the students are *officially* classified as English Language Learners (ELL), there are very few students for whom Spanish is not their first language (less than 5%). The high levels of poverty in this area qualify the Milagros district for federal Title I funding, and the Milagros district has 100% participation in Arizona's Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program. Academically, the Milagros district consistently struggled to meet both federal and state standards as a district from 2005 to 2011 (Arizona Department of Education 2011a, 2011b).

The data collected in Washington are based on a four-year (ongoing) ethnographic project in La Paz Middle School in the Esperanza School District located in south-central Washington. This overall area has a majority Latino population (55.7%), primarily of



Table 1. Summary of schooling contexts in Arizona and Washington.

	Milagros school district (AZ)	Esperanza school district (WA)	La Paz middle school (WA)
Schools	4 schools: K-8	19 schools: K-12	6th–8th grade
Size	3000 students	15,000 students	942 students
Demographics	95% Latino/a	69% Latino/a	95% Latino/a
ELL	55%	35%	43%
Free/reduced lunch	100%	72%	97%
2010/11 federal <i>Adequate Yearly Progress</i> (AYP)	Not met	Not met	Not met

Sources: Arizona Department of Education (n.d.); Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (2011).

Mexican descent (US Census Bureau 2010b) – though the Esperanza School District comprises a 69.9% Latino student population (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2011). The Esperanza district is significantly larger than the Milagros district, comprising 19 schools (approximately 15,000 students): 12 K-5 elementary schools, 3 sixth to eighth grade middle schools, and 4 ninth to twelfth grade high schools.

We feel the comparison between the two contexts is relevant since the total number of middle school students (sixth through eighth grade) in the Milagros district is approximately equal to the number of students in La Paz Middle School (~1000 students). Furthermore, both sites share similar trends in ELL classification rates (42% in La Paz vs. 55% in Milagros), Latino demographics (96% La Paz vs. 95% Milagros) as well as numbers of students from economically impoverished backgrounds (97% La Paz vs. 100% Milagros). Finally, La Paz Middle School also continues to struggle academically and had not met the federal standards from 2003 to 2011 (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2011). The research contexts are summarized in Table 1 above.

## Methods

### Data collection

The data described in this paper are supported by extensive participant observations in the Milagros School District (AZ) and the Esperanza School District (WA). Both contexts

Table 2. Participant observation activities in Arizona and Washington.

	Arizona	Washington
Classroom volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three school years in 6th through 8th grade language arts, history, and math classes (averaging 3 observation days per week during the school year)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three years in 6th through 8th grade language arts, history, English as a second language (ESL), Special Education, and science classes (averaging 2 observation days per week during the school year)</li> </ul>
Summer school instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two summers, 5th through 8th grade science class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One summer, 7th through 8th grade ESL literacy class</li> </ul>
Substitute teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two months, 7th grade language arts class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three months, 7th grade language arts class</li> </ul>



were examined for multiple years (three years in Arizona, four years in Washington). In both contexts, E. Johnson was able to partake in multiple participant observation activities (see [Table 2](#) above).

During these activities, careful attention was paid to how language policy influenced the overall instructional environment, with a particular focus on:

- the way educators and students used and discussed language;
- how teachers structured lessons to accommodate non-English speakers;
- how teachers drew on available resources to communicate with students;
- how educators talk to and about Spanish speaking students; and
- instances of miscommunication or frustration based on issues involving language.

Field notes were recorded while conducting most participant observations, usually during the most convenient/feasible break time (e.g. during the lunch hour, between class sessions, or after school).

### ***Consultants***

Based on the collegial relationships that were formed with educators during the participant observation activities, E. Johnson was able to recruit multiple educator consultants for semi-structured, individual interviews focused on language policy and classroom practices in both Arizona and Washington. Consulting with educators based on this type of professional relationship facilitated candid discussions without causing any undue stress on the interviewees. Overall, the educators' commentaries of how language policies operate on a daily basis reflected the trends gleaned through the participant observations.

Based on the trends gleaned from the participant observations and discussions with the educators, interview questions were developed for language-minority students in Arizona to further explore language policies in terms of education and language use. The interview participants comprised 30 Latino students between sixth and eighth grade. These students were from varying immigration backgrounds (10 were born in the USA, 19 in Mexico, and 1 in Cuba) and age of arrival to the USA (11 of the foreign-born students arrived before the age of 10 years). In addition to the interviews, 10 additional students were recruited to write personal journals to chronicle their daily thoughts and experiences with language and education. These particular students were recruited from a youth community-outreach group that E. Johnson had developed as part of an *AmeriCorps* (2013)-sponsored project focused on youth leadership between 2005 and 2008. All 10 of the journal participants were born in Mexico and had 'undocumented' immigration status. The relationship between the journal students and E. Johnson prompted the students to express their personal thoughts in a supportive and non-threatening environment.

In Washington, 76 students participated in ethnographic interviews surrounding the same themes. All of the participating students were native Spanish-speakers from a Mexican heritage background. Although approximately half of the students were born in Mexico, there were only nine who had arrived after the age of 10 years. Instead of conducting individual interviews with the students in Washington, participants contributed their thoughts in a written dialog format. Following a presentation on language policies and immigration, four classes of seventh and eighth grade students in a bilingual language arts class were given the opportunity to write reflections on three prompts surrounding language, school, and immigration. Even though the responses were

voluntary and conducted during free time at the end of class, all students contributed by writing about at least one of the prompted themes.

Although having the students record their thoughts in a written format might have been more time consuming, it did offer them the opportunity to think through their responses and contribute sensitive information without the threat of being graded for the quality of their answer. While this particular approach to collecting data on the students' perceptions in Washington does differ from the extemporaneous oral interviews conducted in Arizona, we believe that it still approximates the responses produced through the Arizona students' journals. Below, we have listed the timeframe, data collection methods, and number of participants in both contexts:

- (1) AZ: Milagros School District (2005–2008)
  - 30 student interviews
  - 10 student journals (weekly accounts for 13 months)
  - 10 educator interviews
- (2) WA: Esperanza School District (2008–2012)
  - 76 student response essays (administered to four groups – two classes of seventh graders and two classes of eighth graders)
  - 12 educator interviews.

The testimonies provided by the educator and student consultants were analyzed in terms of themes surrounding language, education, and immigration. Based on these themes, voices from participants in both states have been juxtaposed to highlight the way language policies structure classroom environments and impact students and educators. Even though the views expressed by the consultants here do not represent the entirety of students and faculty in these districts, they are *representative* of the types of experiences and beliefs that pervade all of the schools and classrooms in both contexts.

### Analyzing policy levels

#### *Federal language policy*

The federal NCLB education policy designates Title III to accommodate *Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students* (US Department of Education 2012). In 2002, Title III supplanted Title VII of the 1968 reauthorization of the ESEA, which was known as the *Bilingual Education Act*, and shifted the focus from bilingualism to English-focused education (Hornberger 2006; Wiley and Wright 2004). In fact, the word 'bilingual' was expunged from the Title III narrative (Crawford 2008, 25). While empirical studies of its implementation have revealed that NCLB *has* discouraged the development of bilingual education programs or sacrificed the integrity of already existing programs (Menken and Shohamy 2008), there is nothing in the language of the policy that explicitly outlaws any particular type of language education – as long as states provide some type of 'research-based' program that is designed to help ELL students effectively learn English (Wright 2011). This has led some to argue that there is still 'implementational space' (Hornberger 2005) in Title III for a variety of language educational programs (Johnson and Freeman 2010).

Even though NCLB is intended 'to assist all limited English proficient children,' it is more specifically dedicated to 'assisting' State education agencies develop and monitor services for language-minority students (see Title III, Sec. 3102). This empowers individual states to determine the most appropriate services for their particular

educational and linguistic context, as long as they are in line with current and previously established case law policies (Crawford 2004). For this reason, the legislation shifts described in the contexts of Arizona and Washington below should be seen as processes that have taken place within the larger federal policy structure that spans the transition from Title VII to Title III. In addition to NCLB's influence on education policies, we must also mention the current popularity of President Obama's 'Race to the Top' (RTTT) funding framework (US Department of Education 2013a). States qualifying for RTTT funding must demonstrate (among other points) an explicit focus on educator and student accountability, with a specific focus on 'turning around the lowest performing schools' (US Department of Education 2013b). Since Arizona has been approved for RTTT funding (Arizona Department of Education 2013) and Washington has not (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2013), we cannot compare its effect on the language policies in these two states. Regardless of the current influence of RTTT, all states still adhere to Title III of NCLB for issues involving language policies. That said, in Arizona and Washington, the thrust behind accommodating language-minority students has taken two very different trajectories.

### *Washington*

Washington's Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) governs language education programs and resources as set forth by the Washington Transitional Bilingual Instruction Act of 1979 – amended in 1984, 1990, and 2001 – which supports the *Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program* (TBIP; Malagon and Chacon 2009; Malagon, McCold, and Hernandez 2011). Although funding comes from the Washington state legislature (allotted per eligible student – as determined by scores on a language proficiency test), the implementation and funding of the TBIP is overseen by the Office of Migrant and Bilingual Education (Malagon and Chacon 2009; OSPI 2012a). The TBIP provides districts with ample latitude for programmatic discretion, including the implementation of dual-language, developmental bilingual (late exit), transitional bilingual (early exit), sheltered instruction/content-based ESL, and newcomer programs (for expanded description and objectives of these programs, see Malagon and Chacon 2009, 26). It is important to note that even though 'sheltered instruction/content-based ESL' is a supported option under the TBIP, such programs are not 'bilingual' education programs (i.e. they are not designed to utilize the students' native languages for instructional purposes). This inconsistency in terminology reflects the broader use of 'bilingual education' as an umbrella term that is often used to refer to all programs used for ELL students – further complicating a clear understanding of what 'bilingual education' actually means (Crawford 2004; E. Johnson 2009). In fact, the majority of students (84%) receiving services under Washington's TBIP in 2011 were in sheltered instruction/content-ESL programs (OSPI 2012b).

Regardless of the fact that not all districts in Washington have the resources to provide programs aimed at developing academic bilingualism and biliteracy (e.g. dual language, developmental BLE), the state TBIP policy does provide school districts with implementational space to accommodate the needs of their particular communities. Specific achievement results on the state language proficiency assessments and standardized tests are described by Malagon, McCold, and Hernandez (2011, 28–30) and Malagon, McCold, and Hernandez (2012, 36–43). That said, even though Washington's state-level policy is important in creating such implementational and

ideological space for BLE, we contend that local school districts wield significant power in determining how state policy is ultimately interpreted, appropriated, and instantiated.

### *Arizona*

In November 2000, Arizona voters passed Proposition 203 *English for the Children*, effectively abolishing BLE services in favor of a submersion approach termed Sheltered English Immersion – now called *Structured English Immersion* (SEI; Arizona Department of Education 2000). Arizona's victory came after Ron Unz had successfully promoted his anti-bilingual education law (Proposition 227) in California in 1998 and subsequently in Massachusetts in 2002 (E. Johnson 2008b, 2009). Arizona's Prop 203 claimed that bilingual education programs (encompassing transitional bilingual education, dual language, and ESL) were impeding language-minority students from learning English and hindering both their academic and social development (E. Johnson 2005; Lillie 2011; Wright 2005). Once passed, the Arizona Department of Education was adamant that school districts adhere to Prop 203's fundamental tenet: 'Children who are English learners shall be educated through sheltered English immersion during a temporary transition period not normally to exceed one year' (Proposition 203, Sec.15–752). Although Prop 203 includes a waiver option to allow public schools to maintain bilingual programs, waivers are difficult to attain, and bilingual programs remain scant in comparison to English immersion (Combs et al. 2005; Newcomer 2012). Additionally, the rigidity of this law holds educators personally liable for not adhering to the guidelines (see Proposition 203, Sec. 15–754).

Within a few years after the implementation of Proposition 203, schools with high numbers of language-minority students began suffering severe academic consequences while struggling even harder than before to meet state and federal standards (Civil Rights Project 2010; Johnson 2011a; Johnson and Brandt 2009; Krashen, Rolstad, and MacSwan 2007; Lillie 2011; Lillie et al. 2012; Mahoney, Thompson, and MacSwan 2004; Mahoney, MacSwan, and Thompson 2005; Wright 2005; Wright and Pu 2005; Wright and Choi 2006). In spite of these academic woes – which were echoed in California and Massachusetts (Crawford 2008) – support for Proposition 203 remained firm, especially in light of the recently passed federal policy and its emphasis on attaining English proficiency (Title III, Sec. 3102 [1]). Confounding the challenges posed by Proposition 203, the Arizona state legislature passed HB 2064 in 2006. HB 2064 created an ELL Task Force that reshaped SEI programs into a 4-hour per day block of instruction specifically focused on 'English language development' that segregates ELL students from regular content area classrooms (Grijalva 2009; Lillie et al. 2012; Rios-Aguilar, González-Canché, and Sabetghadam 2012). In spite of testimonies from multiple university experts in the field of ELL education (two of whom were on the actual ELL Task Force) denouncing the 4-hour block model, language-minority students assessed below the designation of 'Intermediate' on the state language proficiency exam were required to participate in the 4-hour block classes starting in 2008 (Faltis and Arias 2012).

While providing tangible guidelines for operating a language support program can help mitigate much of the confusion surrounding inconsistent definitions and implementations of 'bilingual education' (cf. Crawford 2004, 32–50; Ovando, Combs, and Collier 2006, 47–83), imposing a one-size-fits-all mandate like Proposition 203 disregards the challenges of implementing such a program in schools with significant numbers of linguistically diverse students (E. Johnson 2008a). Even though Proposition 203 was passed as an educational initiative, it is important to point out that it reflected broader

ideological movements toward linguistic hegemony in the USA (Gándara and Orfield 2012). Proposition 203 is only one of various pieces of legislation passed over the past 20 years aimed at curbing the rights of immigrants (E. Johnson 2011b), denouncing the professional training of teachers with ‘accents’ (Blum and Johnson 2012) and dissolving ethnic studies programs deemed as ‘anti-American’ (Palos 2011).

### **Program development**

At the state policy level, Washington’s overall stance on BLE is much more culturally and linguistically supportive than Arizona’s. In contrast to Arizona’s emphasis on one year of English immersion (see above), Washington’s underlying philosophy is reflected in the statement that ‘English Language Learners (ELLs) will meet state standards and develop English language proficiency in an environment where language and cultural assets are recognized as valuable resources to learning’ (Malagon and Chacon 2009, 1). Whereas Arizona emphasizes English as the key to learning English, Washington’s policy mission statement couches the students’ L1 in terms of a ‘valuable resource to learning.’

### ***District level appropriations***

For veteran educators in Arizona, this philosophical shift has been readily evident since Prop 203 passed in 2000. As described by a school counselor in Arizona, ‘There used to be an emphasis on the value of being biliterate and bilingual, being a true biliterate. The focus now is on let’s get these kids ... able to read English and function in English and take a test in English’ (Ms Sandoval, K-8 Counselor, Milagros School District). Regardless of the programmatic and pedagogical implications of Prop 203’s regulations, this statement illustrates how Arizona’s policy has shaped educators’ overall approach to working with language-minority students.

While the programmatic options in Arizona are limited to SEI, Washington’s TBIP policy has been appropriated by the Esperanza School District to offer dual language (Spanish – English), developmental BLE (Spanish – English and Russian – English), transitional BLE (Spanish – English), sheltered instruction/content-based ESL, bilingual language arts (Spanish), and bilingual mathematics (Spanish, high school only). At La Paz Middle School, the programs are narrowed down to bilingual language arts and content-based ESL (math, science, social studies, and language arts) with native language support in Spanish. In general, the content-based ESL course is for students who have recently immigrated or need extra support with English development. Furthermore, whereas the bilingual language arts class is designed as an enrichment course for students who have progressed through the developmental bilingual program in elementary school, many recent immigrant students also take the class to keep on pace with the grade level curriculum for the English language arts classes.

This basic district-level comparison demonstrates the restrictive nature of Arizona’s policy and indicates how Washington endows districts with the professional discretion to contextualize their programs to fit the needs of their particular schools. In the case of the Esperanza district, the state TBIP policy has been appropriated through a range of programs to students in the elementary grades and then narrowing the programs at the middle school level to allow them opportunities to continue developing their native language literacy skills (bilingual language arts), while still accommodating newly arrived

immigrant students (content ESL). It should also be noted that in Arizona, the actual appropriation of SEI at the school level has been demonstrated as inconsistent and in some cases, non-existent (E. Johnson 2011a, 2012; Lillie et al. 2012).

**Language policy on the ground level**

***Educator orientations to BLE***

Program design and classroom instruction methodologies are evident products of education language policies. A more subtle byproduct, though, is the effect such policies have on educators’ views of their students’ language abilities. The intersection between language policy guidelines and educator perceptions can be considered as the nexus of a classroom doxa that sets the stage for, and contours, student interactions. Furthermore, while teachers are crucial policy decision makers and implementers (Menken 2008; Menken and García 2010; Pérez and Nordlander 2004), administrators establish an overall school environment that influences teachers’ instructional orientations (Epstein 2009; Swap 1993). To illustrate how this applies to BLE policies, the first set of comments comes from building principals in Arizona and Washington. Both principals were asked to explain the role of schools in accommodating ELL students:

AZ	WA
When you don’t have a language, which many of our kids that are coming into us, they don’t have a language, there is nothing to build on. (Principal, Milagros School District)	I think it’s going to help, the community too, not just the district, but for [the students] to say that I’m a Esperanza School District graduate and I was in a dual language program in Esperanza School District, and look ... how many doors this opened for me ... I think it’s building capacity for the ... community and for jobs that are out there too, because we’re going to produce biliterate kids. (Principal, Esperanza School District)

Considering the impact that educators have on their students, the disparate orientations toward language abilities communicated here support Bourdieu’s (1991, 62) description of the role of the educational system in the ‘production of the legitimate competence.’ Moreover, these views also underscore distinct ideological perspectives toward multilingualism. Here, the Arizona principal positions the students’ L1 as a *problem* (Ruiz 1984) – to such an extent that, in this case, the L1 is not even considered a ‘language’ (for further discussion on deficit views toward ELL students’ L1 proficiencies, see MacSwan 2000). Conversely, the Washington administrator’s comments point to the positive effects of bilingualism on the students, schools, and community and thus positions bilingualism as a resource to the students and ‘biliterate kids’ as a *resource* to the community.

Similar sentiments emerge among classroom teachers under these principals’ leadership. When prompted to discuss the students’ language abilities; it is common for teachers in both contexts to reflect positively on ‘bilingualism,’ though in different ways:



AZ	WA
I try to tell these kids that they're extremely lucky that they're bilingual ... but I tell these guys, you can know street Spanish but you're not going to get a decent job. (Mr Walker, 7th grade teacher, Milagros School District)	I am their teacher and I sometimes feel jealous that they are getting something that I wish I would have had ... I think this program will not only help them become bilingual but also multicultural. It's a wonderful gift they have been given. (Ms Zubia, 7th grade teacher, Esperanza School District)

Although Mr Walker expresses an ostensible positive orientation toward being bilingual, he simultaneously denigrates the students' dialect of Spanish as a problem standing in the way of getting a job. Additionally, he uses 'street Spanish' to refer to the ways that all the students speak Spanish. Based on two years working with Mr Walker and conducting multiple observations in his classroom, it was obvious that he neither speak nor understand Spanish well enough to determine linguistic proficiency. Thus, his remark about 'street Spanish' seems less a claim about how different varieties of Spanish are more beneficial in particular situations than a judgment about Spanish in general that appears to be rooted in socioeconomic class distinctions. Parallel to this sentiment, Mr Walker also reported that the majority of the students at his school were 'just fodder for factories' and that 'it is a shame that teachers should be expected to even waste their time on them' (field notes, 11/7/2007).

While we do not claim that all educators viewed their language-minority students through such an egregious and deficit lens, the overall 'language-as-a-problem' orientation found in this study is consistent with other ethnographic descriptions of teachers' perceptions toward ELLs in Arizona SEI classrooms (cf. Lillie et al. 2012, 14–19). On the other hand, the Esperanza School District teacher describes the multilingual educational opportunities in the district as a gift and expresses jealousy that she was also not granted access to a similar multilingual education.

Further shedding light on this context, Newcomer's (2012) ethnographic study of how Proposition 203 has impacted a dual language school in Arizona highlights the nuanced connection between teachers' everyday classroom practices (e.g. use of Spanish, parent engagement, and offering a varied curriculum) and their beliefs about ELL students. Newcomer (2012, 197) proposes that it is 'the engagement with and use of these practices that increases agency,' such that when teachers' positive beliefs toward their students are reinforced by an environment that caters to cultural diversity, they are more inclined to push back against the forces of linguistic homogenization. That said, although teachers are actively involved in the process of shaping micro-ideological and implemental spaces that influence language policies and classroom practices, they do so within an ideological space structured by macro-level language policies.

Regarding the importance of educators and schooling in the development of language norms, Bourdieu (1991, 45) refers to teachers as 'agents of regulation and imposition ... who are empowered universally to subject the linguistic performance of speaking subjects to examination and to the legal sanction of academic qualification.' Hence, although language policies do not explicitly determine interactions between students and educators, they do engender distinct ideological spaces that shape particular expectations of interaction (i.e. doxa) as preferential and position certain language practices (i.e. habitus)



as either resources or problems. Nowhere are the implications of this process clearer than in the voices of the students involved in bilingual programs.

**Student orientations**

Language policies affect students in multiple ways. By driving the creation of specific programs, determining appropriate curricular guidelines, and requiring specially trained educators, language policies construct distinct classroom atmospheres for language-minority students. In this study, the Arizona students had been exposed to a range of teachers throughout elementary and middle school, none of whom used the students’ L1 for instructional support – as required by law (Proposition 203, Section 15–751, Paragraph 5). Conversely, the Washington students were all enrolled in a middle school bilingual language arts class and most had been through the district’s developmental bilingual education program in grades K-5. The commentaries in this section reflect the doxic relationship between language policies and the development of student perceptions of language and academic opportunity.

In both language policy environments, Spanish was consistently represented endearingly in terms of family and cultural heritage. This view of Spanish resonates with the most common way students portrayed the importance of being bilingual and how they use English. For most students, speaking two languages is conceptualized in terms of what each language represents. While Spanish represents the students’ families, English is seen as a necessary tool to open access to broader economic and social resources for the entire family. This can be seen in the way Jorge (AZ) and Manny (WA) describe why it is important to be bilingual:

AZ	WA
Para que te superes en la vida, y así puedes ayudar a la familia. [ <i>So you can improve your position in life, and that way you can help your family.</i> ] (Jorge, 7th grade)	It is important to me so I can communicate with my family because they only speak Spanish ...My parents really depend on me to read important letters or bills for them so I don’t know who they would ask if I didn’t know English. (Manny, 8th grade)

Both Manny and Jorge view bilingualism as a resource; however, while Manny poses bilingualism as a resource for communicating with family (in Spanish) and helping with family financial and personal matters (in English), Jorge conflates ‘bilingualism’ with acquisition of English and portrays English as *the* resource for economic and social opportunities. When asked why being bilingual will help him improve his position in life, Jorge further explained:

...cuando digo superarme en la vida, es porque, si no más supieras español, como si estuviera en kinder y aprenderlo del comienzo, y así ya lo sé y ya puedo subir más en la vida a aprender más rápido, este, pasarme los grados.

[...when I say improve my position in life, it’s because, if you only know Spanish, like if I were in kindergarten and learning it [English] from the beginning, and that way I would already know it [English] and I could do better in life and learn quicker, well, pass the grade levels.]

Here, Jorge positions English as the primary contributor to success in life, while only knowing Spanish would be a serious problem. Thus, English, not bilingualism or Spanish, is *the* resource.

Another theme that emerged in the reflections provided by the Washington students involves viewing bilingualism as a vehicle of identity that helps them connect to both communities. As Jimena (8th grade) explains:

Knowing two languages is very important to me because I get involve in both Spanish and English events, and I help my mother with translation issues. Also like one of my past teachers said knowing more means you know what's happening in your community and you can defend yourself.

Considering the subtext of inter-ethnic group tension that pervades in this particular school district (i.e. anti-immigrant sentiments and economic disparities between Whites and Latinos), being bilingual to Jimena not only means being able to bridge both linguistic communities but also is a mechanism to 'defend yourself' against social discrimination and widespread exploitation that occurs in economic contexts. Although speaking Spanish challenges the doxa of the English-dominant community, English acquisition is a required aspect of the habitus, which grants students legitimacy therein.

While the examples listed above demonstrate how students orient to Spanish and English proficiency outside of school, the texts below reveal how students position both languages within school. In these written excerpts, Javier (AZ) and Fernando (WA) reflect on the relationship between language and school from the perspective of an immigrant student.

AZ	WA
My brother ... is lokey [lucky] because he was born in the USA. I was born in Mexico my life there was hard. Here I couldn't do my work in Spanish, but I tried. If my brother, Aldo was to go only on english schools I think he would have a better life then me. (Javier, 7th grade, journal entry)	Bilingual classes will prepare me for college because being fluent in 2 languages will help me get into college. Even if I know a lot of Spanish of what I learn @ [at] home but I'm not fluent. I think that schools should help immigrants [in Spanish] because when they first get here it's difficult to learn this language [English] and on top of that they still have to learn math and science. (Fernando, 8th grade)

Neither AZ language policy nor Javier's teachers allow Spanish in the classroom, and here he emphasizes his struggle to complete his work without using his native language. On the other hand, Fernando emphasizes the value of BLE as an aid for getting into college and the importance of using Spanish for understanding complex subjects like math and science. In addition to pointing out the role of Spanish in an academic setting, both sets of comments reflect an underlying awareness of the importance of English. By aspiring for his brother to just use English as a means to improve his life chances, Javier's remarks reflect the dominant discourse in Arizona language policy that positions English as the only resource and other languages as problems.

These examples underscore Bourdieu's stance on the role of schools in the (re) production and legitimization of linguistic capital. As Bourdieu (1991, 62) explains:

[g]iven that the educational system possesses the delegated authority necessary to engage in a universal process of durable inculcation in matters of language, and given that it tends to vary the duration and intensity of this inculcation in proportion to inherited cultural capital, it follows that the social mechanisms of cultural transmission tend to reproduce the structural disparity between the very unequal *knowledge* of the legitimate language and the much more uniform *recognition* of this language.

In Arizona, the students appropriate the dominant discourse that positions their own language as a problem and English as the only vehicle for socioeconomic and educational advancement. Similarly, Fernando's sentiments echo Washington's language policy as it is promotive of bilingualism even if he apparently associates the Spanish that he uses at home in terms of not being fluent. Although Bourdieu may be correct that schools structure unequal distribution of linguistic capital and tend to legitimate languages of power, we assert that multilingual language policies and bilingual schools create an ideological space in which multiple languages are seen as powerful resources for all students. Moreover, multilingual language policies and bilingual schools can reject national dominant discourses that position minority languages (and their users) as problems and create local discourses, which, instead, vindicate linguistic and cultural diversity.

Fernando's resource orientation toward bilingualism is also reflected in the ways many of the Washington students portray BLE. While the nature of this 'resource' orientation toward bilingualism – that is, what bilingualism is a resource for – is understood differently, BLE is seen as a powerful educational tool. For example, Ivan (seventh grade) says that BLE 'will help us because we will be able to study for more,' but he also emphasizes the cultural impact of developing his Spanish skills, 'because we won't lose our culture.' In another example from Washington, Brenda (eighth grade) emphasizes the emotional impact that immigrant students endure when entering a school without speaking English:

It was hard for me when I came here to the US and I didn't knew English. The way they talk was alien to me. So when anyone knew Spanish I was happy to have someone to talk to. This was so scary.

Not only do bilingual classes offer academic support, they contribute to the students' overall confidence and emotional sense of belonging.

The effect this has on the identities of developing multilingual students is immense. One student from Washington lucidly portrayed her linguistic identity in terms of 'being bilanguage':

Being bilanguage is important to me because it not only expands opportunity for me, but it gives me access to a whole culture of people with ideas and stories. By knowing another language, you learn about a culture which in turn expands your knowledge about the world and erases ignorance, which prevents disaster. We have seen in the past how far ignorance can spread and what it can do to people. By being bilanguage, I can stop ignorance from becoming fact. (Fabiola, eighth grade)

Fabiola's depiction of herself as 'bilanguage' is a profound example of how bilingual students can challenge dominant and marginalizing monolingual discourses, which she characterizes as 'ignorance', and prevent them from being reified as 'fact.' To Fabiola, her bilingualism expands opportunities and provides access to different groups of people and knowledge. For students like Fabiola, having access to different languages positions

them as cultural brokers who have the potential to confront the widespread social inequities facing immigrants and language-minority groups.

### Discussion

While federal policy has shifted away from promoting BLE – to an emphasis on English-focused programs – state language policies remain powerful filters through which federal policies must pass. While the language policies in both states adhere to the federal NCLB act, there is great disparity in ways they have been interpreted, appropriated, and instantiated across multiple levels. To better understand this process, Bourdieu's (2004, 169) notion of doxa is applied to demonstrate that education language policies heavily contribute to a sense of 'that which is beyond question and which each agent tacitly accords by the mere fact of acting in accord with social convention.' Here, we contend that language policies construct a distinct classroom doxa that is established through parameters of interactions between and among educators and students. Stemming from these doxic parameters, the instantiation of a given policy illustrates how a policy has been interpreted and appropriated at the local level, while also revealing underlying ideological orientations toward cultural norms and expectations.

To many, Bourdieu's (1990, 53) notion that 'the habitus makes possible the free production of thoughts, perceptions and actions inherent in the particular conditions of its production – and only those,' may communicate a lack of human agency and, in fact, seems to reject agentive choice and human creativity. In our discussion, we do not reject that individuals are solely guided by their habitus; rather, we argue that the habitus is negotiated within, and ultimately influenced by, contextually structured doxic conditions. When policies are enacted within defined social spaces, the interaction between the habitus and doxa creates a space in which individuals must negotiate *what* they are doing with *why* they are doing it – especially before the *what* starts to inherently define the *why*. It is within this space that we view human agency taking place. When doxic conditions shift (i.e. through varying interpretations and appropriations of policies), there is an inherent negotiation of behaviors within, and between, individuals. This view allows us to see how policies affect norms of social interaction within distinct contexts (e.g. classrooms) and, in turn, produce cultural behaviors and expectations that may vary between similar social and economic conditions.

### Conclusions

In that Bourdieu's theory is very applicable to LPP research and helps describe how language policy discourses institutionalize and legitimize particular interactional norms and language ideologies, we also maintain that educators and students are active agents in the reproduction, instantiation, or contestation of such norms. The habitus and doxa rely on human agents who actively recontextualize (or not) dominant language policy discourses such that while some educators will be conscripted and therefore complicit in instantiating marginalizing discourses, others will endorse alternative discourses that promote educational and social opportunity for linguistic minorities. We argue that this happens all the time, especially in contexts supported by additive BLE language policies – though this is also possible in repressive environments where additive programs are a result of community-based efforts of resistance to subtractive policies (cf. Newcomer 2012). However, while the interpretation and appropriation of macro-level policy texts is an agentive process, open to human ingenuity and creativity, the power of dominant

policy discourses, which perpetuate the habitus and doxa within schools, cannot be denied and should not be overlooked. This paper has attempted to illuminate this.

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