Raciolinguistics: A Literature Review & Future Research Directions on the Manifestations of Racist Ideologies in the Classroom in the U.S. Educational System

Samuel Enrique Bello Ulcue, Northern Illinois University, United States

The European Conference on Education 2025
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

This systematic literature review explores the questions: *What is raciolinguistics?* And *how does it manifest itself in the classroom?* Raciolinguistics examines the intersection of language and race, highlighting how linguistic hierarchies reflect and reinforce racial ideologies. In the U.S. educational system, raciolinguistic ideologies manifest through language policies, some bilingual programs, and curricular practices that privilege white linguistic norms while marginalizing racialized students. The review highlights three key findings: 1) English-only policies position multilingualism as a barrier, leading to the exclusion of bilingual learners. 2) Subtractive bilingual programs, rather than fostering true linguistic inclusion, reinforce assimilation by prioritizing English over students' home languages. 3) The emphasis on standard English in curricula delegitimizes linguistic diversity and embeds bias in teaching practices. These manifestations of raciolinguistic ideologies shape student experiences, fostering self-doubt and disengagement among marginalized students. By analyzing these dynamics, this review underscores the urgent need for equity-driven reforms that embrace multilingualism as an asset and promote inclusive pedagogical approaches that affirm students' linguistic and cultural identities in the U.S.

Keywords: raciolinguistics, language policies, bilingual education, standard language ideology, linguistic marginalization

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Introduction

Language and race are deeply intertwined, shaping how individuals navigate educational spaces and broader society. Raciolinguistics critically examines this relationship, showing how linguistic hierarchies reflect and reinforce racial ideologies. In the U.S. educational system, these ideologies manifest in policies, curricula, and pedagogies that privilege white linguistic norms while marginalizing racialized language practices—such as African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Spanglish, and Indigenous languages—which are often stigmatized or erased (Flores, 2020; Flores & Rosa, 2015a; Sung, 2018; Zentella, 2014). These ideologies are embedded in institutional structures, influencing language policy, bilingual education, and the dominant framing of standard English as the only legitimate form (Flores & Rosa, 2015b; García et al., 2021).

In classrooms shaped by diverse linguistic and cultural identities, raciolinguistic ideologies remain influential. Teachers and students alike bring with them assumptions, expectations, and biases shaped by a broader system that privileges white language norms. As Flores and Rosa (2015b) argue, examining not only the "eyes" but also the "mouth" and "ears" of whiteness reveals how these ideologies shape classroom interactions. This literature review critiques how English-only policies, transitional bilingual programs, curricular standards, and biased assessments perpetuate linguistic injustice, calling for critical reflection and systemic change in language education. English-only policies like Arizona's Proposition 203 enforce assimilation and devalue multilingualism (Gandara & Hopkins, 2010). Some bilingual programs, despite their intentions, often prioritize English over home language maintenance, structuring bilingualism as a transitional phase and relying on assessments that favor English dominance (Chávez-Moreno, 2022). Curricular norms further perpetuate deficit views of non-standard varieties, reinforcing linguistic inequality (Austin, 2022; Pino, 2022).

Methodology

This literature review examined the questions "What is raciolinguistics and how does it manifest itself in the classroom?" I conducted a systematic search of research in peer-reviewed journals and books using the online databases of ERIC, JSTOR, Academic Search Premier, Education Full Text (H.W. Wilson), Criminal Justice Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, and the Google Scholar search engine. I searched for education policies on the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) and for physical books at Northern Illinois University, Founders Library. I limited searches to research connected to discipline in schools, published in English. Search terms included "bilingualism," "raciolinguistics," "linguicism," "history of racism," "racist ideologies in education," and "case studies on race-based discrimination in the classrooms." These were crossed with outcomes such as "ideology," "teaching practices," "language profiling," "dropout," and "language policies in education." My inclusion criteria looked for publications on a) theoretical analysis and practical application of raciolinguistics as a field and Critical Race Theory (CRT), b) specifically the applicability to the educational setting in the United States, and c) focused on policies and manifestations of raciolinguistics and their short- or long-term outcomes, such as academic engagement, achievement, climate, or self-perceptions. I excluded publications written in other languages rather than in English and not connected to the educational system of the United States.

Survey of the Field of Raciolinguistics

On Human Categorization

Early human societies already categorized individuals based on physical differences to establish collective identity and security. Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt demonstrated social stratification where conquered peoples were often enslaved and seen as inferior, reflecting power dynamics rather than racial ideology (Fredrickson, 2002; Snowden, 1983). Greek and Roman societies emphasized cultural superiority over physical traits, enslaving those deemed *barbaric* (Isaac, 2004). Beyond the Mediterranean, ancient Indian and Chinese societies developed hierarchies like the caste system, which stratified society based on hereditary roles and, later, skin tone (Thapar, 2003). While not explicitly racial, these systems echoed exclusion and control based on perceived differences; for example, ancient African societies' diversity was later distorted by colonial narratives branding them as homogeneous or uncivilized (Banton, 1987; Bartlett, 2001; Keita, 1993b) ignoring the reality that ancient African societies were diverse—culturally, linguistically, politically.

In the mid-15th century, the portuguese prince Henry the Navigator sponsored voyages to West Africa, initiating a new kind of slavery that began targeting Africans specifically (Kendi, 2019). While earlier Islamic and European slavery was not racially based, these Portuguese expeditions marked a shift toward racialized slavery, as they began to enslave Africans exclusively. Gomes de Zurara, Prince Henry's biographer, played a key role in shaping early racist ideology. In his 1453 *Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea*, he described enslaved Africans in terms of skin color and physical features, yet grouped them into a single category deserving of enslavement, regardless of their diversity. This marked one of the earliest instances of turning Blackness into a unified, inferior identity, laying the groundwork for the idea of race as a social hierarchy. Although the term "race" was not formally used at that time, Zurara's writing effectively invented the first racist idea: the notion that all African people could be treated as a single, inferior group. Race-making, then, became a tool to justify enslavement and maintain power.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Enlightenment paradoxically celebrated equality while fostering scientific racism. Thinkers like Carl Linnaeus and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach classified humanity into distinct *races*, attributing moral and intellectual characteristics to these groups (Keita, 1993a; Kendi, 2019). Blumenbach's taxonomy idealized Caucasians, reinforcing Eurocentric biases and justifying colonial expansion (Bartlett, 2001; Gould, 1981; Hannaford, 1996; Stepan, 1982). Philosophers like Kant and Hume embedded racial distinctions in their discussions of morality and reason, asserting natural hierarchies of races (Eze, 1997; Kidd, 2006). Pseudoscientific practices like phrenology and physiognomy further entrenched racial stereotypes, influencing colonial policies and shaping public perceptions of racial inferiority (Gould, 1981; Stocking, 1987). The Industrial Revolution amplified these ideas, legitimizing the exploitation of non-European populations and embedding systemic racism into economic and political systems (Hannaford, 1996).

Colonialism formalized racial ideologies into structured systems that profoundly influenced global societies. European empires developed legal and social frameworks to sustain racial hierarchies. The Doctrine of Discovery legitimized the dispossession and extermination of Indigenous peoples, branding them as "savage" and incapable of self-governance (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2014; Newcomb, 1992). The transatlantic slave trade institutionalized racial ideologies, commodifying African identity and embedding race as a primary axis of inequality (Baptist,

2014; Davis, 2006). In Africa, colonial powers imposed artificial borders and hierarchies, privileging certain groups to maintain control and sowing seeds of ethnic conflict and systemic racism (Mamdani, 1996; Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002). Colonial education systems and cultural policies reinforced racial hierarchies by promoting Eurocentric values and erasing indigenous knowledge (Fanon, 1961; Ngũgĩ, 1986).

Understanding this history is crucial to dismantling the enduring frameworks of colonial racism and addressing its global impact (Blommaert, 2010; Fanon, 1961). Colonialism also wielded language as a tool of control, systematically erasing indigenous languages and imposing the colonizer's language to enforce cultural and ideological dominance (Flores & Rosa, 2015a; Sung, 2018). By stigmatizing and marginalizing indigenous languages, colonial powers relegated their speakers to the lowest rungs of the social hierarchy, further reinforcing racialized systems of oppression (Ngũgĩ, 1986). The enduring perception that certain languages are superior to others has permeated modern societies, perpetuating linguistic discrimination and the marginalization of minoritized communities (Fanon, 1961). These dynamics illustrate how linguistic hierarchies continue to shape power relations and social stratification worldwide.

Raciolinguistics as a Field

Raciolinguistics is an interdisciplinary field that critically examines the intersections of race, language, and power, rooted in colonial structures that position the language of the dominant race as the norm. As Alim et al. (2016) explain, it moves beyond analyzing linguistic forms to critique how language constructs and reflects systems of racial inequality and dominance. The field aims to expose how language perpetuates social, political, and economic oppression while also considering how marginalized communities resist linguistic oppression through transformative efforts in policy, pedagogy, and practice (Alim, 2010; Alim et al., 2016; Paris & Alim, 2017). This focus on critique and resistance marks raciolinguistics as a critical, progressive approach that seeks to dismantle linguistic discrimination.

Race ideology is rooted in a belief that some physical features are inherently superior to others, reinforcing power dynamics that favor those perceived as belonging to the "superior" race. This perspective has its origins in colonial history, shaping how societies categorize and value people (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Similarly, language ideology operates under the assumption that there is a single "proper" or "correct" way to use language—typically modeled after the language practices of the dominant, so-called superior race. These two ideologies intertwine, creating a raciolinguistic ideology characterized by three interconnected concepts: the white listening subject, the idealized speaking subject, and the racialized body (Flores & Rosa, 2015b).

According to Rosa and Flores (2017), the *white listening subject* "is not a biographical individual but an ideological position and a mode of perception that shapes our racialized society" (p. 151); hence, it refers to those who expect others to adhere to "correct" language standards. This expectation can be upheld by individuals, professional groups, or institutions like the education system. In response to these expectations, the *idealized speaking subject* emerges—a monolingual speaker who flawlessly masters the standard or "appropriate" language, becoming the measure against which others are judged. Meanwhile, the *racialized body* includes anyone who speaks a non-standard variety, uses the language as a second or third language, or speaks in a dialect marked as different. These individuals are often expected to strive toward becoming the idealized speaking subject, a goal that is ultimately

unattainable. It is in this inherent impossibility that the raciolinguistic problem arises. The idea that those marked as racially different can never fully meet the standards set by the white listening subject becomes a tool to control, categorize, and undermine entire cultures. Language, then, becomes a mechanism not just of communication, but of power and oppression over, for example, varieties like AAVE and Spanglish (Rosa, 2019).

Language practices are not neutral; they are shaped by racial ideologies that reinforce power structures, influencing educational settings, media representations, and everyday interactions. Lippi-Green (2004) and Baugh (2000) expose how linguistic profiling perpetuates systemic racism in education and employment, as "people use false assumptions about language to justify judgments that have more to do with race, national origin, regional affiliation, ethnicity, and religion than with human language and communication" (Lippi-Green, 2004, p. 292). Similarly, the concept of a "standard language," critiqued by Cameron (2007) and Lippi-Green (2004), reinforces white linguistic hegemony by positioning white, middle-class language norms as ideal while stigmatizing others.

Intersectionality in raciolinguistics reveals that language, race, and power are mutually constitutive elements that shape social realities (Crenshaw, 1991). Linguistic features like accents or hybrid languages (Spanglish, Mock Spanish) become markers of racial identity, often leading to discrimination. For example, AAVE has been racialized as inferior despite its intricate linguistic structure (Alim & Smitherman, 2020), while accents influence perceptions of intelligence and professionalism (Baugh, 2000; Cameron, 2007). Zentella (1997) highlights how Spanglish, though a marker of Latinx identity, is stigmatized because ideas of "Standard English" are racialized constructs rather than objective linguistic categories (Flores & Rosa, 2015b).

The Manifestation of Raciolinguistic Ideologies in the Classroom

Raciolinguistic and Institutional Policies

Educational policies often reinforce systemic racism by upholding norms rooted in raciolinguistic ideologies that privilege whiteness. Though often seen as neutral, these policies shape access and outcomes for marginalized students (Nieto & Bode, 2018). English-only policies, driven by movements like U.S. English and English First since the 1980s, reflect such ideologies (Lawton, 2008). Even before English was officially declared the U.S. language in 2025, many states had already legislated English-only education. These policies, such as California's Proposition 227, devalued bilingualism by restricting instruction in students' home languages, limiting opportunities for English learners and eroding their linguistic heritage (Gandara & Hopkins, 2010).

In Arizona, Proposition 203[1], known as the "English for the Children" initiative, was a ballot measure English proficiency that mandated that all public-school instruction for English learners (ELs) be conducted in English, effectively replacing bilingual education programs with a structured English immersion (SEI) model (Arizona Secretary of State, 2000). Proponents argued that a) immersion in English would help students learn the language faster

[1] Proposition 203 remains in effect. However, there is ongoing debate regarding its implementation and potential amendments. The Arizona School Boards Association (ASBA) has expressed interest in revising the law to better serve ELLs, citing concerns that the current approach may not effectively support students' language acquisition and academic success.

and achieve academic success; b) English fluency was essential for integrating into society and accessing better job opportunities; and c) bilingual education programs were ineffective and kept students segregated from mainstream education. Additionally, Senate Bill 1014 (SB 1014)[2], enacted in Arizona in 2019, reformed the state's approach to educating English Language Learners (ELLs). Previously, Arizona mandated that ELL students participate in a four-hour daily block of structured English Immersion (SEI) instruction, which often segregated them from their peers and limited access to comprehensive academic content. This bill states that a) reducing SEI hours enabled ELL students to spend more time in mainstream classrooms, promoting better integration with English-speaking peers and access to a broader curriculum; b) increased exposure to diverse academic content and interactions would lead to higher overall academic achievement for ELL students; c) granting school districts the autonomy to adopt instructional methods tailored to their specific student populations, fostering innovative and effective teaching strategies; and d) that the previous four-hour SEI block was not supported by research as the most effective method for language acquisition and that more flexible, research-based approaches could yield better results.

The Arkansas the Code titled "Basic Language of Instruction," was originally enacted in 1919. The statute mandates that "the basic language of instruction in the public-school branches in all the public schools of the state shall be the English language only" (Arkansas Code, 2024). Over the years, it has undergone amendments to address the evolving educational landscape and the needs of a diverse student population. In 2021, the Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 663, which amended § 6-16-104 to allow educators to communicate with students in their native languages to facilitate English proficiency. This amendment acknowledged the practical needs of non-English-speaking students and provided flexibility for bilingual or dual-immersion programs approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. As of January 2025, the Arkansas Code § 6-16-104 remains in effect, with the provisions from the 2021 amendment incorporated. The statute continues to mandate English as the basic language of instruction while allowing certain exceptions to support English language learners.

In West Virginia, the Code §18-2-7 pertains to the state's educational system, specifically focusing on the courses of study and the language of instruction within schools (West Virginia Code, 2024). The statute designates English as the primary language of instruction in West Virginia schools. However, it also recognizes American Sign Language (ASL) as a credited foreign language course. West Virginia Code §18-2-7 remains in effect, upholding the provisions regarding the establishment of course standards and the recognition of ASL as a foreign language. The statute continues to guide the State Board of Education in approving curricula and ensuring that English serves as the primary medium of instruction, with accommodations for ASL as part of foreign language education.

Raciolinguistic Bilingualism

Bilingual programs aim to help students become proficient in two or more languages, often serving as a bridge between cultural and linguistic identities. However, beneath the surface of these well-meaning educational policies lies the influence of raciolinguistic ideologies, which shape how language is taught, valued, and regulated in schools. These programs, rather than fostering true bilingualism, often function as mechanisms for linguistic assimilation,

[2] The 2019 version of SB 1014 is in effect, implementing the changes to the SEI program. The 2025 version is still in the pre-filed stage and has not yet been enacted into law.

reinforcing racial hierarchies that privilege English over other languages (Román et al., 2019; Rosa & Flores, 2017). The distinction between subtractive and additive bilingual programs highlights this disparity.

Subtractive bilingual programs prioritize English acquisition at the expense of students' home languages, reinforcing linguistic hierarchies that devalue non-English languages. Examples include Early Exit Transitional Bilingual Programs and ESL Pull-Out, Push-In, and Sheltered/Structured English Immersion (SEI) Programs, which are not bilingual programs but they exist in the context of language education (García, 2009). Additive bilingual programs, such as Dual-Language Immersion and Late Exit Transitional Bilingual Education, aim to develop proficiency in both languages, which is the goal of bilingualism.

Early Exit Transitional Bilingual Programs are designed to facilitate the shift from a student's native language to English, with the goal of mainstreaming students into English-dominant classrooms as quickly as possible (Baker & Wright, 2021; García, 2009). While these programs provide initial instruction in students' home languages, the gradual reduction of non-English instruction reflects an underlying belief that English is the ultimate linguistic goal. This approach aligns with raciolinguistic ideologies that position English as the language of academic and professional success while treating students' native languages as temporary crutches rather than legitimate linguistic systems. The assumption that students must eventually abandon their home languages to achieve academic success reinforces a deficit perspective, framing bilingualism as a barrier rather than an asset—particularly when the bilingual speaker is racialized. This ideology is evident in policies that measure program success primarily by English proficiency test scores, rather than by students' ability to maintain and develop bilingual skills.

ESL (English as a Second Language) programs vary in structure but generally function within a raciolinguistic framework that constructs non-English speakers as linguistically deficient. While these programs claim to support multilingual learners, they ultimately reinforce the dominance of English and fail to value students' home languages as legitimate modes of learning and communication (Flores & Baetens Beardsmore, 2015; Flores et al., 2015).

In Pull-Out ESL programs, students are removed from their mainstream classrooms for a portion of the day to receive separate English instruction. This model isolates students from their peers, positioning English as the only valuable language for academic success while reinforcing the notion that their home languages are insufficient. By segregating students based on language ability, these programs contribute to racial and linguistic stratification, further marginalizing bilingual learners (Ovando & Combs, 2017). This reinforces a hierarchy where English is seen as the legitimate academic language, while students' home languages are positioned as obstacles to learning.

Dove and Honigsfeld (2018) mention that Push-In ESL programs are, to some extent, better than Pull-Out programs. However, although ESL teachers enter mainstream classrooms to provide support, the primary expectation remains that students conform to standard English norms. Rather than promoting a truly bilingual learning environment, this approach subtly pressures students to abandon their home languages in favor of English. Likewise, although scholars such as Faltis in in the 90s defend sheltered/structured instruction immersion programs' positivity of segregation for someone who is not proficient in the target language, the truth is that segregation may produce social isolation and self-perceptions of inferiority

for students (Baker & Wright, 2021; Constantino, 1993). These programs aim to teach academic content using simplified English, assuming that students will naturally acquire English proficiency through immersion. However, by disregarding students' home languages as valuable resources for learning, these programs contribute to linguistic erasure. The focus on English-only instruction mirrors broader assimilationist policies that seek to suppress linguistic diversity, reinforcing the belief that dominant languages are the norm while minoritized languages are obstacles to success.

Flores and Rosa (2015a) argue that students classified as English learners are often racialized as lacking linguistic legitimacy, regardless of their actual language abilities. The racialized nature of ESL classifications means that Black, Indigenous, and Latinx students are disproportionately placed in these programs, despite demonstrating proficiency in English. The emphasis on English acquisition over bilingual development implicitly devalues students' home languages, reinforcing the message that English is superior and necessary for full participation in academic and professional spaces.

Raciolinguistic Curriculum and Teaching Practices

The emphasis on standard English in education undermines other languages and varieties, privileging Eurocentric norms and marginalizing racially and linguistically diverse students. Curricula often promote "a homogeneous, idealized form of spoken and written language... enforced by hegemonic institutions, such as governmental bodies and schools" (Licata et al., 2023, p. 125), also referred to as standard or academic language (Flores, 2020). This ideology positions English as the only legitimate medium for conveying knowledge, disregarding the value of other linguistic and cultural practices. As García et al. (2021) note, English language arts teachers face the "absurdity of trying to teach only in English" using a Eurocentric curriculum, even though bilingual students often demonstrate greater linguistic and intellectual depth (p. 207). Pino (2022) illustrates this with his experience of being sent to speech therapy for nonstandard pronunciation, despite being an English speaker, showing how language racialization devalues students' abilities and fosters feelings of inadequacy. This process—known as *languagelessness* (Rosa, 2019)—frames nonstandard varieties as inferior, reinforcing the idea that students must conform to white linguistic norms to succeed (Cameron, 2007; Fallas-Escobar, 2024; Flores & Rosa, 2015a; Licata, 2021; Lippi-Green, 2004; McWhorter, 2017). As Pino (2022) powerfully states, students' language—and even their existence—can be perceived as deficient, threatening "the invisibility and normalcy of whiteness" (p. 5).

Furthermore, teaching practices shaped by raciolinguistic ideologies devalue the linguistic and cultural practices of racialized students, limiting their academic opportunities and reinforcing systemic inequities. Implicit biases, deficit framing in pedagogy, and cultural mismatches in the classroom all contribute to the marginalization of racialized students. Teaching practices, for example, in many educational settings often reflect implicit biases. Chávez-Moreno (2022) argues that teachers' "explanations of the persistent disparities they perceive in their classrooms influence their practices and what they view as needed interventions" (p. 555). Some scholars contend that ESL teachers, for example, should prioritize fostering critical consciousness to ensure educational equity, a perspective supported by longstanding research emphasizing the role of educators in developing students' critical awareness (Chávez-Moreno, 2022; Palmer et al., 2019). However, teachers may unconsciously interpret linguistic features like African American English (AAE), Spanglish, or other varieties as signs of academic weakness in need of speech therapy (García, 2008;

Pino, 2022) rather than evidence of linguistic dexterity. For instance, a Black student who uses AAE features, such as "He be running," might be unfairly labeled as needing remediation, even though such expressions reflect complex grammatical rules within AAE. This bias overlooks the student's linguistic competence and reinforces the raciolinguistic ideology about "standard" English being the only valid form of communication.

Additionally, by structuring the curriculum around a narrow linguistic standard, educational institutions not only limit access to diverse linguistic traditions but also reinforce a hierarchy where white, monolingual English remains the default and all other linguistic expressions are either erased or positioned as exceptions. As García et al. (2021) note, "even when racialized and/or bilingual writers have attained recognition by having their work included in the school curriculum, the language practices of the authors are tagged as exceptional and unique" (p. 209), which means that their works are often framed as deviations from an assumed linguistic norm rather than valued on their own terms. This marginalization is further reinforced by the ways in which academic language itself is defined. As García et al. (2021) explain, "attempts to identify detectable linguistic characteristics of academic language tend to stem from idealized representations of texts produced mostly by white monolingual English-users occupying a socially dominant position" (p. 209). Because the dominant standard is rooted in the linguistic practices of white monolingual speakers or the *White listening subject*, any divergence from this norm is marked as an exception rather than as a legitimate and integral part of academic discourse. This exclusionary framework is not incidental but systemic, as normative approaches to language in education actively erase non-dominant voices. García et al. (2021) describe this erasure, stating that "it is in this abyssal light that normative approaches to language and education continue to generate absences and failures" (p. 216). Additionally, the persistent scarcity of representation from linguistically marginalized authors further perpetuates white linguistic dominance. As Austin (2022) points out, the "scarcity of representation from speakers of languages outside of white mainstream English (WME), coupled with a language eradication approach in English Language Arts spaces, contributes to white linguistic hegemony" (p. 246).

Implicit biases often lead teachers to hold lower expectations for students of color, assuming they are less capable of academic success. These biases can manifest in grading, classroom dynamics, and recommendations for advanced programs, ultimately limiting opportunities for racialized students to access higher-level academic pathways (Pino, 2022). Additionally, teachers from predominantly white, middle-class backgrounds may experience a cultural mismatch when working with students from diverse communities (Chávez-Moreno, 2022). This mismatch can lead to misunderstandings of students' behavior or communication styles, alienating students and preventing the use of culturally relevant pedagogies that affirm their identities. The pervasive deficit-framing of racialized students and their communities further exacerbates educational inequities. Rather than addressing systemic barriers, this perspective places the burden of change on students and their families, framing them as lacking the skills, values, or resources needed for success. Such narratives ignore the systemic inequities that contribute to educational disparities and perpetuate the myth that failure is rooted in individual or cultural deficiencies.

Findings

The analysis reveals that raciolinguistic ideologies embedded in educational policies and practices continue to marginalize students from racially and linguistically diverse

backgrounds. These ideologies manifest in various ways, shaping students' educational experiences and reinforcing systemic inequities.

a) English-only policies treat students' home languages as deficits rather than assets, fostering feelings of inadequacy and disengagement among bilingual and multilingual learners.
b) Some bilingual programs, though framed as inclusive, subtly promote English dominance by downplaying the value of students' native languages, leading students to see their linguistic diversity as irrelevant.
c) The emphasis on standard English delegitimizes non-standard varieties and other languages, embedding bias into instruction and assessment and undermining students' cultural and linguistic identities.

Discussion

This literature review draws on raciolinguistics to examine how language and race intersect in U.S. classrooms, where institutional policies and teaching practices often reinforce white linguistic dominance and marginalize racialized students. English-only mandates, such as Arizona's Proposition 203 and Arkansas's Code §6-16-104, exemplify policies that devalue multilingualism and treat students' home languages as obstacles rather than assets (Arizona Secretary of State, 2000; Arkansas Code, 2024; Flores & Rosa, 2015a; Gandara & Hopkins, 2010). These policies uphold white linguistic hegemony by positioning non-English speakers as deficient, limiting access to academic and economic opportunities.

Even some bilingual programs contribute to linguistic assimilation by treating English proficiency as the ultimate goal. Transitional models, in particular, frame students' native languages as temporary tools, rather than integral to identity and learning (Chávez-Moreno, 2022). This dynamic reflects broader societal patterns in which bilingualism is celebrated when associated with white, middle-class speakers, but seen as a deficit when tied to racialized communities (Flores & Rosa, 2015b).

Curricula and pedagogy further reinforce these inequities by privileging standardized English and marginalizing other linguistic forms. Academic language is often defined around white monolingual norms (García & Li, 2014; García et al., 2021), while non-standard varieties and non-white authors are framed as deviations. Textbooks lack representation of linguistically diverse voices, and implicit biases in teaching and assessment often position racialized students as linguistically deficient (Austin, 2022; Pino, 2022). For example, Pino (2022) recounts being sent to speech therapy despite speaking English as a first language, highlighting how systemic bias pathologizes linguistic difference.

While raciolinguistics has been applied to education policy and theory, a significant gap remains in understanding how raciolinguistic ideologies manifest in everyday classroom interactions. As Flores and Rosa (2015a) argue, we must examine the "mouth" and "ears" of whiteness, recognizing that the white listening subject may also be students racializing the language practices of teachers. Studies like Flores et al. (2020) and Flores et al. (2018) on dual-language students in Chicago illustrate how raciolinguistic frameworks can uncover hidden biases in classroom discourse and guide more equitable pedagogy.

Addressing raciolinguistic inequities requires systemic reform across educational policy, curriculum, teacher preparation, and community engagement. Equitable funding, revised tracking systems, and the elimination of punitive discipline policies are essential to

supporting marginalized students. Anti-racist curricula must highlight contributions from racialized communities and validate students' linguistic identities, while teacher training must address implicit bias and promote culturally sustaining pedagogy. Research should also examine the ideological limitations within anti-racist movements themselves—some of which, as McWhorter (2021) critiques, risk reinforcing racial divides through performative actions rather than structural change. Nonetheless, the frameworks advanced by DiAngelo (2018) and Kendi (2019) continue to influence education discourse and merit critical engagement.

Conclusion

Raciolinguistics offers a critical lens to examine how language reinforces racial inequities in education. While much research addresses policy-level issues, future studies must investigate real-time classroom interactions to uncover how raciolinguistic ideologies are enacted daily. This shift allows for the identification of both harmful practices and moments of resistance, revealing opportunities for more equitable teaching. Transformative change requires moving beyond symbolic reforms to implement raciolinguistically informed curricula, teacher training, and policies. Centering the lived experiences and linguistic practices of racialized students is essential for creating inclusive educational spaces that validate diverse identities and challenge the dominance of standardized English norms.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Dr. Gulsat Aygen and Dr. James Cohen for their generous and insightful feedback, which greatly enriched this work. Special thanks to John Riebe, whose steady presence and reflections helped me understand that racism affects us all—but that kind hearts and committed allies can stand against it. I also thank Mónica, Carolina, Giovany and Sofía for sharing their experiences as international educators in multilingual classrooms, which deeply informed my perspective. Finally, I thank Camilo Gaviria for being a thoughtful and critical reader of my work from afar. Thanks to them, I am especially reminded of the power of embracing our own language identity as a source of strength, connection, and resistance.

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Contact email: Samuel.bello@fulbrightmail.org