



Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching in the Neo-Nationalist Era

Edited by
Kyle McIntosh

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This book is dedicated to the memory of Jean Babb (1922–2006), a public-school teacher and literacy specialist who spent part of every summer driving her grandson around the United States in an AMC hatchback so that he could learn more about the history of this nation. She never shied away from talking to him about the terrible atrocities that had been committed in its name, while also pointing out the many great things it had accomplished. I still miss you, Grandma.

Preface

This edited volume explores how resurgent nationalism across the globe demands a re-examination of many of the theories and practices in applied linguistics and language teaching as political forces seek to limit the movement of people, goods, and services across national borders and, in some cases, enact violence upon those with linguistic and/or ethnic backgrounds that differ from that of the dominant culture. Some questions that this book addresses are: How does rising dissatisfaction with globalization affect public perceptions of second or foreign language learning and learners? How are nationalist ideologies reflected in teaching practices, textbooks, educational policies, and public debates? Could neo-nationalism in some countries be seen as a corrective to the hegemony of the English language and Anglo-American power? How might the fields of applied linguistics and language teaching reaffirm a commitment to multilingualism and multiculturalism in the face of rising nationalism without sounding like apologists for neoliberal globalization? To address these questions and others, the authors in this volume have provided their careful analysis of nationalist discourses and actions in disparate contexts: from Africa to East Asia, Europe to the Middle East, and in

North and South America. These authors offer unique historical and cultural perspectives, as well as practical responses, to the fraught political situations with which many language educators and policymakers must now contend.

Following an introduction by Kyle McIntosh in Chapter 1, which provides background on the rise of neo-nationalism and the dilemmas that this political shift poses for the related fields of applied linguistics and language teaching, the remainder of the volume is divided into two parts: “Policies” and “Practices.” Of course, these two facets of our professional lives can never be totally separated, as policy always informs practice, and vice versa. Nevertheless, the chapters included in each section tend to lean more in one direction than the other.

Part I focuses mainly on the ways in which neo-nationalist ideologies influence language-in-education policies in both the political and public realms. As Bryan Meadows notes in Chapter 2, “From the beginning, language has played a central role in the ideology of nationalism” (p. 19). To see how this ideology is evolving in the United States today, Meadows examines arguments in support of the so-called “English-Only” movement. Through critical discourse analysis, he exposes monolingual models of education as a form of border maintenance that attempts to control who belongs in the country and who does not. While the push to make English the U.S.’s official language has been stymied at the federal level, it has been more successful on state and local levels. Meadows finds evidence to suggest that the anti-immigration policies of the Trump administration are reinvigorating those who view bilingual education as a threat to their vision of a linguistically, culturally, and ethnically homogenous nation.

While English is the dominant language in the United States, regardless of its official status, and commands a great deal of attention—and criticism—worldwide as a lingua franca, it can also be marginalized, especially when saddled with the complex legacies of colonialism, as Bernard Ndzi Ngala reveals in Chapter 3. His fascinating account of the “Anglophone crisis” in Cameroon, where the dominance of the French-speaking majority in legal and educational domains has sparked protests and violence among the English-speaking minority, clearly illustrates how difficult it can be to maintain equality in a multilingual society.

Meanwhile, in Chapter 4, Fatima Esseili looks at preemptive measures taken by the government of the United Arab Emirates to prevent social unrest and to promote unity in a country where the expatriate majority has been excluded from many aspects of social and political life. She then contrasts these moves toward a more inclusive, civic nationalism with efforts by the ruling Emirati minority to protect their language and culture from threats posed by globalization and the spread of English. From these chapters, we begin to see just how fraught and fragile the “imagined political community” (Anderson, 1983, p. 6) of the nation can be in the face of perceived danger.

In many instances, neo-nationalism stands in opposition to the unfettered movement of people, goods, and services promoted by neoliberalism, but it may also be used to disguise it, as Marlon Valencia and Isabel Tejada Sánchez point out in Chapter 5 with their conversation about the politics of language in Colombia. They note how, despite the failure of a national program to promote Spanish–English bilingualism and the unfulfilled promise of prosperity for all, the current right-wing government, brought to power in part as a response to the crisis in neighboring Venezuela, continues to promote self-motivated entrepreneurship as a means of strengthening the country. In Chapter 6, Dat Bao and Le-Ha Phan analyze the discussions of Vietnamese nationals and expatriates on social media to better understand how those who take pride in their country’s resistance of western domination may still embrace policies that allow for increased globalization. What they find is a multitude of voices, not always in harmony, coalescing around the idea of belonging to a language and culture that represent the nation, as well as its surrounding region.

While policies continue to be discussed in Part II, just as practices were in Part I, the focus shifts to how neo-nationalism impacts the learning, teaching, and use of foreign and second languages. As in the previous chapter, Ramona Kreis studies social media in Chapter 7, but she emphasizes how the technology is being used to promote right-wing, anti-immigrant views in Germany, as well as voices of opposition, with comments often posted in English to reach a global audience. For Kreis, the speed and ease with which these discourses circulate online make it imperative to continue studying and teaching digital literacy in order

to avoid falling prey to disinformation and the demonization of others. In Chapter 8, Aleksandra Kasztalska and Aleksandra Swatek investigate the effect that such right-wing discourses are having on foreign language teaching in Poland, where traditional nationalism coupled with growing Euroscepticism is keeping teachers from promoting multiculturalism in their classrooms for fear of offending the patriotic or religious sensibilities of students, parents, and school administrators. Similarly, in Chapter 9, Paul McPherron and Kyle McIntosh revisit a university in China where they previously taught to examine how recent nationalist policies enacted by the central government in Beijing have altered the teaching practices of their former colleagues and the attitudes of students toward the study of English and other foreign languages. In these two cases, both countries seem to be turning away from greater engagement with the outside world, but top-down edicts from strong central governments could tilt the balance either way.

Expressions of nationalism are not always overt. In Chapter 10, Trevor Gulliver examines Canadian ESL textbooks and citizenship guides to uncover how nationalism is often couched in everyday objects and expressions, from a picture of the flag to who—or what—is mentioned as “belonging” to the country (e.g., Wayne Gretzky, hockey). As Gulliver explains, these instances of “banal nationalism” (Billig, 1995) also work to hide the nation’s past injustices and to marginalize its newcomers. In Chapter 11, Joel Windle and Brian Morgan explore how neo-nationalists in different countries effectively employ remix and other “culture jamming” techniques suited to the digital age to sow fear and confusion in real and virtual spaces. They then provide sample lessons from their own classrooms in Brazil and Canada that were designed to foster critical awareness among their students. Lastly, Suhanthie Motha provides an afterword in Chapter 12 that reflects upon the complex issues covered in the previous chapters and draws clear connections between them. She presents a bold vision for moving the field toward a more “nation-conscious applied linguistic practice” (p. 296) that recognizes the vital importance of protecting national identity and language rights while actively combating racism, xenophobia, and other manifestations of hatred and fear.

While the scope of this volume is expansive, it is far from exhaustive. There are many facets of nationalism, both neo- and otherwise, in applied linguistics and language teaching that need to be explored. Therefore, we encourage those who read these chapters to initiate or continue their own research into the myriad ways in which such ideologies are informing language-in-education policies and classroom practices in their own countries, communities, and institutions. We all need to offer up theoretical possibilities and practical suggestions to help educators and researchers deal with the threats posed—and possibilities presented—by a worldwide turn toward nationalism at the start of the third decade of the twenty-first century.

Tampa, USA

Kyle McIntosh

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Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Carol Chun Zheng, who inspires me daily with her brilliance and resolve; our son, Kieran, whose creativity and kindness give me hope for the future; and my parents, Beverly and Gary McIntosh, for their lifelong support. I love you all!

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1

Introduction: Re-thinking Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching in the Face of Neo-Nationalism

Kyle McIntosh

Confession: This is a chapter that I never imagined I would write in a volume that I never thought would need to be published. Until a few years ago, the idea of neo-nationalism emerging as a formidable global force seemed to me the stuff of dystopian fiction. Granted, I have lived and worked in the United States, South Korea, and the People's Republic of China where, over the past two decades, I have witnessed firsthand—and through the news media—nationalist sentiments rising up at different times in different places (e.g., post-9/11 saber-rattling in the U.S., protests in Korea and China over the whitewashing of wartime atrocities in Japanese history books). My general sense, however, was that most countries were trending toward a more interconnected, interdependent future in which multilingualism and multiculturalism would be viewed as norms rather than exceptions. I drew this conclusion not

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only from my personal experiences but also from reading and conducting research in applied linguistics and language teaching.

So, when I went to bed on June 23, 2016 at an Airbnb in Ann Arbor, Michigan, following the first day of the International Writing Across the Curriculum (IWAC) Conference, I fully expected to wake up the next morning in a world largely unchanged from the one in which I had fallen asleep. Instead, when I opened my eyes, grabbed my iPhone, and looked at my newsfeed, I saw this headline from *The New York Times*: “British Stun the World with Decision to Leave the E.U.” I was, in fact, stunned. Although it was known that the vote would be close, few polls had predicted this outcome. Apparently, rising Euroscepticism triggered by frustration with the fiscal policies coming out of Brussels, along with low turnout among younger voters, had been enough to push through the referendum. Suddenly, I had a sinking feeling in my stomach that, come November, Donald Trump would be riding a similar wave of economic dissatisfaction and burgeoning neo-nationalism into the White House. Never before in my life had I so wished to be wrong.

The trade-protectionist and anti-immigrant stances associated with neo-nationalism, which Eger and Valdez (2015) posited as something of a hybrid between the far left’s “anti-establishment populism” and the far right’s “desire for a return to traditional values and an emphasis on law and order” (p. 127), did not begin with Brexit or the election of Donald Trump. For years prior to 2016, neo-nationalist movements had been gaining ground across Europe, propelling figures like Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Polish President Andrzej Duda into power. Similar movements were springing up around leaders in other parts of the world: Narendra Modi’s Hindu nationalism in India, Recep Erdoğan’s Ottoman revival in Turkey, and Xi Jinping’s “Chinese Dream,” to name a few. Nevertheless, the shift toward neo-nationalism by what had hitherto been the two strongest proponents of neoliberal globalization sent a clear signal that the world was, in fact, starting to bend in a new direction. If the United Kingdom and the United States—the very countries that advanced English as an international language to serve their own political and economic interests—were withdrawing from trade deals, tightening their borders, and inciting violence against immigrants, then how long before other nations began to rethink educational policies and practices

that, for decades, had touted learning English as a key to entering the global marketplace? Would the rise of neo-nationalism across the world, fueled in part by xenophobia, lead to a backlash against the teaching of foreign languages in general?

Nationalism, Language, and Education

For many, the word “nationalism” conjures up dramatic images, like Adolf Hitler screaming maniacally into a microphone before legions of saluting Nazis shouting “Sieg Heil” in return or perhaps, more recently, the bombed-out cities of the Yugoslav Wars (1991–2001). While such extreme forms have led to interethnic conflict and genocide, nationalism has also been mobilized to drive out colonizers or resist other outside aggressors, as was the case with Vietnam’s defeat of France and the United States, respectively, in the First and Second Indochina Wars (see Bao & Phan, Chapter 6 in this volume). Most everyday manifestations of nationalism, however, fall under what Billig (1995) categorized as “banal” and are therefore easier to overlook: the face of a country’s founder placed on its currency or the national anthem being played before a sporting event. Nationalism is even embedded in the words that we use to talk about ourselves and others: native, foreigner, compatriot, expatriate, immigrant, alien.

The very idea of the nation, which Anderson (1983) called “an imagined political community” (p. 6), depends heavily on the establishment of a common language—or languages—to create a sense of shared identity among people who are unlikely to meet face-to-face and who may experience very different linguistic realities on a day-to-day basis. China, with its hundreds of often mutually unintelligible regional and local “dialects,” provides a striking example of how an officially-mandated “common speech” (*putonghua*, or standard Mandarin) and a relatively uniform writing system work to construct the idea of a single national language: Chinese. Other countries, like Singapore and Switzerland, recognize multiple national languages to reflect their linguistic diversity, but striking a balance between these languages remains challenging. In Cameroon and the United Arab Emirates, for instance, official status

may not be enough to protect languages spoken by a minority of the population, and the fear of this loss can spur ethnolinguistic nationalism and conflict (see Ngala, Chapter 3 in this volume; Esseili, Chapter 4 in this volume).

Of course, not all forms of nationalism are the same. In the current political climate, we can hear differences in the voices of those promoting a particular imagined community, whether it be a far-right ethno-religious state or a more left-leaning civically-minded nation, but we may also detect similar interests in maintaining borders or opposing global markets, although likely for different reasons and through different means (Svitych, 2018). As Blommaert (1996) noted:

The way in which language is symbolised may cohere with the general set-up of the particular nationalism; its ideological construction may be guided by similar underlying assumptions, viewpoints and visions of the desired ‘ideal society’ which nationalists are trying to build. Closer attention to language-ideological issues may thus contribute to a better understanding of the conceptual, ‘deep’ structure of various nationalisms [...]. (p. 236)

We find these idealized visions of the nation regularly reproduced in political speeches and media coverage of events, in documentaries and other historical accounts, and in language textbooks and citizenship guides (see Gulliver, Chapter 10 in this volume). Studying the ways that people in different places and with different political orientations speak and write about the idea of the nation can help us to understand why nationalism is on the rise again and how it may be contributing to the formation of new alliances and oppositions across old ideological lines.

Just as nationalism has long been tied to language, so too is it tied to language education, in policy if not in practice. Decisions as to which languages can be spoken, written, taught and tested in schools are often enshrined in law (Wright, 2016). Governments are involved in how students from other countries with different immigration or residency statuses are classified within education systems. Sometimes, countries even establish public organizations, like the British Council or Confucius Institute, to affect how national languages—official or de facto—are taught in other countries. To Phillipson (1992), the entire enterprise of

English language teaching (ELT) was a form of “linguistic imperialism,” through which Anglo-American power could continue to be exerted in a post-colonial world by perpetuating the specious argument that English is “a vehicle of the entire developing human tradition, well adapted for change and development, not ethnic or ideological, the world’s first truly global language, of universal interest” (p. 276). Today, we see this same argument put forward not only by Anglophone nations but also by multinational corporations that promote English, and perhaps a handful of other lingua francas (e.g., Arabic, French, Mandarin), as vital components of individual success in a globalized world.

Neoliberalism and Applied Linguistics

In 1990, when Alastair Pennycook proposed adopting a more critical approach to applied linguistics, the Berlin Wall had just fallen and the Soviet Union was a year away from collapsing, but he was prescient in calling for new ways of thinking about the roles that language and education play in perpetuating inequalities in a world where few alternatives to American-led free-market capitalism (i.e., neoliberalism) would soon remain. Taking his cue from post-structuralist philosophers like Michel Foucault, Pennycook (1990) reminded us that knowledge is never neutral and that, as a field, we must repeatedly examine the ideological basis/biases of our work by interrogating foundational concepts and accepted research methods to uncover who or what is being excluded from the conversation. Only then, he argued, can we truly understand the power that language has to limit, as well as expand, the ways in which we view our world and one another.

Around the same time, the number of so-called “non-native” speakers of English began to outpace the number of “native” speakers, prompting scholars to wonder if such a division still had meaning, if it ever did (e.g., Davies, 1991; Phillipson, 1992). Yet, despite bodies of research on the unique characteristics of World Englishes (see Kachru, 1997) and the cognitive benefits of bilingualism (see Bialystock, 2011), monolingual models of education have persisted and even spread, especially in places where speaking a dominant or prestige language continues

to be viewed as a means of improving one's socioeconomic status (see Meadows, Chapter 2 in this volume).

The social turn in applied linguistics, which emphasized the effects of context and interpersonal relations on language learning and use, has helped us to challenge such monolingual ideologies and to reposition multilingualism as the global norm. Likewise, the dynamic turn in ELT has sought to connect classroom practices to students' experiences with language in the world. While these goals are laudable, they also happen to align with what Flores (2013) called the "commodification of language in service of transnational corporations" (p. 515). In other words, companies are happy to promote linguistic and cultural diversity, as long as the languages and cultures possess some degree of capital, in the Bourdieuan sense. Thus, learning a new language becomes a form of "job training," and workers are transformed into lifelong learners who must continually adapt to changing conditions as they move from one "gig" to the next.

We reinforce such sentiments when, even with the best of intentions, we tell our students that learning another language will increase their employment prospects after graduation. Flores (2013) encouraged teachers to push back against such "universalizing" narratives by guiding students to see how different languages can be used to experiment with identities and positionalities that challenge the tacit assumptions of both neoliberalism and neo-nationalism. While I find this suggestion promising, recent scholarship in applied linguistics has done a far better job of critiquing the former, while giving less attention to the latter in the first two decades of the twenty-first century. This oversight was likely because, until fairly recently, the nation-state appeared to be in decline, with free-trade agreements, high-speed communication, and affordable travel making borders seem more permeable and barriers more surmountable than ever before.

Understandably then, much of the research in applied linguistics and language teaching in the early 2000s has focused on how to go beyond simply paying lip service to multilingualism and multiculturalism in a globalized world to actually finding viable means to ensure that students and workers, regardless of language background, social status, ethnicity, religion or gender, receive the educational support and equitable treatment they deserve. One possible outcome might be the realization of a more transnational, cosmopolitan existence for everyone, and not just

the global elite (see Canagarajah, 2013). Again, while much of the world appeared to be moving in that direction prior to 2016, our view was likely skewed by the places we live, work, and travel to, and by the people who we meet, work with, and teach. Kubota (2016) questioned if, by putting so much emphasis on cosmopolitanism and linguistic hybridity, applied linguists had overlooked the ways in which even the most well-intentioned theories and practices could be used to further marginalize and oppress the poor and undereducated. In other words, how does the notion of translanguaging fluency, or the ability to move between languages depending on audience, impact the hundreds of millions of people in the world who do not have access to the educational resources needed to learn how to read and write in any language? How might an emphasis on multiculturalism and mobility provoke hostility from those who cannot afford to leave their villages or small towns? What will it mean for foreign and second language teaching, which has undoubtedly benefited from globalization, if more and more countries decide to retreat behind borders and walls?

The End of Neoliberalism and the Rise of Neo-Nationalism?

Even with Brexit and the election of Donald Trump, it is premature to sound the death knell for neoliberalism. Multinational corporations continue to exert undue influence on politics, and stock markets keep hitting record highs. Yet, tensions are also high, both between and within nations. Lee (2017), for example, found that increasing nationalist sentiment in higher education settings in South Africa, as well as in South Korea (Lee, Jon, & Byun, 2016), led to unfair treatment and open hostility against foreign students, especially those from neighboring countries who are seen as competing for jobs and resources. Meanwhile, Ngala (Chapter 3 in this volume) has chronicled the ongoing crisis in Cameroon, where speakers of French and English are locked in a violent conflict over the status of the languages of their former colonizers. To make matters worse, the global outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has shut down borders, disrupted supply chains, and sparked

further instances of ethnic violence, from attacks on Asians in New York City (Chapman, 2020) to discrimination against Africans in Guangzhou (Nyabiage, 2020). The long-term impact of this pandemic on international relations remains to be seen, but it will certainly alter the way we think about our connections to the rest of the world.

Higher education was already experiencing a downturn even before schools were shuttered in the spring of 2020. Three years prior, international enrollments at U.S. universities had decreased by 6.9%, due in part to the hostile political environment, as well as issues with visas, a strong dollar, and competition from regional education hubs like Germany, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates (Baer, 2017). Meanwhile, countries like South Korea and Iran have raised the age at which students begin studying English in school to protect their own languages and cultures, while China has reduced the importance the English language requirement on its college entrance exam (see McPherron & McIntosh, Chapter 9 in this volume). These developments raise several questions: Should we take declining enthusiasm for learning English as a sign that its status as *the* international language is coming to an end? Or is this part of a larger turn against multilingualism and multiculturalism in general? Can we support the unfettered movement of people, goods, and ideas without also propping up an economic system on the verge of collapse?

In a 2017 opinion piece in *The New York Times*, Bhaskar Sunkara, former vice chair of the Democratic Socialists of America, presented the metaphor of a runaway train heading toward three possible destinations to represent the directions that countries might take in a post-neoliberal world. He claimed that right-wing populists (i.e., neo-nationalists) long to arrive at “Budapest Station,” which is modeled on Orbán’s anti-immigration and anti-globalization reforms in Hungary, but first they need to throw the “undesirables” off the train. Meanwhile, most corporatists (i.e., neoliberals) are trying to hit the brakes so that they can get off at “Singapore Station,” an authoritarian technocracy that embraces officially-sanctioned multilingualism and prides itself on a cosmopolitan worldview. Given those two choices, the latter would seem like the better option for those working in fields related to the teaching and learning of languages. As DeCosta and Jou (2016) pointed out, however, an

uncritical acceptance of cosmopolitanism can mask serious problems like racism, sexism, and income inequality in what outwardly appears to be a “harmonious” multicultural society.

The third stop, which Sunkara (2017) dubbed “Finland Station,” marks a return to pre-Soviet socialist ideals, offering a form of radical democracy where quality education, housing, and healthcare would be guaranteed for all and where linguistic and cultural differences could be negotiated via a more “dialogical” form of cosmopolitanism, similar to what Canagarajah (2013) envisioned. We have seen versions of this appear in Europe and Latin America with varying degrees of longevity and success. We have even seen glimpses of it in the United States with the rise of left-leaning populist politicians like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who invoke a more civic form of nationalism when appealing to working class voters upset about manufacturing jobs being outsourced to China, Mexico, and elsewhere.

At this moment in history, it is difficult to predict at which of these three stations the metaphorical train will stop, even in a country like the United States where many people still regard “socialism” as a dirty word. Each country has a unique history and set of present circumstances that will affect the way it deals with the decline of neoliberalism (see Valencia & Tejada Sánchez, Chapter 5 in this volume, for the example of Colombia). Complicating matters further is a growing distrust of any form of government among the working classes who reap few benefits from technology booms or stock market rallies, but who feel disproportionately harmed by economic downturns. This real, if often misdirected, sense of injustice makes them susceptible to radicalization by religious or racist extremists and to disinformation campaigns promoted by foreign governments.

Conspiracy theories are hardly new, but the speed at which rumors, half-truths, and outright lies spread across the Internet is unprecedented (see Kreis, Chapter 7 in this volume, for an account of right-wing discourses on Twitter in the immediate aftermath of the 2016 Berlin terrorist attack). In many ways, these attempts to challenge credible evidence for everything from the dangers of climate change to the safety of vaccines recall earlier postmodern takedowns of the scientific method and the very nature of facts, which led Bruno Latour (2004) to famously

declare that critique had “run out of steam.” In a post-truth world, all matters of fact are partial and political. Latour’s recommendation, later endorsed in part by Pennycook (2018), is to begin privileging matters of concern instead. In other words, we need to stop falling back on what Latour (2004) called the “fact vs. fairy” positions, which turn everyone into either victims of powerful forces beyond their control or naïve believers who project their desires onto powerless objects. Instead, we need to seek a *fair* position that cultivates “a stubbornly realist attitude” (p. 231) and renewed commitment to empiricism, not necessarily to find answers, but to add more depth to our descriptions of the world.

The main purpose in assembling this volume was to begin thinking about what a fairer applied linguistics and language teaching might look like in a world where neo-nationalist rhetoric continues to propel political candidates into positions of power, in turn emboldening more candidates to employ such rhetoric in their campaigns. As Windle and Morgan (Chapter 11 in this volume) suggest, we can begin by helping our students to observe and critique the ways in which neo-nationalist groups have successfully co-opted postmodern techniques like parody and pastiche to promote jingoism and fear. In countries currently controlled by authoritarian regimes, foreign language teachers may have to adopt other creative classroom practices to resist xenophobic policies and attitudes (see, for example, Kasztalska & Swatek, Chapter 8 in this volume; McPherron & McIntosh, Chapter 9 in this volume). Fortunately, the leaders of most countries are still democratically elected, which means that they can be voted out of office, but there needs to be a clear alternative vision for the future of the nation that speaks to all its citizens, and not only the privileged few, or else these countries risk losing the ability to correct course through democratic means.

As scholars and teachers, we need to think carefully about what constitute matters of concern for applied linguistics and language teaching, and how to better connect with people in other fields, other places, and other walks of life who share these concerns, even—and perhaps especially—when our ways of knowing and speaking differ. As those who study how language is used in various contexts, we are in a unique position to understand and help bridge these gaps. Motha (Chapter 12

in this volume) advocates developing practices that further explore the links between race and empire as a means of revealing the ways in which nationalism continues to reside, often hidden, in our teaching, learning, and use of language. Whenever possible, we need to stand up to injustices, past and present, that have been committed in the name of the nation while remaining mindful of the pitfalls presented by internationalization when driven by competition rather than cooperation.

On a local level, we can work to change our institutional cultures. Over the last few decades, we have seen school districts and universities transformed into global pseudo-corporations, with business leaders and politicians put in charge of budgetary, personnel, and even curricular decisions. I hope that we will not be so complacent if and when those same leaders make alliances with right-wing populists as a bulwark against their shared fear of democratic socialism creeping in from the left. When it comes to our teaching and service responsibilities, we can follow Kubota's (2016) advice to practice what we preach by applying our knowledge of class and identity issues more visibly, not just in our research but in all of our work. We can use appointments to admissions and hiring committees to increase diversity in our schools and departments, while working in other professional capacities to ensure that this commitment is honored in every aspect of academic life. We can use our roles as editors and reviewers to guide more marginalized voices into print or public forums. Last but not least, we can use our positions as teachers and mentors to help students recognize the subtle and not-so-subtle ways that language is used to promote—or obscure—hatred and division, as well as its potential for creating a more inclusive, unified nation.

I end this chapter by echoing Pennycook's (1990) entreaty to “be more humble in the world, listening to the many alternative views of language and learning, rather than preaching our views as the newest and best” (p. 26). As applied linguists and language teachers, we may have a limited impact on the direction of politics beyond our classrooms and local communities, but we have an impact nonetheless. If we wish to improve education and reduce inequality on a local and global scale, then we can begin by forging stronger alliances across boundaries based

on shared matters of concern rather than strict adherence to ideological positions.

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Part I

Policies



2

Neo-Nationalism and Language Policy in the United States: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Public Discourse Advocating Monolingual English Use

Bryan Meadows

The anti-immigrant stances expressed by neo-nationalist actors in the United States have taken on increased political significance following the 2016 election of Donald Trump. From the president's office, Trump has been able to amplify messages voiced by neo-nationalist groups. In addition, policymakers within the administration are identified either directly or indirectly with neo-nationalist positions. Sympathetic news organizations help to mainstream these positions. Other media sources have brought attention to the close relationship shared between the Trump administration and neo-nationalist groups (Blow, 2019) and the coincidental—or not—rise in extremist-related murders (Sonmez & Parker, 2019). The Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right (2019) editorialized Trump-style politics not just as a trend, but “part of an emerging

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ideology that can and should be described as late fascism—a fascism for our current era” (para. 15).

Nothing in neo-nationalism contradicts the ideological principles at the base of more conventional forms of nationalism (e.g., the basic unit of social organization shall be the nation-state, per Gellner, 1983). What justifies the term is the hyper-attention to border maintenance and internal homogeneity within spaces of established nationalized boundaries (Eger & Valdez, 2015; Halikiopoulou & Vlandas, 2019). That is, those who follow neo-nationalist ideologies involve themselves in defining national insiders from outsiders and maintaining clear boundaries to separate the two (Svitych, 2018, p. 9). An illustrative example of neo-nationalism can be found in the following platform statement presented online by the American Freedom Party:

Freedom from the immigration invasion. Americans never wanted their country to be overwhelmed and fundamentally altered by allowing tens of millions of legal and illegal immigrants to enter and drain endless billions of taxpayer dollars in services. A free country defends its borders by securing them, and the American Freedom Party will construct a well-armed security fence along the entire southern border when it takes power. (American Freedom Party, 2020, emphasis in original)

The American Freedom Party is a political organization with candidates in state and federal elections in the United States. In the above excerpt, they express their objective to physically separate nationalized outsiders (i.e., immigrants) from nationalized insiders (i.e., Americans). While the academic literature on neo-nationalism starts with Western Europe, case studies are being applied in other locations (Donley, 2018; Lee, Jon, & Byun, 2017), thus demonstrating that neo-nationalism is increasingly a global phenomenon (Svitych, 2018, p. 9).

Neo-nationalists occasionally associate themselves with “holistic nationalism.” For example, Augustus Invictus, a presidential candidate in the United States, included the following among his political objectives:

Make Americans Great Again: We will raise up the poor and working class by eschewing obsolete notions of capitalism and socialism, *returning to a holistic nationalism.* (Invictus, 2019, emphasis added)

The gerund phrase “returning to a holistic nationalism” conveys dissatisfaction with the current status quo. But what is holistic nationalism? The term emerges from the tension between the people of a nation and the political state at the center of the ideology. While both the national and the state components are always present in nationalist movements, one component can be emphasized over the other (Svitych, 2018). The result is a spectrum ranging between ethnic nationalism (nation-focused) and civic nationalism (state-focused).

Holistic nationalism is the neo-nationalist term for what has been called “ethnic nationalism” (Berezin, 2006, p. 278), in that it identifies the nation in ethnic terms. As the nationalized subject is the primary focus, holistic nationalism is “exclusive and organic, defined by common descent, native culture and other ascriptive and immutable criteria of national belonging” (Halikiopoulou & Vlandas, 2019, p. 412). Holistic nationalism lends itself to acts of social exclusion and the “subordination of individual civil and political liberty to the nationalized collective” (Carter, 2018, p. 172).

Thus, the phrase “returning to a holistic nationalism” communicates a rejection of civic nationalism. The excerpt argues instead for the exclusionary strand of nationalism that rigidly fixes individuals on one side or the other of national legitimacy: as either insider or outsider by birth or heritage. It goes without saying that xenophobia is a common thread in neo-nationalist writings and actions (Berezin, 2006, p. 278).

Neo-Nationalism and Language

From the beginning, language has played a central role in the ideology of nationalism. Hartman (2003) claimed that “the role of language in the formation of the imagined communities now known as nations must not be underestimated” (p. 189). Billig (1995) and Anderson (2006) figured language at the center of early nationalist movements. Anderson reminded us that the printing press was a key tool in promulgating nationalism and the ability of individuals to imagine nationalized landscapes beyond their immediate environs. Echoing Anderson’s analysis of nations as “imagined communities,” Billig (1995) explained that

“national languages also have to be imagined, and this lies at the root of today’s commonsense belief that discrete languages ‘naturally’ exist” (p. 10). Risager (2018) expanded on this point, arguing that when one sees the world “as equipped with a number of languages that are separate from each other, it is a small step to take to seeing it as being perfectly natural for people who speak the same language wishing to have a common national state” (p. 62).

In their influential eighteenth century writings, Herder, Fichte, and Humboldt conceptualized a national language as fundamental to any nationalist project (Kedourie, 1993). For Herder, the national language was the most faithful expression of a nation’s true essence (Woolard, 1998, p. 16). Like Herder, Humboldt posited a national language as a primary link to the unique individual character of a nation, stating: “from every language we can infer backwards to the national character” (Humboldt, 1988, as cited in May, 2013, p. 61). In contemporary times, a national language remains a primary fixture upon which nationalist movements seek political legitimacy (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1992; Rezakhanlou, 2018).

The maintenance of the nation-state is an ongoing sociopolitical struggle between various political stakeholders (Billig, 1995; May, 2013). From the standpoint of neo-nationalism, asserting the power to define the nation (i.e., nationalized people and culture) is fundamental to maintaining the nation-state. Neo-nationalist movements recognize that language is a symbolic fixture of a nationalized culture and therefore must be claimed. Once established, a national language can be a useful tool for promoting the belief in a homogeneous national culture (May, 2013, p. 59). It can also be used like a shibboleth to discern insider from outsider, or those with a legitimate presence in the nation from those without. In the case of the United States, neo-nationalist-affiliated political actors have asserted English to be central to how they imagine the nation and have lobbied for legitimacy of their nationalized imagining in the political institutions of the state (e.g., official English laws, executive orders, language-in-education policy). In this way, language policies at the federal and state levels become central sites of struggle over how to define legitimate language use in the nationalized space. The consequences of the power struggle between dominant and minority

groups within nationalized spaces are clear. May (2013) reminded us that, “by their pre-eminence, the dominant group’s culture and language comes to be represented as the core or ‘national’ culture and language. Minority groups, and their languages and cultures, consequently tend to be excluded from ‘national recognition’” (p. 85).

What can be observed about groups that embrace neo-nationalism is that they do not necessarily oppose foreign language use. For example, the National Socialist Movement website features a translation function that will change their writings into a number of European languages, and *The New York Times* recently reported that Swedish alt-right groups show influence of non-Swedish language sites (Becker, 2019). On the surface, this might appear to be counterintuitive, but such a stance is completely in line with the conventional ideology of nationalism. As Billig (1995) observed, no nation is intended to exist in isolation. All nationalized groups envision a landscape beyond their borders populated by nationalized counterparts, each with its own unique language, identity and political state, among other features. Conventional nationalism projects an interconnected global network of nation-states. Neo-nationalist groups follow this ideological blueprint. Thus, neo-nationalist groups look to counterpart groups across nationalized borders as allies, as long as all parties mutually acknowledge and maintain rigid boundaries of nation and state.

The Study

Purpose

Having provided an introduction to neo-nationalism and established the underlying ideological interest in language, this chapter now examines neo-nationalist influence on public discourse surrounding language policy in the United States. Specifically, the chapter explores six interrelated sets of texts that advocate for narrowing language use within the United States to monolingual English. In analyzing these sets of texts, the chapter will reveal intertextual linkages across them and the neo-nationalist underpinnings informing the arguments they convey. The

following two-part focus question guides the chapter: In what ways does public discourse on language policy in the United States rely on neo-nationalist priorities, and in what arguments are such neo-nationalist priorities conveyed?

Method

The methodological orientation selected for this study is Critical Discourse Analysis (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Having adopted a critical stance, the basic presumption I had entering into the study was that people realize social ideologies in the texts they author. A second presumption is that texts are created and consumed by individual actors from varying positions of social power. A final presumption is that, depending on the context, a text can function to reinforce and/or challenge a given commonsense worldview made possible by a particular ideology.

For this study, I am examining how neo-nationalist ideology is realized in the arguments that political actors produce in support of monolingual English language practices in nationalized spaces. I look at how these arguments make repeat appearances across data sets to form intertextual chains (Fairclough, 1992). The theoretical position here is that the intertextual chains function as tangible, discursive means by which ideologies are reproduced and normalized in banal social activities.

The six sets of textual data are: (1) Candidate statements on language use in the United States (2010s); (2) text of the federal-level English Language Unity Act (2019); (3) advocacy statements in support of the English Language Unity Act (2019); (4) official English justification statements: Individual states (1986–2007); (5) neo-nationalism versus bilingual education (2018–2019); and (6) language-in-education legislation in state-level committee hearings (2019). Each data set varies in volume of text to be analyzed. However, with each set, the basic methodological technique is the same. Each text is analyzed primarily for the justification arguments they provide for isolating English as the single legitimate language for use in institutional work of the political

state (e.g., official English legislation and English immersion language-in-education policy).

Analysis

Candidate Statements on Language Use in the United States (2010s)

In the following analysis, an ideological link will be illustrated between neo-nationalism, as an ideology of national homogeneity and border vigilance, and contemporary English-only lobbying efforts in the United States. Education scholars have demonstrated the intertwining history of English-only movements in the United States and anti-immigrant sentiment (Bonilla Moreno, 2012; Hartman, 2003). Gándara (2012), in particular, noted that English-only legislation “tends to be pushed through during period of high immigration when Americans feel they are under siege by other languages” (n.p.). At a conceptual level, anti-immigrant and English-only stances are just a half-step from one another. The English-only stance is a logical extension of the anti-immigration stance because border maintenance within nationalism is simultaneously a physical and ideological task. Like related social ideologies, nationalism works when individuals replicate nation-based distinctions in multiple dimensions of everyday life (i.e., recursiveness). Such distinctions can “provide actors with the discursive or cultural resources to claim and thus attempt to create shifting ‘communities,’ identities, and selves, at different levels of contrast within a cultural field” (Gal & Irvine, 1995, p. 974). That is, individuals come to see nationalized borders no matter where they turn: in housing, in commercial media, in airports, in schooling, etc. The term “nationalist border practices” (Meadows, 2014b) is apt for describing the efforts of neo-nationalist actors to render nationalized borders in linguistic spaces through English-only policies.

Below are some examples of candidate public statements online that reflect neo-nationalist ideology and the focused attention to English-only

stances. While these candidates may or may not self-identify with neo-nationalism, the political actions they advocate for are consistent with neo-nationalist priorities. In their arguments, the candidates additionally link anti-immigrant with English-only stances. As Art Jones, a 2016 Republican candidate for Illinois's 3rd Congressional District, wrote on his website:

Make English the Official Language: America was found by English speaking people. For most of our history as a nation, if you wanted to be able to advance yourself, as a new legal immigrant, you had to learn how to speak and write in English. Since 1965, with the repeal of the McCarran-Walter Act [...] the requirement for citizenship to be able to speak and write English was swept aside and now any two-legged vagabond from any third-world, non-white, non-Christian country is given preference whether they arrived legally or illegally. (Jones, 2018)

In a blog post dated December 11, 2013, Merlin Miller, a 2012 Candidate for President of the United States under the American Third Position Party (later, American Freedom Party), listed 19 things he would consider immediately if elected president. Among them, number 11 was: "Make English the official language in the United States and require non-English speakers to gain proficiency before being granted citizenship" (Miller, 2013).

The public arguments presented here represent neo-nationalist attention to language in the way that they equate the nation with English language use. Both positioned English usage as a primary criterion of one's legitimacy within the nationalized space (i.e., *shibboleth argument*). Jones (2018) developed a more extended rationale linking English to the nation's origins (i.e., *heritage argument*) and a past era when nationalized borders were more vigilantly protected (i.e., *mythical past argument*). Something else these statements reveal is candidate self-positioning as authors of the nationalized people and culture. Neo-nationalist arguments only really work when expressed from a position of national proprietor, self-proclaimed or not.

Text of the Federal-Level English Language Unity Act (2019)

With the election of Donald Trump, neo-nationalist arguments have increasingly informed immigration policy at the national level. However, neo-nationalism has had less tangible impact on language policy, despite the importance of language to the neo-nationalist agenda. At the level of federal legislation, political organizations have promoted legislation codifying English as the official language of the political state. In the House of Representatives, a bill has been introduced as the English Language Unity Act (H.R. 997); the Senate companion bill is known as S. 678. Despite multiple introductions since 2005, neither bill has gone beyond initial consideration in committee. Nevertheless, political organizations like ProEnglish and U.S. English actively lobby for these bills each year. As the analysis will show, justification arguments in favor of official English are logical extensions of the anti-immigrant arguments central to neo-nationalism.

To begin with, the title of the act communicates the intended function of English, which is to unite the national people. This is premised on the Herderian principle (Woolard, 1998) calling for one language for one nation. The logic follows that a shared language provides a direct pathway to a shared identity under nationhood. The following section examines selected excerpts from the 2019 H.R. 997 bill. Section 2 articulates the findings or the justification for the bill. Lines 4–20 read:

The Congress finds and declares the following:

- (1) The United States is composed of individuals from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and continues to benefit from this rich diversity.
- (2) Throughout the history of the United States, the common thread binding individuals of differing backgrounds has been the English language. (Congress.gov, 2019)

These statements provide a rationale for the bill that is articulated in a *commonality argument*. For example, the English language is represented as a “common thread” that has been “binding” diverse individuals together within a nationalized space. Section 3 of the bill proposes

amendments to Title 4 of the U.S. Code. Among the amendments are three guiding proclamations:

- § 162. Preserving and enhancing the role of the official language
- § 163. Official functions of Government to be conducted in English
- § 164 Uniform English language rule for naturalization

Proclamation § 162 details requirements of federal institutions to promote English language use and English learning by those who require it. This reflects an intended function of official English to perpetuate the American national people, as the authors interpret it (i.e., *the continuation argument*). Proclamation § 163 codifies requirements for all federal operations to be conducted in English. Also included in this part are exceptions when non-English languages may be used, such as (1) the teaching of languages and (2) requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Finally, Proclamation § 164 establishes English reading comprehension as a criterion for naturalization. This is the shibboleth argument identified in the previous section.

As written, the text justifies the actions of the bill based on the commonality argument. However, the bill must be interpreted as imposing a common language rather than simply acknowledging one. This is because if English were at present a common language nationwide, then it would not be necessary to clarify where it will be used within a nationalized space. While it is not stated in the text of the code, the underlying impact of the bill would be to marginalize millions of people within the United States who may not use English as their preferred language. Like immigration policies that physically remove individuals from nationalized spaces, official English policies carry a similar potential but in terms of legitimate participation in nationalized spaces.

The bill includes exceptions, thus clarifying the legitimate spaces in which non-English languages may be used in institutional settings (e.g., education, international relations, public health/safety, criminal justice, and “terms of art or phrases from languages other than English”). These exceptions portray institutional contexts in which the primacy of English is not infringed upon. Echoing the neo-nationalist websites that allow

non-English translations, these exceptions show that it is not monolingual space per se that is the ultimate objective but rather the hierarchy of legitimate language use with English at the top privileged position.

Advocacy Statements in Support of the English Language Unity Act (2019)

Two political organizations championing H.R. 997/S. 678, the English Language Unity Act, are U.S. English and ProEnglish. These groups do not self-identify as neo-nationalist, but their strong advocacy on H.R. 997/S. 687 is occasionally framed in arguments consistent with neo-nationalist priorities. Hartman (2003, p. 196) located English-only organizations within the U.S. mainstream and not necessarily on the societal margins. The following analysis examines blog postings during 2019 that one advocacy group, ProEnglish, associates with H.R. 997. There are 22 postings in total. The method of analysis was to search online for the H.R. 997 category and analyze the blog posts for content and for arguments. The entire data set is accessible at <https://proenglish.org/category/h-r-997/>.

In January 2019, the group articulated their lobbying agenda for the year and then repeated these priorities in two subsequent postings during the year. The agenda items are:

- (a) passing HR997/S678,
- (b) passing the RAISE Act,
- (c) facilitating an executive order to rescind Executive Order 13166, and
- (d) increase the number of official English laws at the state level.

In their blog postings, the group provided justification arguments to advance their support of H.R. 997/S. 678. For example, the following statement was posted on February 7th and then repeated in seven subsequent blogs during the year: “The passage of official English legislation in H.R. 997 and S. 678 will save Americans billions of dollars in current, government-mandated translation and interpretation costs and will encourage cultural and linguistic assimilation by new arrivals to our

nation” (Guschoy, 2019c). This policy statement argues for two potential functions of official English legislation: (a) *economic argument*, and (b) *unifying argument*. The economic argument is that government operations in multiple languages creates unnecessary expenditures, which are paid by Americans. At the same time, the unifying argument is that shared language use will promote the assimilation process. One may note that assimilation in itself conveys conformity of the outsider to an insider cultural norm. It is a homogenizing of the national space according to cultural and linguistic ideals pre-determined by neo-nationalist actors. These arguments are consistent with neo-nationalism in the way that they clarify, through word choice, legitimate members of the national collective (i.e., “Americans” in the economic argument) from the non-legitimate (i.e., “new arrivals” in the unifying argument). That is, as the arguments justify a political stance, they are at the same time discerning insiders from outsiders.

The group invokes external sources to further legitimize their stance. A January 2nd blog posting referenced a Rasmussen Reports poll “that showed that 81% of Americans believe that English should be the official language of the United States” (Guschoy, 2019a). This was repeated in 12 subsequent blog posts. Another source of external support is in the Trump administration, which the group invoked several times in 2019 in support of H.R. 997/S. 678. A January 7th posting reads: “Official English advocates have in the White House perhaps the most pro-English president since Theodore Roosevelt. President Donald Trump frequently has stated, ‘We have a country where to assimilate, you have to speak English’” (Guschoy, 2019b).

Subsequent references to the Trump administration are deployed on March 12th. In addition, the group reports three meetings with the Trump administration to encourage a new executive order to rescind Executive Order (E.O.) 13166, which entitles federal government agencies to provide multilingual access to all agency services. Bonilla Moreno (2012, p. 199) reported that E.O. 13166 is justified by Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination based on national origin. ProEnglish’s campaign against E.O. 13166 is rooted in neo-nationalist boundary maintenance. It is the ethnic nationalism of sanitizing a nationalized space to remove the presence of foreign Other.

If not outright removal, then the next best thing is clarifying the power structure: English is the first and only representative language of the nation.

Two additional H.R. 997 postings communicate the argument that English can function to unify people within nationalized space. This echoes the neo-nationalist arguments identified previously. In a June 24th posting on the topic of statehood for Puerto Rico, the group presented the following position statement exemplifying the unifying argument:

Accepting Puerto Rico as a new state, without a specific designation of English as the primary official language of the island, would automatically transform the United States into a bilingual nation. ProEnglish believes that the U.S. should look to Canada's experience as a bilingual nation in order to remind us of the potential risks and consequences involved. (Guschoy, 2019e)

Additionally, in a November 19th posting, the group cites a recent author who champions English as a national unifying element (i.e., unifying argument):

In Lowry's new book [...] he stated that English was a 'pillar of our national identity.' Lowry made it a point of focus in his book to discuss the importance of a common language as a source of social cohesion: 'Where a common language is present, it creates a cultural glue; where it isn't, there are usually deep-seated divisions.' (Guschoy, 2019f)

One observation, based on the analysis of the 22 blog postings, is that the group is asserting a position of power to define a nationalized culture, a nationalized heritage, and the specific elements that will promote a shared national identity. Another is that these blog postings advance the unifying argument in the interest of defining insiders from outsiders, and this interest is consistent with neo-nationalist priorities. A third observation is the way that the group uses word choice to emphasize legitimate from illegitimate status; the authors consistently use "Americans" to refer to monolingual English speakers and avoid using the same term for all nationalized others (e.g., new arrivals, immigrants). Terms

matter because they communicate legitimate membership in the nation. Finally, they utilize discursive strategies to associate themselves with external sources of legitimacy and social capital such as national polling organizations, news media organizations, and the Trump administration.

Overt attempts to discredit established policies like E.O. 13166 are illustrative of the fundamental struggle within nationalist frames to make the political state in the mold of the national people. To discredit the laws of the political state is to argue implicitly that the current political state no longer reflects the essence of the national people. This is a power play on the part of the advocacy group to assert such a position. Ultimately, this figures into the general agenda of neo-nationalism to separate national insiders from outsiders.

The weakness of the unifying argument is two-fold. First, a language can be shared between two nation-states at war (e.g., the American Revolution, the American Civil War). Second, language as a unifier can be a false promise for new Americans. What can happen is that, even after achieving proficiency in English, many still face racial, class, or gender discrimination.

Official English Justification Statements: Individual States (1986–2007)

One area where official English advocacy groups have had more tangible success is at the state level. As of 2019, 32 U.S. states have passed official English legislation (this number does not include U.S. territories). Interestingly, some of the language of the English Language Unity Act is echoed in the state-level acts. This analysis will narrowly examine the arguments individual states articulate to justify their official language legislation. First, not all legislative acts provide an explicit justification for the act. This frames the privileged status of English as beyond question in that an explicit justification is not necessary ($n = 24$). One representative example is in the Indiana (1984) text which states simply: “The English language is adopted as the official language of the state of Indiana.”

Still, where a justification is provided, a common theme is English as a unifying element ($n = 8$). What is interesting is that some justifications link the state to the nation ($n = 5$). One notable observation is that nearly all acts articulate explicit exceptions for (a) foreign language and (b) English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, which may require non-English language use as a form of instructional support. One representative example is in the South Carolina (1987) text which reads:

Sections 1-1-696 through 1-1-698 do not prohibit any law, ordinance, regulation, order, decree, program, or policy requiring educational instruction in a language other than English for the purpose of making students who use a language other than English proficient in English or making students proficient in a language in addition to English.

As seen in Table 2.1, there is a common textual design to the eight justification statements. All establish that the function of English is to serve as common language (e.g., commonality argument). Some statements additionally relate the state to the nation (e.g., AK, CA, and NC). Following that, half formulate the purpose to “preserve, protect, and enhance/strengthen English language [use]” (e.g., AK, AL, CA, NC). This is a continuation argument in that the expressed desire is for English language use to continue the current interpretation of the American national people into the future. Iowa and Missouri stand out in the purpose they offer for official English status. Their texts convey the unifying argument (i.e., assimilation):

Iowa (2002): In order to encourage every citizen of this state to become more proficient in the English language, thereby facilitating participation in the economic, political, and cultural activities of this state and of the United States.

Missouri (1998): The general assembly recognizes that English is the most common language used in Missouri and recognizes that fluency in English is necessary for full integration into our common American culture.

Like official English legislation at the federal level, these enactments serve neo-nationalist goals to map the people to the political state. This is an

Table 2.1 State justification statements

State	Text excerpt	Arguments presented
Alabama (1990)	<p>"The legislature and officials of the state of Alabama shall take all steps necessary to ensure that the role of English as the common language of the state of Alabama is preserved and enhanced. The legislature shall make no law which diminishes or ignores the role of English as the common language of the state of Alabama"</p>	<p>Justification: commonality argument Function: continuation argument</p>
Alaska (1998)	<p>"The people of the State of Alaska find that English is the common unifying language of the State of Alaska and the United States of America, and declare a compelling interest in promoting, preserving and strengthening its use"</p>	<p>Justification: commonality argument Function: continuation argument (Note: "The people find...")</p>

State	Text excerpt	Arguments presented
California (1986)	<p>“English is the common language of the people of the United States of America and the State of California. This section is intended to preserve, protect and strengthen the English language, and not to supersede any of the rights guaranteed to the people of this Constitution”</p>	<p>Justification: commonality argument (state + nation) Function: continuation argument</p>
Idaho (2007)	<p>“Idaho was able to build a state from this widespread and diverse background because of a binding common thread...The English language. A common language has allowed us to discuss, debate, and come to agreement on difficult issues. The need is just as great today. The purpose of this bill is to have an official language become our common language”</p>	<p>Justification: commonality argument Function: commonality argument</p>

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

State	Text excerpt	Arguments presented
Iowa (2002)	<p>"1b. Throughout the history of Iowa and of the United States, the common thread binding individuals of differing backgrounds together has been the English language.</p> <p>2. In order to encourage every citizen of this state to become more proficient in the English language, thereby facilitating participation in the economic, political, and cultural activities of this state and of the United States, the English language is hereby declared to be the official language of the state of Iowa"</p>	<p>Justification: commonality argument Function: unifying argument (state + nation)</p>
Missouri (1998)	<p>"English as common language of the state. Section 1. The general assembly recognizes that English is the most common language used in Missouri and recognizes that fluency in English is necessary for full integration into our common American culture"</p>	<p>Justification: commonality argument Function: unifying argument (nation)</p>

State	Text excerpt	Arguments presented
North Carolina (1987)	<p>“§145-12. State Language. (a) Purpose. – English is the common language of the people of the United States of America and the State of North Carolina. This section is intended to preserve, protect, and strengthen the English language, and not to supersede any of the rights guaranteed to the people by the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of North Carolina.”</p>	<p>Justification: commonality argument (nation + state) Function: continuation argument</p>
South Dakota (1995)	<p>“1-27-20. English as common language—Use in public records and public meetings. The common language of the state is English. The common language is designated as the language of any official public document or record and any official public meeting.”</p>	<p>Justification: commonality argument Function: commonality argument</p>

orientation toward ethnic or holistic nationalism where the ethnic group takes priority in the nation-state relationship. The opposing orientation is toward liberal nationalism. The ultimate effect of these political acts is to marginalize communities within the nationalist space that do not meet narrowly-defined ethnic/cultural criteria.

Finally, the similarity between the English Language Unity Act (at the federal level) with Official English legislation (at the state level) cannot be overlooked. For example, the commonality argument is present in both, as is the unifying argument. Additionally, the state level texts articulate exceptions to the official English policy, as does the federal one.

Neo-Nationalism Versus Bilingual Education (2018–2019)

A particular thorn for groups that align themselves with neo-nationalist priorities is bilingual education. For them, bilingual education on principle is a threat because it displaces English as the primary medium of instruction, even if temporarily (Johannessen, Guzman, Thorsos, & Dickinson, 2016). Currently around 10% of the total K-12 student population in the United States identifies as English learners (ELs). This population represents hundreds of different languages, although roughly 70% are Spanish language dominant. Despite conventional representations, EL status does not necessarily coincide with immigrant status in the United States. Also, as a 2019 U.S. Department of Education study determined, EL students are “heavily concentrated in districts and schools with their EL peers” (n.p.).

Wright (2019) observed that public schooling is not part of the Federal Constitution, and therefore public education has largely been left to the states. This has changed since the 1960s as federal oversight of public education has increased. On the one hand, the right of EL students to receive a fair and appropriate education has been established in Civil Rights and subsequent legislation (ESEA of 1965 and EEOA of 1974) and has been clarified in Supreme Court cases (*Lau v. Nichols*, 1974; *Plyler v. Doe*, 1982). On the other hand, Federal education policy has established protocols of accountability that have heavily influenced how individual states administer their schooling systems. These new protocols

have come with consequences for EL students. For example, the language of the 2002 No Child Left Behind Act turned the focus towards EL performance on state exams and away from previously-recognized benefits of bilingualism (Wright, 2019, pp. 59–60). The federal update to education policy, ESSA, has loosened some of the accountability requirements, but the large-scale testing requirements remain, as well as the emphasis on linguistic assimilation over bilingualism.

This view is validated in the recent scholarship on language-in-education policy. The ESSA and NCLB policies “often reflect the belief that all other languages are, and should continue to be, subservient to English, thus, ignoring the language rights of students” (Johannessen et al., 2016, p. 28). Yazan (2019) explained how the dominance of English plays out in the K-12 setting, where such “policies support the normative assumption that emergent bilinguals should learn English to succeed in their academic life and there is no legitimate place for their home languages in schooling practices” (p. 4).

Language education is an important area of concern for neo-nationalism because it pertains to the determination of what nationalized spaces will look like. In their own words, neo-nationalist groups link immigration with public education. In a VDARE blog posting, “American Schools Suffer under Foreigner Invasion” (July 11, 2019), the group writes:

[...] arguably the most negatively affected sector is education in the local schools. In order to teach foreign children, resources must be reallocated and increased to deal with students who may not speak either English or Spanish, but instead understand only their tribal language. American students are being shortchanged by having to share their schools with uninvited foreigners.

A 2018 research report published by FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform) presents economic arguments against English language support services for K-12 students:

Public school districts across the United States are suffering under [...] the requirement to educate millions of illegal aliens, the school age

children of illegal aliens, refugees and legal immigrant students. FAIR estimates that it currently costs public schools \$59.8 billion to serve this burgeoning population. The struggle to fund programs for students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), sometimes called English Language Learners (ELL), represents a major drain on school budgets. (p. 5)

The same report presents the argument that immigrant students bring down the quality of K-12 education:

Yet the underlying tragedy behind this mad dash to accommodate illegal aliens, refugees and legal immigrants is that despite all the money spent, there is little to show for it. LEP students consistently demonstrate dismal progress in all subject areas and the fallout is affecting other students. (FAIR, 2018, p. 13)

The VDARE and FAIR statements link immigration to public education in order to offer the following arguments in opposition to English language services: (a) *economic argument* (e.g., “The struggle to fund programs [...] represents a major drain on school budgets”), (b) *pedagogical argument* (e.g., “despite all the money spent, there is little to show for it. LEP students consistently demonstrate dismal progress”), and (c) *detriment argument* (e.g., “American students are being shortchanged by having to share their schools with uninvited foreigners”). The advocacy group, ProEnglish, echoes a similar pedagogical argument to justify their own opposition to bilingual education: “After 30 years of the bilingual experiment and billions of dollars spent, reliable research shows that these programs fail to teach students the English language and literacy they need for school success” (ProEnglish, 2019).

Around the time that the AZ bill was voted on, a February 15th ProEnglish blog commentary presented arguments in support of English language immersion programs (and not bilingual instruction). Titled “English Immersion Classes Could Be Rolled Back in Arizona,” it opened with:

ProEnglish long has advocated for English language immersion programs as far superior to bilingual education programs for students for whom English is not the native language, in order not to relegate such students

to a linguistic ghetto in which they are destined for a poorer-quality educational experience and a stronger likelihood of lower-paying job opportunities upon graduation. (Guschoy, 2019d)

Interestingly, the arguments did not include the commonality or unifying arguments, as observed in previous sections. Instead, they are (a) the pedagogical argument and (b) the economic argument.

Academic scholarship has challenged the pedagogical arguments opposing bilingual education. For example, Hartman (2003) pointed out that the “English-only movement’s non-racist claims are seriously undermined by their systematic attacks on bilingual education” (p. 192). Johannessen et al. (2016) called out the English-only movement for the assimilationist agenda underlying the lobbying efforts, noting that the legislative efforts “infuse politics and society [...] to impose policies that English is, and should always be, the only language suitable for academic development” (p. 32). TESOL International (2005) publicized this position statement on challenges to bilingual education: “English-only policies will polarize and divide rather than unify; they will exclude rather than include immigrants and other English language learners from civic life and hence further marginalize this group” (p. 4).

Language-in-Education Legislation: State-Level Committee Hearings (2019)

Individual state agencies develop their own language-in-education policy within the framework provided by the federal government in ESSA. Although Official English legislation has been successful in 32 states, state education policies in 2019 have started to reaffirm bilingual education. As reported in *Education Week* (Mitchell, 2019), California (Proposition 58) and Massachusetts (LOOK Act) have both re-instated pathways for bilingual education in their states. In 2019, Arizona gave up the 4-hour English language block (S.B. 1014). According to *Education Week*, the governor is planning a state-wide repeal bill for 2020. These movements come with accompanying support for dual-language and Seal of Biliteracy initiatives.

Fourteen bills were voted on by state legislatures during 2019 legislative sessions. They were located via Education Commission of the States (2019), an aggregator site. From a cursory look at the bill titles, it is clear that state legislatures nation-wide are pushing their respective education agencies to meet the Civil Rights obligations as they pertain to EL students and their families. For example:

- MD HB1144: County Boards of Education – Equal Access to Public Services for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency
- OR SB496: Prohibits the Restriction of Certain Areas in Schools from English Language Learners
- WA HB1130: Creation of a Work Group Regarding Language Access Barriers for Public School Students and their Families.

I reviewed committee transcripts/video recordings for seven of the 14 bills, which I was able to easily access online (see Table 2.2). It should be noted that all seven of the bills received overwhelming support in the public hearings reviewed. However, the focus of the current study is how

Table 2.2 State-level bills pertaining to language-in-education for EL students, 2019

Bill number	Last Action (2019)	Title/description
AZ – SB 1014	February 14	Models of English Language Instruction
ID – H 222	March 20	Education Program Appropriations
MD – HB 1144	May 13	County Boards of Education—Equal Access to Public Services for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency
NV – AB 219	June 17	Creates Reporting Requirement and Corrective Action Plan Creation Regarding ELL Student Performance
OR – SB 496	June 17	Prohibits the Restriction of Certain Areas in Schools from English Language Learners
UT – SB 173	March 26	Dual Language Immersion Pilot Programs
WA – HB 1130	May 7	Creation of a Work Group Regarding Language Access Barriers for Public School Students and their Families

arguments consistent with neo-nationalism are deployed in legislative hearings in order to oppose bilingual education.

In reviewing the bills, two public oppositions were recorded in the recordings/transcripts. One was in opposition to Arizona S.B. 104 and a second to Oregon S.B. 496. Both were reviewed in detail, but only Arizona S.B. 104 will be discussed below. This is because Oregon S.B. 496 pertains to equitable access of EL students to all district facilities so as to avoid unnecessary physical segregation during the school day. The intent of the bill is consistent with the Office for Civil Rights (2015) guidance, which notes that unnecessary segregation diminishes EL students' access to all the district services to which they are entitled. This is a positive direction for how school districts service EL student populations, but the issue does not directly relate to language-in-education and the relationship with neo-nationalism.

On January 15, 2019, the Arizona Senate Education Committee held a public hearing to consider the bill S.B. 104. The bill rescinds the state-wide requirement that EL students attend a 4-hour English instructional block until they achieve sufficient English proficiency as required to participate in mainstream, English-medium classwork. First, it must be noted that the majority of the public statements were in support of the bill. Support for the bill was led by representatives of Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) and Stand for Children, a public advocacy group. The single opposition to Arizona S.B. 104 will be discussed here because it pertains directly to language of instruction for EL students and thus invokes familiar discussion between monolingual and multilingual models of high interest for neo-nationalism. The speaker is a former classroom educator and former member of the English Learner Task Force that originally developed the Structured English Immersion policy in 2000. (The 4-hour English language block was added in 2008.) At the public hearing, the representative advanced a pedagogical argument: "This bill will harm ELLs permanently by limiting their access to the English instruction they so desperately need to be successful." The speaker contended that these students are not learning English because "we have too many teachers teaching to them in Spanish, and they're put with a lot of kids speaking Spanish so WHERE WILL THEY LEARN the English. They don't. They're not exposed to it enough."

Without claiming an association between the speaker and political lobbying groups, the pedagogical argument presented in this context is related to the arguments presented in the previous section by ProEnglish, VDARE, and FAIR. The pedagogical argument the representative offers is clear: The daily 4-hour immersion block is the fastest way to provide the exposure students need to acquire English. What is intriguing is the follow-up elaboration the representative presents to the committee. The pedagogical argument nearly reveals nationalized imaginings of monolingual English spaces. The representative's speaking volume increases, conveying heightened emotion. The representative appears to describe a Spanish-language classroom environment (i.e., teachers and students speaking in Spanish). From a neo-nationalist perspective, this scenario is likely frightening because it disrupts the idealization of U.S. institutional spaces as primarily English ones. If this is indeed what is going on with the representative's comments, it would be consistent with language complaints in similar contexts that draw directly on nationalism (Meadows, 2014a).

The basic premise underlying the public exchanges reviewed is so engrained that neither side articulates any possible alternative to monolingual English schooling. For example, one remedy would be to implement a multilingual model in place of the current monolingual one. But to do that would be to disconnect the American nation from the English language as realized in a public schooling system overseen by institutions of the nation-state. The fact that neither side articulates a multilingual solution reveals the power of the monolingual frame in the United States.

A review of the language education policy proposals that state legislatures considered in 2019 shows that the momentum is with advocacy groups and education scholars who envision formal schooling in the United States as inclusive spaces. The Civil Rights of EL students are increasingly being acknowledged in state-level policy. When placed in nationalist terms, the current momentum is toward civic/liberal nationalism, as opposed to the ethnic/holistic nationalism characteristic of neo-nationalism. However, the English monolingual model has not changed nor has the ESSA accountability system tied to large-scale testing.

Discussion

The analysis explored six sets of discourse data, listed in Table 2.3, and traced contiguities in discourse between anti-immigration stances at the federal level, official English language policy at federal and state levels, and through to language-in-education policy at state levels.

As summarized in Table 2.3, the analysis identified the arguments utilized by political actors in interrelated contexts to advance language policy consistent with neo-nationalist priorities. For those individuals and organizations wishing to closely align state political policy with a narrowly-defined national people, English language use is a central concern. In the texts examined, the authors formulated multiple argument types to justify a privileged spot for English in institutional spaces. These included: (a) heritage argument (i.e., English is part of the national culture), (b) mythical past argument (i.e., English has always been with

Table 2.3 Analysis summary

Data set	Argued justifications FOR English	Argued function(s) OF English
1. Candidate statements on language use in the United States (2010s)	<i>Heritage argument</i> <i>Mythical past argument</i>	<i>Shibboleth argument</i>
2. Text of the federal-level English Language Unity Act (2019)	<i>Commonality argument</i>	<i>Continuation argument</i> <i>Shibboleth argument</i>
3. Advocacy statements in support of the English Language Unity Act (2019)		<i>Economic argument</i> <i>Unifying argument</i>
4. Official English justification statements: Individual states (1986–2007)	<i>Commonality argument</i>	<i>Continuation argument</i> <i>Unifying argument</i>
5. Neo-nationalism versus Bilingual education (2018–2019)	<i>Economic argument</i> <i>Pedagogical argument</i> <i>Detriment argument</i>	
6. Language-in-education legislation: State-level committee hearings (2019)	<i>Pedagogical argument</i>	

us), (c) commonality argument (i.e., English is a common thread that binds diverse groups), (d) economic argument (i.e., multiple language media is costly), (e) detriment argument (i.e., the presence of EL students takes away from American students), and (f) pedagogical argument (i.e., EL students need sustained exposure to English away from Spanish or other languages). The commonality argument appeared in official English legislation at the federal and state levels. Additionally, the pedagogical argument was invoked by authors in support of English-medium classroom practices.

Authors also formulated multiple argument types to establish a function for official English status. These included (a) shibboleth argument (i.e., English proficiency as a criterion of immigration), (b) continuation argument (i.e., to protect and preserve English), (c) unifying argument (i.e., to assimilate/participate in national civic society), and (d) economic argument (i.e., official language will save money). The majority of these arguments appear in at least two data sets. The shibboleth argument appears in the candidate statements, as well as the federal English Language Unity Act. The continuation argument appears in the federal- and state-level Official English legislation. Finally, the unifying argument appears both in the state-level Official English legislation and in advocacy statements put forth by ProEnglish.

The commonality argument used to justify English-centric language policies can only be successful if one subscribes to a nationalized worldview that strictly discerns between cultural insiders and outsiders. The logic only makes sense if one interprets English speakers as cultural insiders (who therefore count) and speakers of non-English languages as cultural outsiders (who therefore do not count). As the commonality argument draws attention to nationalized insiders and outsiders, it can serve in the interest of neo-nationalist priorities.

Despite the surface arguments, public efforts to enact official English laws and English monolingual instructional models are entirely about border maintenance (i.e., what language use is permissible within a given nationalized space). The justifications and the functions offered in the data sets advance an agenda to draw the political state in direct line with the cultural practices of a nationalized people. This is the influence of

neo-nationalism on public debates over language policy in the United States at present.

Conclusion

Neo-nationalism is identifiable in the U.S. context in much the same way as it has been discussed extensively in the contexts of Western and Eastern Europe. This chapter has defined neo-nationalism in the United States and considered how the objectives of neo-nationalism are translated into language policy at federal and state levels. The chapter traced neo-nationalist arguments intertextually in how they are reproduced across contexts by interrelated political actors.

As the six data sets reveal, efforts to cultivate English-only spaces has had limited success. While there are at least 32 state-level laws for Official English, such a law does not exist at the federal level, despite vigorous lobbying on the part of advocacy groups and politicians. In regards to language-in-education policy, the momentum is away from exclusively monolingual instruction. Still, the arguments that undergird these lines of advocacy are not disconnected from the arguments shaping immigration policy adopted by the Trump administration. Despite this sympathetic venue for anti-immigration views, neo-nationalist politicians and political parties have started distancing themselves from the Trump administration and the Republican party. For example, the American Freedom Party (2020) encourages their followers to abandon the Republicans and Democrats, stating that “we need a nationalist party interested in defending our borders, preserving our language and promoting our culture” (para. 1).

For scholars of language education and applied linguistics, there is good reason to remain sensitive to the arguments surrounding language policy in the United States and the potential ideological links to neo-nationalism. As demonstrated in this chapter, language policy is intertwined with immigration policy when seen through a holistic/ethnic lens of nationalism.

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3

The Impact of the Resurgent Anglophone Crisis in Cameroon on Language Education and Policy

Bernard Ndzi Ngala

Cameroon is a multilingual country with more than 290 indigenous languages, but officially she is an English-French bilingual country, thanks to her colonial history. Her major lingua francas are Pidgin English and Camfranglais, a hybrid language spoken among the youth that combines English and French. Since October 2016, demands made by English-speaking lawyers and teachers to the Cameroon government have degenerated into an armed sociopolitical conflict in Cameroon's

Editor's note: Bernard Ndzi Ngala, Ph.D., is one of the victims of the ongoing Anglophone crisis in Cameroon. On Saturday, November 10, 2018, he was kidnapped by armed Anglophone separatists in a government bilingual high school in the southwest region of Cameroon, where he was a French language teacher. An English-speaking Cameroonian, Dr. Ngala was charged with high treason by his captors. He was accused of teaching French, the language of the "oppressor" in "Ambazonia," and of violating the call for a school boycott (Crise anglophone, 2018). After eight days in captivity, he was released upon payment of a ransom.

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two English-speaking regions, triggering the resurgence of what has been termed the “Anglophone problem” or “Anglophone crisis.”

The term “Anglophone,” as understood in Cameroon, has little to do with knowledge of the English language, but carries a specific ethnic connotation. An Anglophone refers to a member of an ethnic group in the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon, which were formerly part of British Cameroons. Anglophone Cameroon comprises two Regions: Northwest and Southwest. It covers about 16.364 sq.km of the country’s total area of 475.442 sq.km and has about 5 million of Cameroon’s 24 million inhabitants. It is the stronghold of the main opposition party, the Social Democratic Front (SDF), and plays an important role in the economy, especially its dynamic agricultural and commercial sectors. Most of Cameroon’s oil, which accounts for one twelfth of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP), is located off the coast of the Anglophone region. (International Crisis Group Report, 2017, para. 11)

To understand what caused the Anglophone crisis and to gauge its impact on language education and policy in Cameroon in general, and in the two Anglophone regions in particular, I undertook a qualitative and quantitative investigation during the 2017–2018 school year, using documentary techniques, questionnaires, and classroom observations of English and French language lessons. The study is divided into four parts. Part one deals with the theoretical and methodological frameworks, while part two explores Cameroon’s colonial legacy as the root of the ongoing Anglophone crisis. After examining the demands made by the striking English-speaking lawyers and teachers as the immediate causes of the crisis, part three then narrates the course that the Anglophone crisis has taken since 2016. Finally, part four analyzes, from sociolinguistic and didactic perspectives, the impact of the ongoing crisis on language education and policy in Cameroon.

The Role of Language in the Formation of Nationalist Movements

Scholars have established a close link between language and nationalist movements (Anderson, 1983/1991; Fairclough, 1989; Gellner, 1964). They posited that language resources can be used to mobilize a people or a nation for a certain cause (e.g., war). Anderson (1983/1991) defined nationhood as “the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time” (p. 3). He described the nation as “an imagined community,” where “the members of even the smallest nation are unknown and anonymous to one another, yet the image of their fellow citizens’ communion is undoubtedly in the minds of each one’s life” (Anderson, 1983/1991, p. 133). Similarly, Gellner (1964) held that “nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist” (p. 169). Anderson (1983/1991) went on to opine that a nation owes its existence to a language through which it is “imagined” and stressed the mobilizing role that language plays in forming solidarity to create nationhood:

It is always a mistake to treat language in the way that certain nationalist ideologues treat them as emblems of nation-ness, like flags, costumes, folk-dance, and the rest. The most important thing about language is its capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect particular solidarity. (p. 122)

This is the case in Cameroon, where the English language serves as a symbol of cultural identity and as a mobilizer of English-speaking Cameroonians to the cause of restoring their imagined nation, which they fondly refer to as “Ambazonia.”

Linguistic Hegemony, Language Marginalization, and Resistance

Scholars have long been interested in issues concerning linguistic hegemony, language marginalization, and resistance. According to Suarez (2002), linguistic hegemony refers to a situation of language use patterns

in the public domain where some languages are dominant and others are sidelined. As a result, the marginalized languages assume inferior positions, and their speakers feel denigrated and disenfranchised in situations where they are required to use the dominant languages to access public information. In Cameroon, for example, English and French are the official languages recognized by the constitution as holding equal status. In practice, however, the French is dominant in government administration, and official documents are usually sent to the Anglophone regions in French only (Atindogbe, 2015).

Ford (1994) defined the process of language marginalization as “any action or attitude, conscious or unconscious that subordinates an individual or a group based on language” (p. 11). Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty (2006) considered it in terms of the prohibition of the printing and circulation of documents in the language of the minority group. According to them, language marginalization leads to linguistic genocide, the deliberate elimination of a language without actually killing its speakers. In the face of linguistic and cultural disenfranchisement, the minority language group tends to mount resistance, which can take various forms, including separatist movements (Mpfou & Mutasa, 2014; Mpfou & Salawu, 2018).

Methods and Procedures

For this study, we interviewed and distributed questionnaires to a total of 100 English and French language teachers in schools and language centers in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. We made use of social media outlets to reach out to some of the teachers in schools where access was difficult due to the ongoing armed conflict. Since October 2016, armed separatist fighters who call themselves “Amba Boys” (a name derived from “Ambazonia”) have blocked the roads linking Divisional Headquarters in the two Anglophone regions. They have been targeting and kidnapping students and teachers who dare to violate calls for a school boycott.

In the open-ended questions, teachers were asked to describe how the armed conflict has adversely affected their delivery of lessons since

the start of the crisis in 2016. We also observed classroom language lessons in government high schools and in language centers in the south-west region. Finally, we made use of primary sources of information concerning the ongoing crisis.

Colonial Legacy as the Seed of the Anglophone Crisis

The Partitioning of German Kamerun by Great Britain and France

What is today referred to as the Anglophone crisis is deeply rooted in Cameroon's colonial history. The German government and the Douala coastal chiefs signed a treaty in July, 1884, whereby the Germans established a protectorate called Kamerun. After the defeat of Germany in World War I by the Allied forces, the League of Nations appointed France and Great Britain as joint trustees of Kamerun (Konings & Nyamnyoh, 1997). Kamerun was later partitioned, with France administering the Eastern part, which comprised four-fifths of the territory, while Great Britain administered the remaining one-fifth, the southern part of which was known as the British Southern Cameroons; the northern part, known as British Northern Cameroons, was administered as part of Northern Nigeria. British Cameroons and French Cameroon were separate legal and political entities.

After World War II, the United Nations explicitly called on the British and French to administer their respective spheres of Cameroon towards self-government. It also called on the Administering Authorities to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the territories and their progress towards self-government or independence.

Towards Independence

On January 1, 1960, French Cameroon achieved independence from France and was baptized *La République du Cameroun* (Fig. 1). On 11 February 1961, a plebiscite was organized in British Southern and Northern Cameroons to determine the fate of their independence from British rule. Two questions were asked: Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria? Or do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroon? A third option for independence as a separate political entity was not offered to voters.

Southern Cameroonians were apprehensive about this move and put pressure on John Ngu Foncha, then head of the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP), to redress the situation. Foncha led a delegation to London in November 1960 to press for the inclusion of the option for independence as a separate political entity. The request was rejected. While the British Southern Cameroons voted to gain their independence by joining the already independent French Cameroon, *La République du Cameroun*, the British Northern Cameroon voted to join the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Thus, on October 1, 1961, British Southern Cameroons gained her independence by joining the Republic of Cameroun, a union which gave birth to the Federal Republic of Cameroon under the leadership of President Ahmadou Ahidjo (Anye, 2008; Awasum, 1998).

The Fouban Constitutional Conference

Delegates of Southern Cameroons and those of the Federal Republic of Cameroun met at Fouban in the west of the Francophone territory from July 17 to 21, 1961, to negotiate the terms of reunification. Delegates from the Federal Republic, under President Ahidjo, came with a draft of a federal constitution that their counterparts from Anglophone Cameroon only discovered at the conference. The draft was supposed to have been presented to the Southern Cameroons House of Chiefs (SCHC) and the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly (SCHA)

for deliberation and approval before their departure to the conference. However, this was not the case. English and French were proclaimed official languages, and the bicultural (i.e., Anglophone and Francophone) and bi-jural (i.e., English common law and French civil law systems) character of the Federal Republic of Cameroon was enshrined in the new Federal Constitution (Nkwi, 2004).

Anglophone delegates left the conference disappointed. They thought it was going to be an open forum for debates on a constitution that would guarantee a Federal Republic built on equality, with a degree of autonomy given to the states. They were surprised when Ahidjo imposed a ready-made constitution that gave broad powers to the executive of the federal state to the detriment of the two federated states (Ngoh, 1996). Without waiting for West Cameroon to gain independence from Britain before adopting the constitution, the National Assembly of West Cameroon approved the Federal Constitution in August, 1961. Then, on September 1, President Ahidjo promulgated it. The lack of frank and open debates and general consensus over the constitutional process sowed seeds of bitterness and suspicion in the minds of Anglophones, who felt that they had been duped by the Francophones.

Hyper-Centralization of Power Erodes the Dreams of Anglophones

In September 1966, President Ahidjo dissolved all political parties and formed a new one: the Cameroon National Union. The single-party system weakened Anglophones in their drive towards developing the state of West Cameroon. Making use of these newly centralized powers, Ahidjo appointed the Honorable Solomon Tandeng Muna in 1968 to replace the Honorable Augustine Ngom Jua as Prime Minister without the required Parliamentary endorsement and in contravention of the law, which did not permit Muna to hold the posts of Federal Vice President and Prime Minister of West Cameroon concomitantly (BAPEC, 2016). For many Southern Cameroonians, this was a blatant violation of the democratic principles that they held dear. After ushering in the one-party

system, Ahidjo suppressed federalism on May 20, 1972, through an organized referendum. Anglophones continued to challenge the legality of this change on the grounds that the 1961 constitution stipulated that only parliament could amend the constitution (Ekali, 2004).

Unconstitutional Name Change from the Federal Republic of Cameroon to the Republic of Cameroon

When President Paul Biya succeeded Ahidjo in November 1982, he further centralized power. On August 22, 1983, he divided the Anglophone region into two provinces: Northwest and Southwest. In 1984, without any parliamentary consultations, he changed the country's official name to the Republic of Cameroon (the name of the former Francophone territory) and removed the second star from the flag, which represented the Anglophone part of the country. To Anglophones, these constitutional amendments were evidence that the original intentions of French-speaking Cameroonians were to absorb Southern Cameroonians rather than to regard them as equals (Kah, 2012; Mukong, 1990).

To sum up, the Anglophone problem is rooted in Cameroon's colonial history. It hinges on the cavalier reunification process and unlawful constitutional amendments that have left Anglophones with the impression of being annexed by their Francophone counterparts. The current crisis simply represents a resurgence of old grievances that have accumulated since 1961.

The Anglophone Crisis (2016–2019)

Kouega (2019) defined the Anglophone problem as “the expression of a malaise that Anglophone citizens have been trying to cope with since reunification in 1961” (p. 67). Based on claims made by striking Anglophone lawyers' and teachers' trade unions since 2016, this malaise finds its expression in terms like: *linguistic marginalization*, *Frenchification of Anglo-Saxon culture*, *cultural assimilation*, and *erosion of Anglo-Saxon culture*.

Linguistic Marginalization and Frenchification of the Anglo-Saxon Legal System

The ongoing crisis began on October 11, 2016, in Bamenda when lawyers from the Northwest and the Southwest Regions went on strike. They demanded the translation, from French into English, of the Code of the Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa (OHADA) Created in 1993, OHADA has seventeen member states and is dominated by Francophone Countries. This may explain why the OHADA acts were published in French only. The striking lawyers perceived the circulation of the OHADA laws in Anglophone Common law courts in French as a sign of the marginalization of English. They also protested against the Frenchification of Common Law jurisdictions, with the appointment to the Anglophone Regions of Francophone magistrates who did not understand English or the Common Law. Of the Frenchification of the Anglo-Saxon culture by the French-speaking dominated government of Cameroon since reunification in 1961, Kouega (2019) wrote:

At reunification, the two Federated States merged to form a Unitary State. This new state turned out to be highly centralized, with powers in the hands of the President of the Republic. Over the years, West Cameroon citizens witnessed the erosion of their Anglo-Saxon culture and the rapid introduction of French-based elements in their ways of doing things, which they referred to as assimilation. Actually, every British-inspired system of management in areas like administration, agriculture, education, was gradually undergoing frenchification. (p. 34)

Frenchification of the Anglo-Saxon System of Education

On November 21, 2016, seven Anglophone Teachers' Trade unions followed suit by holding a sit-down strike to protest against the Frenchification of the Anglophone sub-system of higher education, among other grievances, in the following terms:

The Universities of Buea and Bamenda have been “francophonised” and admissions into key faculties have been taken to Yaounde so that admission lists can be doctored [...] Francophones who do not master English to teach in Anglophone schools. The teachers teach in broken English, thereby confusing the students. As a result, many students do not perform well in their final examinations. (Statement on the Anglophone Teachers’ Strike, 2016)

The Universities of Bamenda and Buea in the Northwest and Southwest Regions, respectively, are the only two Anglophone universities in English-speaking Cameroon (Ngange & Talla, 2019). The striking teachers wanted a system where English is the only teaching language and that encourages student associations and the independence of universities in the management of their affairs without interference from the dominant French-speaking government. Several other grievances were aired: They decried discrimination against Anglophone candidates during competitive entrance examinations into professional schools and argued that, as a result of this discrimination, the government was not training Anglophone technical teachers; the few Anglophones who were trained were sent to work in French-speaking areas. The teachers also complained that Anglophone children were being compelled to take examinations in French or with questions poorly translated from French into English (Statement on the Anglophone Teachers’ Strike, 2016).

Technical education in Anglophone Cameroon has, since the 1972 abolition of the federal system of government, suffered from an acute shortage of teachers. This situation was due to the absence of technical schools available to English-speaking students after receiving their General Certificate of Examination Advanced Level (G.C.E A/L). To make up for the shortage, the government has been posting secondary and high school technical teachers from the dominant French-speaking Douala Higher Technical Teacher-Training College, known by its French acronym ENSET, to English-speaking technical schools. Most of the French-speaking teachers do not have a comfortable mastery of the English language. The shortage of technical teachers in Anglophone Cameroon has, of late, been resolved by the opening of two Higher

Technical Teacher-Training Colleges in Bamenda and Kumba in the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon, respectively.

The Resurgence of Armed Conflict

As mentioned above, initial requests by Anglophone lawyers and teachers for better working conditions and respect for Anglo-Saxon culture transformed into political demands, notably a change from a unitary state back into a federal state. They argued that only a return to federalism could safeguard Anglo-Saxon culture. Indeed, on October 12, 2016, English-speaking Lawyers in the Northwest and the Southwest Regions went on strike. They pressed for the recognition of the Anglo-Saxon legal system. They also requested the translation of the Uniform Acts of OHADA and the CIMA (International Conference of Insurance Markets) Code into English. Furthermore, the lawyers complained about the transfer of French-speaking judicial and legal officials who do not understand English and the Common Law system to the Anglophone Regions. They clamored for the opening of a Common Law Division at the Supreme Court and a Common Law Department at the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) (Ngange & Talla, 2019).

The lawyers' strike was followed a teachers' strike on November 21, 2016. The Anglophone teachers denounced the gradual Frenchification of the English subsystem of education that, along with the French-speaking subsystem, was enshrined in a 1998 law. The teachers were angered by various attempts made by the dominant French-speaking government to harmonize the two subsystems. They clamored for the withdrawal of all French-speaking teachers from Anglophone technical schools. The striking teachers accused French-speaking teachers of teaching Anglophone students in Pidgin English. The crisis took a dramatic turn and soon engulfed the whole of Anglophone Cameroon (International Crisis Group, 2017).

On January 9, 2017, many communities in the two Anglophone Regions became "ghost towns" (i.e., a form of civil disobedience characterized by a boycott of all socio-economic activities) following a call

by the Consortium of Cameroon English-speaking Civil Society. On September 21, 2017, activists attacked students on their way to school, and the name “Ambazonia” was heard chanted. On September 22, 2017, the crowd again chanted the name during demonstrations in the streets. They requested the liberation of English-speaking activists incarcerated since December 2016. On September 30, 2017, protesters in the North-west and Southwest Regions hoisted green and white “Ambazonian” flags in front of public buildings in preparation for the commemoration of the independence of the Federal Republic of Ambazonia on October 1, 2017. That day, many street demonstrations were organized in the two regions (Ngange & Talla, 2019). The Anglophone diaspora did not initiate this crisis, but it did play a vital role in propagating secessionist ideas and sponsoring the separatist militia groups, who now control pockets of territory and are charged with restoring the statehood of the Republic of Ambazonia.

The socioeconomic impact of the crisis has seen the closure of the Cameroon Development Corporation, the second largest employer after the state, and brought untold hardships to the two regions, displacing 40,000 persons internally and rendering another 34,000 refugees in neighboring Nigeria (International Crisis Group, 2018), as well as causing thousands of deaths among civilian and military populations (Amnesty International, 2018). The Anglophone crisis has also had a significant impact on language policy and education in Cameroon in general, and in the two crisis-hit regions in particular.

Impact of the Armed Conflict on Language Policy and Education

The ongoing armed conflict in Cameroon has had a significant impact on language policy and language-in-education in the two conflict-hit Regions through the adoption of sweeping peace-building reforms to promote bilingualism as official policy.

Impact on Language Planning

Language planning refers to a systematic, future-oriented change in language code (i.e., corpus planning), domains of use (i.e., status planning), learning and speaking (i.e., acquisition or language-in-education planning) and/or language promotion (i.e., prestige/image planning) undertaken by governments or other state-sponsored bodies (Baldauf, 2005; Kaplan & Baldauf, 2003). In order to quell the protests by striking English-speaking teachers and lawyers, the government made several reforms which positively affected the domains of use, learning as well the image of the English language, in a bid to restore the Anglo-Saxon culture dear to the Cameroonians of the former British Southern Cameroons.

Sociolinguistic Reforms in the Judicial Sector

Reforms were undertaken in the judicial sector to boost the status of English and French, respectively, in the training for and practice of English Common Law and French Civil and Public Law in Cameroonian courts and universities:

- a) special recruitment of English-speaking Pupil-Judicial and Legal Officers and Court Registrars into the Division of Magistracy and Registry of the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM);
- b) opening of a Common Law Division at the Supreme Court to examine appeals from the Court of Appeal, South-West Region and Court of Appeal, North-West Region;
- c) opening of a Department of English Law at the Universities of Douala Maroua, Ngaoundere and Dschang and a *Département de Droit Public* at the Universities of Buea and Bamenda;
- d) opening of a *Département de Droit Civil* at the University of Bamenda and at University of Buea;
- e) translation into English and publication of the official English version of the Uniform Acts of the Organization for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa (OHADA) on January 20, 2017.

Sociolinguistic Reforms in the Education Sector

In the education sector, measures were also taken to safeguard the Anglo-Saxon system. In January 2017, French-speaking teachers at technical schools in the two English-speaking Regions were redeployed to the eight French-speaking regions where they could better teach technical subjects in French. Similarly, to make up for the number of French-speaking teachers redeployed from the two English-speaking Regions, 1000 bilingual teachers were recruited into the Cameroon public service. These bilingual teachers were expected to promote the learning of both English and French when teaching subjects in government technical schools.

Enhancing Normative Production in the Two Official Languages

In a bid to foster national unity through the enhancement of normative productions in the two official languages, President Biya created, through a presidential decree issued on January 23, 2017, a National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism in fulfilment of one of the promises he had made in his address to the nation on December 31, 2016. The commission was charged with:

[...] submitting reports and recommendations on issues relating to the protection and promotion of bilingualism and multiculturalism to the President of the Republic and the Government; monitoring the implementation of constitutional provisions; establishing English and French as two official languages of equal status, and especially ensuring their use in all government services, semi-public bodies as well as any State-subsidized body. (Biya, 2017, p. 2)

Promotion of Official Languages in Cameroon

On September 10, 2019, President Paul Biya, in a special address to the nation, convened a Major National Dialogue (henceforth, MND) from September 30 to October 4, 2019. In his words, the constitution-based MND was organized: “to seek ways and means of meeting the

high aspirations of the people of the northwest and southwest regions, but also of all the other components of our Nation” in order to resolve the crisis (“Dialogue National,” 2019). Topics earmarked for discussion at the MND included: Bilingualism and cultural diversity; reconstruction and development of conflict-affected areas; the return of refugees and other displaced persons; and the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

At the end of deliberations, the commission proposed that the practice of English-French bilingualism be enhanced in all sectors of society through the creation and implementation of programs starting from preschool. On December 24, 2019, President Biya enacted a pioneering law on the promotion of bilingual in Cameroon. Below are some of the jurisdictional-linguistic provisions of the new law on the promotion of official languages in Cameroon.

Legal Provisions on Official Public Language Use

Chapter III, sections 13, 14, 16 and 18 of the law emphasizes the equality of English and French in official public use. Section 13 provides that English and French shall be the official working languages in public entities where users have the right to communicate and interact in either official language, while state employees are bound to render services in any of the official languages. The law also states that citizens have the right to ask for public services to be rendered in any of the official languages. In order to promote public language use, section 14 provides that each public entity shall have an internal structure in charge of translation, interpretation and promotion of official languages, run by professional translators and interpreters whose mission will be to ensure that official correspondence between public entities are written in either of the two official languages.

In a bid to maintain equality in official language use, section 16 of the law provides that official speeches and statements by public authorities shall be translated and made public in the other official while public authorities may use both official languages alternately in official speeches and statements. Section 18 provides that signposts, logos, placards and

various notices shall be prepared and displayed by all public entities in English and French, with respect to equality of formal presentation in terms of font color, type and size.

Legal Provisions on Official Language-in-Education Policy

In Chapter II, sections 11 and 12, the law seeks to promote the teaching and learning of French in both school and extracurricular settings. According to section 11, the state will set up entities to provide training and build capacity in the use of English and French. It also seeks to promote the image and prestige of official languages by granting of incentives to enable citizens to develop their proficiency in both official languages, in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Republic.

Among the sweeping reforms that have taken place since the start of the crisis in 2016, the enactment of the pioneering law on the promotion of official languages in Cameroon stands as one of major consequences of the Anglophone crisis on language policy. The next section addresses the following questions: What has been the impact of these reforms on the teaching of English and French in the two Anglophone Regions of Cameroon? What impact has the ongoing war had on the teaching of these two languages?

Impact on Language-in-Education Policy

Since 2016, French language learning and teaching in the two English-speaking Regions of Cameroon has been paying a heavy price. In 2018, all French-speaking civil servants were ordered by the Ambazonia Interim Government to evacuate the two Regions or face the wrath of Ambazonia Restoration Forces (Ateba, 2018). Then, on November 5, 2019, Chris Anu, the Ambazonia I.G. Secretary and Spokesman, announced on ABC Amba TV a ban on the teaching, learning, and use of French in the two English-speaking Regions of Cameroon:

The Southern Cameroons, Ambazonia IS NOT... IS NOT, ladies and gentlemen, a bilingual country. We shall hold on to our Anglo-Saxon

heritage and shall henceforth keep and defend it forever. The ban of the French language as an official language in all of Ambazonia means that it can no longer, FRENCH CAN NO LONGER BE HEARD SPOKEN OR USED in any official capacity, in any office, in any market or business place. French language is banned in schools and the French Cameroun so-called bilingual schools are hereby banned from operating in Ambazonia. Any education institution employing French teachers shall be shut down. (Amba Watchman, 2019, emphasis added)

This ban has taken a toll on the effective teaching and learning of French in both mainstream schools and extracurricular settings. At the extracurricular level, language centers have witnessed a dramatic drop in the number of French language learners, with some classrooms empty like the one at Buea Regional Linguistic Center in Southwest Cameroon that we visited on February 28, 2020 (see Fig. 3.1). A two-hour French language class was due to be held in this classroom from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m., but no students showed up.

One of the French language teachers who we interviewed blamed the apathy for French language learning on security concerns and on the fact that most of her students now considered French to be nothing more



Fig. 3.1 An empty French language classroom at Buea Regional Linguistic Center (February, 2020)

than a foreign language imposed on Anglophone Cameroonians by the French-dominated government:

Before the crisis started in 2016, the Buea Regional Linguistic Center used to enjoy the presence of a lot participants coming from other countries and from other Regions of the country to learn English and French, but since the crisis started, not only is it unsafe for people to come into the country, especially to the Anglophone Regions, but it has also had a toll on the learning of languages at the Center. Given that Buea is one of most conflict-hit towns, our learners do not find it easy having to live here [...] Secondly, when the crisis started, the secessionists made many people believe that the country was going to break up. So, most parents and children, who first of all did not like the French language, thought this was an opportunity for them to get rid of learning French. So they decided to stay away from the Center or from learning the language. That is why I can say that the decrease in the number of learners is partly due to the crisis. (personal communication, February 28, 2020)

At the Bamenda Linguistic Center in the Northwest Region of Cameroon, the learning of the country's two official languages has also paid a heavy price due to the ongoing armed conflict. A teacher of English and French here attributed the dramatic drop in the enrollments to poverty, difficulties with marketing, and fears about learning French among English-speaking Cameroonians:

I must say that the Bamenda Linguistic Center has undergone a steady drop in enrolment into English and French language classes as a result of the ongoing crisis. Firstly, the learning population of Bamenda has escaped to other peaceful regions. That has deprived several schools of students. Secondly, the few available learners complain of poverty owing to the economic breakdown caused by the war. Lastly, our Language Center cannot do marketing in order to attract many more learners owing to insecurity. In terms of learners' attitudes, the general phobia which English-speaking students usually have about French language learning has worsened because of the crisis. This is also reflected in the dramatic drop in the number of French learners at the Bamenda Linguistic Center with the exception of those who learn French in order to meet dire needs.

This attitude also prevails in high schools and universities. (personal communication, March 9, 2020)

The ban imposed on the use and teaching of French in Anglophone Cameroon by separatist fighters has also had an impact on English. The Ambazonia Interim Government leadership declared English, a colonial legacy of the former British Southern Cameroons, to be the lone official language to be spoken and taught in Anglophone Cameroon:

The English language shall remain the business language, the official language in all of our territory: in schools, hospitals, business places. Individuals communicating exclusively in French at work places, that is, with little or no ability to speak pidgin during this time of war, should be considered French Cameroun spies. (Amba Watchman, 2019)

If French language classrooms witnessed a drastic drop in enrolment, partly due to the ban, English language learning has registered a relatively higher number of learners than French during the period under study (see Fig. 3.2).

An analysis of the data collected revealed that the majority of the learners who defied gunshots to attend language classes did so to

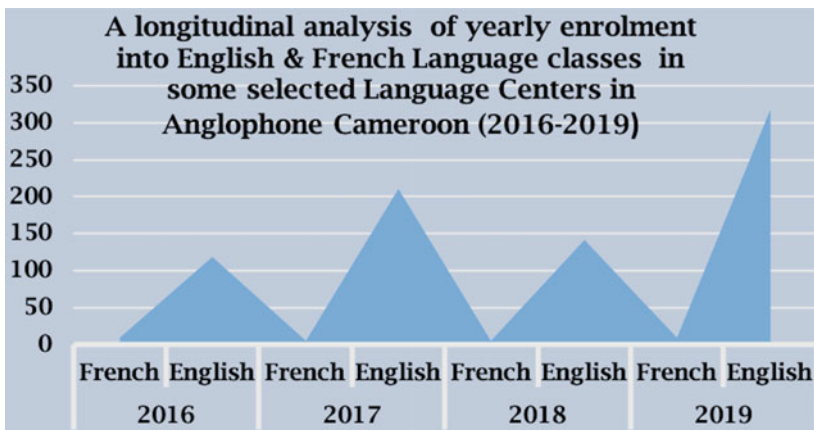


Fig. 3.2 Enrollment in language courses at extracurricular settings

prepare for international English and French proficiency examinations like TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), IELTS (International English Language Testing System), TCF (Test de connaissance de la langue française), and TEF (Test d'évaluation de français) (see Fig. 3.3). Most of the learners interviewed said that they have been braving the odds to study and sit for these examinations so that they could seek asylum abroad.

A French language teacher at the Bamenda Linguistic Center noted a shift in learning trends during the ongoing crisis in favor of English, a shift which corroborates the data above:

Most of the learners who come to our Center during this crisis, come to learn English in order to sit International English Language Examinations that can permit them to travel abroad in escape of the crisis. So, one can say that the enthusiasm to learn French is by far less than that for English naturally because of the international status enjoyed by the English language in addition to other advantages. (personal communication, February 28, 2020)

The impact of the ongoing crisis on language teaching and learning in the extracurricular setting aside, the armed conflict has taken a heavy

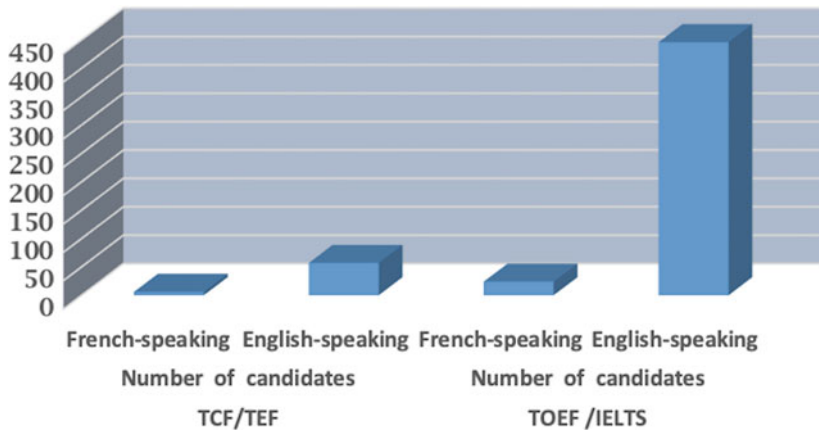


Fig. 3.3 Enrollment in international language proficiency examinations

toll on the teaching and learning of French and English in mainstream settings.

Impact on the Special Bilingual Education Program

One of the most devastating consequences of the Anglophone crisis has been the shutdown of schools in the two English-speaking regions of Cameroon since 2016 and the closure of pilot schools of the Special Bilingual Education Program (Maclean & Kiven 2019; Tah, 2019). Out of the thirteen pilot schools of the Special Bilingual Education Program in the Southwest Region that were functional before 2016, only two of them, Government Bilingual High School Limbe and Bilingual Grammar School Molyko-Buea are functional today. Both are situated in urban centers. The rest of the schools are in rural areas, where armed separatist fighters have built their camps, and thus have been abandoned (see Fig. 3.4).

As a consequence of the Anglophone crisis, mainstream schools in the urban centers have become crowded following an influx of students fleeing the rural areas. In the face of the official ban on French in the



Fig. 3.4 An abandoned school site due to armed conflict (February, 2020)

two Regions, teachers were not only risking their lives, but they also had to cope with overcrowded classrooms. As one of the French language teachers at the Bilingual Grammar School Molyko–Buea explained:

The current crisis has created fear in us. One goes to class to teach amidst fears of being kidnapped. Since the start of the Anglophone crisis, students' perception about the French language has changed. The language is being perceived by many as a language that is being imposed on them. Consequently, they are not willing to learn. Besides, large numbers of students who have come in from other schools make teaching and assessment very laborious tasks. Before leaving the house to go to school, one needs to hide everything: school bag and textbooks. One dresses casually as if one is going to the market or to the farm in order to avoid being noticed by separatist fighters. On the way to school, one has to avoid speaking French or being noticed as a French teacher. (personal communication, February 27 2020)

Several of the teachers who were interviewed said that they were being threatened by administrative officials with sanctions, like the withholding of salaries, if they failed to come to school.

The large class sizes in mainstream schools, compared to the drastic drop in students at extracurricular settings, could be explained by the fact that, since 2016, urban schools have been militarized in order to protect students and teachers from armed separatists, while language centers are not guarded by soldiers. Concerns about safety have been scaring away learners.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I set out to analyze, from sociolinguistic and didactic perspectives, the impact of the resurgent Anglophone crisis in the two English-speaking regions of Cameroon on language education and policy in general, and in the conflict-hit regions in particular. While nationalist movements amongst minority groups within a state are usually associated with their sociocultural and linguistic demands for recognition, this study revealed that the ongoing resurgent Anglophone crisis, rooted

in Cameroon's colonial history, was born out of multifaceted frustrations suffered by the Anglophone minority group at the hands of the dominant French-speaking government. Grievances, such as the gradual erosion of the Anglo-Saxon legal and educational systems and the eventual marginalization of English, were brought to the fore in 2016 by striking English-speaking lawyers and teachers. The armed conflict that followed has adversely affected the teaching and learning of French in Anglophone Cameroon, but it has also led to improvements in the status and image of English as a minority language in Cameroon through the signing of sweeping peace-building reforms, notably the enactment of a pioneering legal text on the promotion of official languages in Cameroon and the creation of the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism.

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4

Civic Nationalism and Language-in-Education Policies in the United Arab Emirates

Fatima Esseili

At the onset of the twenty-first century, a new form of nationalism has surged, one with different agents and target audiences, and with a reinvigorated persona represented by the prefix *neo-* in its title. Politicians like Donald Trump, Marine Le Pen, Boris Johnson and Viktor Orbán, along with the many far-right parties in different countries, are some of the most visible agents of neo-nationalism, but this phenomenon is by no means restricted to western countries, as we can witness similar trends in China, India, and Myanmar, to name a few. Islamophobia, Hispanophobia, anti-Semitism, and other xenophobic sentiments have become distinctive features of neo-nationalist rhetoric. While some might downplay such features by referring to Islamophobia as “anti-Islamic activism,” for example, or trying to justify such sentiments as being grounded in “empirical evidence” (see Sedgwick, 2013), fear,

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racism, and inadequate governmental responses to transnational capitalism and the socioeconomic problems it has created remain the major drivers of neo-nationalism in its extreme form. This is one reason why, in its most vicious manifestations, neo-nationalism primarily targets refugees and immigrants, and sometimes even residents or citizens who may be perceived as such, in an attempt to limit their numbers and access to jobs, benefits, and resources.

Sedgwick (2013) called neo-nationalism “a response to threats posed by globalization at the levels of sovereignty, identity, and economics” (p. 211). Similarly, Eger and Valdez (2015) attributed this phenomenon to “sociocultural issues” and “national identity,” which are perceived to be threatened as a result of changing demographics (p. 117). In its most popular forms, neo-nationalism triggers fear of a reality in which non-whites, who have been historically colonized, demeaned, and often demonized, move to so-called “white areas,” along with their unique ethnic and religious practices, traditions, cultures, and languages. They become a “national emergency,” as is the case in the United States today (Baker, 2019), or a threat to “national sovereignty” in western Europe (Eger & Valdez, 2015, p. 127), among other labels.

Neo-nationalism is not only directed at other ethnicities and religions. It can also affect people of similar backgrounds. This was the case with international students in higher education in South Africa and South Korea, who experienced discrimination from locals, even though they were of the same race and shared cultural values (Lee, 2017; Lee, Jon, & Byun, 2016). It is also the case of some countries in the Middle East, such as in Lebanon, where Palestinian and Syrian refugees are discriminated against by right-wing groups. Due to shifting economic and political grounds, supporters of neo-nationalism often channel their frustrations towards refugees and minorities because they are viewed as threats to the social, economic, and political welfare of the country, instead of directing their frustrations toward the real agents of political and economic corruption.

Another form of nationalism, which can be labeled as “civic,” attempts to focus on the positive outcomes of a changing world order. Civic nationalism is characterized by superdiverse communities that aim to be non-confrontational to other ethnic and religious groups, especially

Table 4.1 Population of GCC countries in 2019

Gulf State	Population	Citizens (%)	Non-Citizens (%)
Bahrain	1,505,003	46	54
Kuwait	2,993,706	30.4	69.6
Qatar	2,444,174	11.6	88.4
Oman	5,664,844	54	45
The UAE	9,992,083	11.6	88.4
Saudi Arabia	34,173,498	61.7	38.3

in countries that are home to many immigrants, foreign workers, or expatriates. In a civic nation, people do not have to “be unified by commonalities of language or culture” and anyone can be a member, including immigrants, so long as they support political institutions and “accept the liberal principles on which they are based” (Stilz, 2009, p. 257). Whether liberal principles are actually applied in such countries is beyond the scope of this chapter.

In the case of the Gulf states, specific policies and procedures exist to regulate the presence of non-citizens, including refugees or asylum seekers who up till now have only been permitted to enter as residents on a case-by-case basis (Day, 2019). They also have rules that govern the limited channels that expatriates must follow in order to set foot into a specific Gulf state. Despite these policies, the number of non-residents in some cases far outweighs that of the local population, creating national concerns related to identity, language, and cultural practices. In fact, out of the six Arab countries that constitute the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), three have resident populations that are greater than that of the local populations (Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait), two have expatriate populations closer to 50% (Bahrain and Oman), and one (Saudi Arabia) is 38% non-Saudi. Table 4.1 presents aggregated data of the percentages of locals and non-locals, with the United Arab Emirates and Qatar as the most extreme cases with local populations that are in the minority.

This chapter focuses on nationalism and language-in-education policies in the United Arab Emirates (hereafter UAE). It argues that, while the policies and practices that have been set to safeguard the interests of the local Emirati population might look neo- or ethno-nationalist,

nationalism in the UAE takes a more civic form, albeit broadly defined. In contrast to many western countries where neo-nationalist sentiments are manipulated to instigate fear and hatred of other cultures or ethnicities, the UAE has been working towards a more tolerant society where people from all backgrounds are welcomed and can feel at home. In essence, the UAE government promotes the image of a unified country that not only transcends ethnic and cultural differences but also celebrates them. This is achieved by forging a new brand for national and cultural identity rooted in traditions, diffusing conflict through the use of soft power and diplomacy, promoting diversity and tolerance, and trying to preserve Arabic as the native language. The chapter also argues that clearer language policies that take into account language(s) as a right and a resource must be instated to further enhance national and social cohesion.

This chapter begins by providing brief historical background of the different factors that have shaped the UAE into what it is today, focusing on select areas where nationalism can be observed. The second section presents a critical examination of major scholarship on the country's language-in-education policies with a focus on English and Arabic. The chapter concludes with implications for language-in-education policy and national identity.

Description of Context

The UAE is situated on the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the south and west, the Arabian Gulf to the north, and Oman to the east. Formed in 1971, the UAE is a federation of seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Fujairah, Ras al Khaimah, and Um al Quwain. Before the mid nineteenth century, the UAE was inhabited by nomadic families with frequent tribal clashes amongst them, as well as clashes with the British Empire that culminated in the latter destroying all major ports in 1819 and controlling Gulf waters (National Archives, 2019). Subsequent truces that safeguarded maritime peace were signed and renewed up until 1853, when naval aggression ceased. As a consequence, the area became known as the

“Trucial Coast,” which included present-day UAE and Oman. With the rise of Ottoman, French, and Persian interests in the Gulf, the British signed an exclusive agreement with the Gulf sheikhs, whereby the former vowed to defend the UAE against all enemies. Thus, the UAE became a British “protectorate,” a euphemism for imperialism. This treaty established British supremacy in the Gulf until their withdrawal in 1971 (National Archives, 2019). After independence, nationalism manifested itself through different policies and practices, some of which will be addressed in the following section.

Citizenship Laws

Since the formation of the UAE in 1971, strict policies have been enacted regarding who can become a citizen. With the exception of the children of Emirati women married to foreigners, who can now become citizens when they turn 18 (Issa, 2011), expatriates who were born and who have spent all of their lives in the country have no legal channel to become citizens, and therefore must remain on sponsored visas. This could be partly explained by the demographic imbalance; with an estimated population of about 10 million, the number of expatriate residents far outweighs the number of UAE nationals who constitute only about 11% of the population (United Arab Emirates’ Government Portal, 2019b). This population is concentrated in the emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Thus, Emiratis are a minority in their own country. This demographic imbalance “has posed security, economic, social and cultural threats to the local population” (Kapiszewski, 2006, p. 4). For this reason, prioritizing nationals’ access to resources and benefits, as well as preserving their cultural and linguistic identity, have become more urgent than naturalizing the growing number of expatriates, which could threaten the rights of the local population. This reasoning, however, is questioned by some scholars who cast doubt on the Emirati or Arabs’ sense of belonging and collective identity. Stephenson and Rajendram (2018), for example, depict Arabs as a population who had “little sense of collective identity” up until the 1830s with the booming of the pearling industry, and who had only engrained their “narrative of belonging” with the oil

discovery in the 1930s (p. 893). The authors are of the view that withholding citizenship from expatriates will eventually jeopardize stability and “reinforce ethnic division” in the UAE (p. 901).

In contrast, the National Archives (2019) present the UAE as a civilization that dates back to prehistoric times, with evidence from archaeological excavations. It does not present itself as a land where various civilizations have existed, but rather as a single continuous civilization, thus extending the Emirati roots to centuries before the booms of the pearling and oil industries. To an outsider, such a narrative, along with the fear for the loss of Emirati identity and rights, may not appear civic in nature since in a civic nation, “it is not the role of the state to privilege or endorse one national culture over others” (Stilz, 2009, p. 258). Rather, they might appear to be ethno-nationalist (Koch, 2016, p. 52) or neo-nationalist in an extreme form that supports “the maintenance of social insurance, with preferences for protecting or increasing benefits to ethno-nationals, while cutting benefits to out-groups” (Eger & Valdez, 2015, p. 127). This would be the case, especially when considering how naturalization is possible and legally regulated in other countries. However, from the UAE’s point of view, the unemployment rate among Emiratis, along with other social and cultural factors, warrant restrictive citizenship laws, at least for the time being.

In addition, there may be a need to understand the context of the UAE “beyond the predominantly rights-based framework of citizenship studies” and look at how expatriates may “embrace the hegemonic or mainstream identities promoted in their new homelands” (Koch, 2016, p. 52). The government seems to be aware that changes need to happen, which is one reason why, in 2019, it became possible for foreigners to own property in perpetuity, rather than for a fixed term as before, in investment areas (United Arab Emirates’ Government Portal, 2020b). This law is likely to increase long-term investment, bolster a non-oil economy, and enhance the sense of security among expatriates and foreign investors.

National and Cultural Identity

Another factor related to the current citizenship law is the feeling among many Emiratis that their cultural and national identity might be threatened as a result of the demographic imbalance. Hopkyns (2014) describes the situation as “cultural fragility,” where nationals are uncertain over their past, present, and future (p. 3). The debate on UAE national identity culminated in declaring 2008 as the National Identity Year, and in organizing a conference to discuss issues of concern. One study found that 60% of Emiratis “felt a sense of isolation as their cultural identity became increasingly diluted” due to demographic imbalance (Richardson, 2008, para. 2), which was also perceived as a threat to the stability of Emirati society (Al-Kitbi, 2008). Challenges that ranged from “losing our country” (El Sawy, 2008) to “losing our identity, heritage, and language” (Mohammed, 2008) have all been expressed by Emiratis in various venues. Such attitudes, Koch (2016) believes, are primarily expressed by the “conservative elites,” who are anxious about policies that favor expats (p. 50). Since then, the UAE has set its National Agenda, which aims at achieving six national priorities by 2021, the year that marks the 50th Emirati National Day. One of the six priorities is achieving a cohesive society and preserving national identity. In order to accomplish this herculean task, the UAE has launched a number of indexes such as the National Identity Index, which measures the sense of belonging and national identity of citizens and which currently stands at 96.93% (Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development, 2018), and the Social Cohesion Index, which investigates people’s sense of equality, education, culture, and national belonging, among other themes, and which stands at 86% (Ministry of Community Development, 2018). The UAE has also established a number of government entities tasked with preserving national identity such as the Federal Demographic Council (FDC) and the Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development (MCKD). The FDC is responsible for rebalancing the population “while strengthening the loyalty of the UAE’s citizens to their leadership and homeland” (United Arab Emirates’ Government Portal, 2019c). MCKD works on preserving national identity

while enhancing cross-cultural communication. According to an official government website:

The ministry defines national identity a system of social and moral values associated with the lifestyle of the people in the past, present and future. This system is founded on the essence of the people's existence and their survival in the face of the challenges of dispersion, extinction, disintegration and demise. (United Arab Emirates' Government Portal, 2019c)

The Ministry strives to counter such challenges by boosting the Emiratis' sense of citizenship and belonging, supporting their talents, and enhancing their work ethics. This is achieved via the various initiatives and projects, such as the Best Youth Initiative for Community Development Award, UAE's Flag day launched in 2013, and UAE Commemoration Day launched in 2015 (Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development, 2019; United Arab Emirates' Government Portal, 2019d). The UAE National Day, which is celebrated on December 2nd, plays a major role in promoting civic nationalism. The day is used to establish a state-based sense of belonging among both expats and locals, or the "dis-senting [Emirati] elites," who are also "being targeted by recent efforts to imbue National Day celebrations with a civic nationalist spirit" (Koch, 2016, p. 51). Although such attempts are not meant to establish equality between Emiratis and expats, they do create a shared sense of "nationalist pride" and demonstrate that nationalism is not just for nationals (pp. 51–52). Another area that boosts national identity and preserves traditions is changing long-established elite sports into "heritage sports," including camel racing, falconry, saluki racing, and dhow racing, to name a few (Yaqoob, 2016). These heritage sports serve to connect tribalism and modernism, promoting a modern identity that is rooted in history. Such demarcation of sports as distinctly elitist and heritage-bound, however, may institutionalize differences related to the status quo and further reinforce divisions among Emiratis and expatriates that other events aspire to bridge.

Perhaps one of the most important areas where national identity is exhibited to the world is in the two flag carriers of the UAE: Al Etihad

Airways, based in Abu Dhabi; and Emirates Airlines in Dubai. Not only do these airlines promote national identity through the various iconographies displayed on their aircrafts, but they have also managed to expand internationally through their use of luxury aircrafts, thus competing with long-established western carriers. They promote their nation's brand by using internationally acclaimed celebrities in advertisements, displaying the carriers' names on billboards in prestigious stadiums, and sponsoring various sporting teams and art events. This success has triggered backlash from U.S. carriers like Delta, American, and United, who accuse Emirati and Qatari airlines of receiving government subsidies, which have enabled them to lower airfares and put their American rivals at a disadvantage (Nunes, 2018). This culminated in a xenophobic comment by former Delta CEO, Richard Anderson in 2015, who essentially blamed the Arabian Peninsula for the 9/11 terrorist attacks and for his company's 2005 bankruptcy ("Emirates Rejects Delta Apology," 2015). Thus, as the UAE attempts to shatter stereotypes and to project the image of a strong modern economy with national pride at its center, there are efforts by neo-nationalists in the west to vilify such gains.

Divisions Across Ethnicities and Nationalities

Nationalism is manifested in the clear division of labor among ethnic groups and nationalities in the UAE. This is seen in the disparities of salaries among ethnic groups, as well as the preferences for certain nationalities when it comes to specific jobs. In the private sector, where the workforce is primarily expatriate (98%), Tong and Al Awad (2014) found that there is a "high level of wage inequality" and "a hierarchical ordering of workers' pay along nationalities" (p. 59). Thus, nationals from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are at the top of the pyramid with the highest earnings, followed by Emiratis, then Arabs, and finally at the bottom, East and South Asians who constitute the largest group of workers in the country. Burton (2012) presented a similar division but with the first two swapped. Burton's division, however, takes a chauvinistic twist in labeling Emiratis as "the *bank* at the top," followed by "Arabian, Iranian, and

Western expats” who are labeled “the brains” (p. 73), as though Emiratis do not have the intellectual capacity to be anything other than the “brainless rich.” Although the most recent annual salary survey administered by the magazine *Gulf Business* showed that the salary gap among the different ethnicities is slowly closing, especially between Westerners and Arabs (Anderson, 2018), other factors need to be taken into account before drawing any conclusions. With the absence of specific laws, it is yet to be seen how this disparity will change in the future.

The second manifestation of nationalism in the labor market is the preference for certain nationalities in some occupations. Ten years ago, this preference was clearly stated in job advertisements, especially ones for teaching English, which used to list the specific nationalities required: “native speakers” from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, or New Zealand. Some ads specified “passport holders” from the previously listed countries. In fact, “the most lucrative sectors of the ELT industry [were] wrested and set aside for the ‘native speaker’” (Karmani, 2005, p. 93). Karmani described the situation as “linguistic apartheid” constructed upon “social privileges,” including “native speaker privilege, White privilege, American privilege, British privilege, etc.” (p. 93). Nowadays, this preference is not explicitly listed due to the 2015 anti-discrimination law (discussed below), but one can still find plenty of job advertisements on popular UAE websites, such as Naukri Gulf and Dubizzle, where nationality is explicitly stated.

In addition, preferences can be listed indirectly, with many institutions requiring a degree from a western university, the ability to teach English as a first language, and/or evidence of work experience in western countries. Applicants who manage to pass through the initial round of application reviews might get filtered out once paperwork is submitted since disclosing nationality, religion, and denomination are required to get the security clearance needed to work in the UAE. Nationality preferences can be seen in other domains as well. Sequeira (2015) found that 30.5% of the job ads sampled had a direct explicit nationality bias favoring non-Arabs (at 23%), compared to 13.5% that had indirect explicit nationality bias with preference given to non-Emiratis. The latter finding is not surprising, considering that Emiratis have their own online portal for finding jobs and exclusive job fairs. Interestingly, the

study also found that “jobs with higher socioeconomic status [were] less likely to include any type of explicit nationality bias” (p. 12), suggesting that qualifications and credentials take precedence over national origins for certain jobs.

In 2015, the UAE introduced Law No. 2 “On Combating Discrimination and Hatred” against all forms of prejudice based on “religion, creed, doctrine, sect, caste, race, colour or ethnic origin” (Federal Decree Law, 2015, p. 1). The law encompasses workplace prejudice, including salary discrepancies and nationality preferences. Most recently, the UAE Labor Ministry condemned discrimination based on national origin in job advertisements and warned that penalties would be incurred (Duncan & Ryan, 2018); however, such laws are still not strictly enforced. It is also worth noting that advertisements targeting UAE nationals are exempt from this penalty since it is considered “positive discrimination.” Such an exemption might be understandable given that UAE nationals hold less than 10% of public jobs and less than 1.3% of private jobs (Tong & Al Awad, 2014). In addition, the UAE has recently introduced laws and policies that prohibit discrimination against domestic helpers (Federal Law No. 10, 2017) and people with disabilities (Government of Dubai Media Office, 2018), and that establish equal pay for men and women (“Mohammed bin Rashid Approves,” 2018). Such laws increase the likelihood of future resolutions that will end all discrimination in the workplace, including pay gaps and nationality preferences.

Emiratization

Another manifestation of nationalism in the UAE is presented through the different programs and initiatives launched by the federal government to empower Emiratis, such as TANMIA, Tawteen, and Absher, to name a few. Discussing all of these programs is beyond the scope of this chapter; however, one of them can help to shed light on how such initiatives are viewed positively from a minority perspective. The Tawteen program, or Emiratization, is an initiative launched to “overcome the structural division in the labor market” by mandating “the inclusion of Emiratis in the job sector, particularly in the private sector” (United Arab

Emirates' Government Portal, 2019a). The federal government encourages the private sector to implement *Tawteen* through incentives, quotas, and the foundation of the UAE Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization. Eventually, the UAE would like to reduce its dependence on expatriates (Al-Waqfi & Forstenlechner, 2014).

Tawteen arose partly to resist the negative consequences of the spread of English in the emirates (Hopkyns, 2014), and partly due to the unemployment rate among Emirati citizens. While unemployment rate in the UAE is one of the lowest in the world, currently stands at 5.2% in Abu Dhabi and 0.5% in Dubai (Statistical Yearbook of Abu Dhabi, 2019, p. 202), it does not consider unemployment among Emiratis, which was estimated at 14% (Nasir, 2017). This is why 2013 was named Emiratization Year with the aim to bring down unemployment among Emiratis to less than 1% by 2021. This goal was perhaps overly ambitious, as unemployment is on the rise. In Dubai, Emirati unemployment rose to 4% in 2018 (Webster, 2019). This can be partly attributed to the reluctance of the private sector to hire Emiratis due to their perceived low skill standards, higher salary requirements, and reluctance to work longer hours (Aljanahi, 2017; Thompson & Wissink, 2016). Other barriers to Emiratization include differences in cultural norms, work ethics, and legal frameworks that do not provide companies with power over Emiratis (Al-Waqfi & Forstenlechner, 2014), which is why some companies resort to fake naturalization employment, with “ghost” employees are put on the payroll but asked not to show up (Aljanahi, 2017; Riyami, et al., 2015). Such barriers to hiring Emiratis demonstrate “a colonial modality of thinking in a labor market that is based on racial social hierarchy” where “coloniality and negative racial stereotypes are constitutively two sides of the same coin in the UAE” (Thompson & Wissink, 2016, pp. 6–7). In essence, the private sector’s reluctance to hire Emiratis and to train them shows a lack of understanding of the spirit of *Tawteen*: to diversify the workforce and preserve national and cultural identity through the integration of nationals. It also shows a lack of understanding of “the transitional nature of the UAE society” that requires patience and the initiation of HR programs aimed “at upgrading the overall quality of the local stock of human capital” (Al-Waqfi & Forstenlechner, 2014, p. 184). Achieving such a holistic understanding can only be achieved

with a joint effort with all the parties involved: the government, Emiratis, and the private sector.

By establishing such governmental entities, projects, and initiatives, the UAE demonstrates a proactive response to global challenges related to changing demographics and assumes responsibility for expanding opportunities. Instead of being reductive of other races and ethnicities, as is the case in many of western countries where neo-nationalism thrives, the UAE is embracing diversity while being cognizant of how that might affect its citizens. It promotes a rhetoric that is focused on what the UAE can offer to its population and to the world, and it tries to soften the consequences of changing demographics by implementing specific projects so that none of its citizens fall behind and are left vulnerable to neo-nationalism in its extreme form.

Civic Nationalism and Education

Unlike countries where neo-nationalists promote campaigns, like the “English-only” movement in the United States, which is intended to limit the use of Spanish (see Meadows, Chapter 2 in this volume), the UAE has set a precedent in its official acceptance of other languages, particularly English, although in practice this might not always be the case. The following section provides a brief overview of the education system in the UAE, focusing on ethnic and linguistic segregation in higher education. It also addresses the relationship between nationalism and language teaching.

Schools in the UAE are either public or private. Public schools are free for locals and gender-segregated; they use the Ministry of Education (MOE) curriculum, Arabic as the primary medium of instruction, English to teach science, and require students to pass a test in Arabic in order to enroll (United Arab Emirates’ Government Portal, 2020a). Private schools, on the other hand, can be very expensive; they are mostly co-educational, use more than 15 different curriculums, mostly with English as the medium of instruction (EMI), and teach Arabic and other languages as subjects. Such differences may partly explain why the number of private schools has been growing at the expense of public

schools. In 2010–2011, 60.5% of schools were public, but by 2019–2020, that number decreased to 49% (Ministry of Education, 2010, 2019b). The same applies for the number of students, which decreased from 33% to 26% for the same academic years. In fact, more than half of Emirati students now opt to enroll in private schools due to the use of EMI and the perceived prestigious status and curricular rigor, which is considered superior to public schools (Government of Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority, 2011). The same applies to many wealthy expatriates. Moreover, parents are forced to choose one type of school over another based on “the family’s ethnicity, language, and socioeconomic status” (Stephenson & Rajendram, 2018, p. 895), with the result that many schools end up being ethnically, linguistically, and socioeconomically segregated.

Civic Nationalism and Higher Education

There are more than 100 institutions of higher education in the UAE. Seventy-six of these are accredited, but only three are state-sponsored (Ministry of Education, 2019a): UAE University (UAEU), Zayed University, and Higher Colleges of Technology; these are restricted to Emirati nationals (United Arab Emirates’ Government Portal, 2018) and are perceived to be the most prestigious and elite institutions due to their outstanding government funding (Stephenson & Rajendram, 2018). UAEU, ranked as the country’s top university in 2019 (“UAE University”), was also the country’s first national university, founded in 1976 following independence from Britain. As with universities in other Arab countries post-independence, UAEU was founded to play an active role in nation-building and to help shape national identity. Stephenson and Rajendram (2018) have argued that the European-style university, which was adopted by many newly founded nation-states, used to play a significant role in identity formation, but does not anymore in this globalized era (p. 890). Such a belief only holds true because language is a major component of identity formation, and when a language is not promoted in education, it sends the wrong signal to the users of that language.

In the UAE, English is the medium of instruction in all three types of institutions of higher education, not Arabic. This is not limited to the UAE, as many Arab states have adopted EMI for higher education (and some K-12 schools). Such policies and practices deviate from recommendations of both language research and the Arab League, whose 1946 Cultural Treaty declares that member states “will work to make the Arabic language convey all expressions of thought and modern science, and to make of it the language of instruction in all subjects and in all educational stages in the Arab countries” (Arab News Bulletin, 1947, p. 208). Thus, the message imparted to students as a result of such policies is that, at the very least, Arabic is not as important as English, and that to have access to education and better economic opportunities one must learn English. In the long run, Al-Issa and Dahan (2011) warned that the “gradual loss of Arabic could lead to a lessening of unity” between Emiratis and other Arab countries (p. 4).

Other factors that weakens the state university’s role in identity formation are the rise of the Western-style models of education, the emergence of “a managerial model tailored to the global markets” that emphasizes “corporate alliances” (Stephenson & Rajendram, 2018, p. 891), and the assumption that anything “western” is superior. Currently, the UAE has the second largest concentration of international branch campuses (IBCs) in the world (WENR, 2019). American liberal higher education in particular is often perceived as superior. This perception has been promoted through the locals’ preference for western or western-educated expats. It is also promoted through the literature which assumes “superiority” (Koch & Vora, 2019, p. 553) and “builds (upon) a geopolitical imaginary of American exceptionalism, largely through Orientalist representations” (p. 554). This erroneous perception is not limited to the UAE, as we see traces of it in other Arab countries; in Lebanon, for example, English is associated with tolerance and liberalism (Esseili, 2017). Ethnic background also plays a major role in choosing an institute of higher education. A recent study showed that, even when it comes to group work in IBCs with diverse populations, students “self-select those from their ethnic group or their language of comfort” (Stephenson & Rajendram, 2018, p. 897). Language policies and segregation at the school level contribute to a lack of integration in the UAE’s greater

community. In the long run, such factors might play a role in harnessing negative neo-national rather than civic sentiments among the less fortunate, especially those who feel disadvantaged as a result of inequitable language preferences.

Civic Nationalism and Language Teaching

English was introduced to the UAE with the signing of oil concessions in the late 1930s. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, as cited in Karmani, 2005, p. 92) identified the aftermath of the OPEC oil embargo in the 1970s as the period when ELT became a big business in the Gulf region. The industry resembled “that of an oil cartel than an educational service provider” (Karmani, 2005, p. 93), with a centralized western core that determined the best methods and textbooks while subtly discrediting “non-native” English teachers. Since then, the presence of English in the UAE has expanded to almost all functional domains, including institutions of higher education, the retail industry, food service, the private sector, and the public domain (Nickerson & Crawford, 2013; Randall & Samimi, 2010). English can be found in national airports and airlines, advertisements and billboards, restaurants and coffee shops, mass media, and street signs (Thomas, 2016). English is used as a lingua franca at all levels of the society and “is replacing Arabic” in Dubai (Randall & Samimi, 2010, p. 43).

In fact, the spread of English in the UAE prompted the government in 2008 to declare Arabic as the official language of the country in all federal institutes (Al Baik, 2008). It also triggered a number of scholars to sound the alarm on the dangers awaiting Arabic and national identity (cf, Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Hopkyns, 2014; Raddawi & Moslem, 2015; Randall & Samimi, 2010). Disagreement over the labeling for this language change is evident in the literature; however, the feeling that Arabic is losing ground to English is widespread. In contrast to these voices trying to raise awareness, others have dismissed arguments that blame English for language loss in the Arab world and believe that such rhetoric manipulates “nationalist and Islamist discourse” to indicate that English presence is “a continuation of Western colonialism and imperialism” (Alzaben, Omar, & Kassem, 2019, p. 386). Instead, English

is not considered a threat to identity and Arabic in the GCC region, and Arabic's resistance to language change and its inability to address the needs of its users is to blame for any decline. Despite the fact that the Gulf region has provided fertile ground for ELT to flourish, English spread is not neutral, and it contributes to promoting inequalities and the marginalization of local populations if not properly regulated (Pennycook, 2003). In addition, while the idea of blaming English for language loss is not convincing without first examining the practices of the local population, as well as government policies and the ELT industry, taking it for granted that English should be the lingua franca in the Gulf region and that population figures alone are not enough to sound the alarm (Alzaben et al., 2019, p. 387) is also unconvincing. Population figures might not be important when there are clear policies that regulate the use of languages in the country's different functional domains, particularly the regulative and instrumental functions (Esseili, 2017). Likewise, multilingualism is important and should not be considered a threat to national identity when users of major languages in a given context are granted their linguistic rights, including the right to use their first language as a language of instruction. Arabs in general, and Emiratis in particular, have the right to use Arabic for education.

To complicate the issue further, research on the spread of English in Arabic speaking countries reveals that code-mixing and code-switching (i.e., using Arabizi or Arabish and, in some instances, English as the primary mode of communication) are on the rise (cf, Al Haq & Smadi, 1996; Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Allehaiby, 2013; Esseili, 2017; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014; Pessoa & Rajakumar, 2011; Randall & Samimi, 2010). Such practices call for legitimate inquiry into the leading causes of these trends rather than frantic calls for abolishing English or a total dismissal of such warnings as conspiracy theories, or framing the discussion as either for or against Arabic/English. Karmani (2005), for example, classified the responses of the Muslim Arab world to the spread of English into two camps: The modernist position, which embraces ELT and stresses emulating the west in various domains; and the Islamist response characterized by a rejection of "Western-style modernization and by extension the current prominence of English" (p. 99). Likewise, Mohd-Asraf (2005) presented a dichotomous response, wherein English is

depicted as the language of opportunity, but at the same time “a carrier of Judo-Christian cultural values” and “Western civilization” with both positive and negative connotations (p. 104).

There is no doubt that English can be a double-edge sword, but there is also a need to move past such binary oppositions and divisive language to determine future directions. A third response could be described as one that accepts multilingualism as an asset, acknowledges the ensuing challenges, endorses language rights, initiates clear and informed language planning and policies, and works on strengthening the native language, among other national areas, in order to redress any shortcomings. Such a response has been recognized and adopted in the UAE, but it has not been entirely successful in addressing some of the challenges due to a lack of clarity regarding language policy and planning initiatives.

In this regard, a number of scholars have addressed the value of bilingual education, as opposed to shifting entirely to EMI. Despite its massive spread, EMI has not been entirely successful in the UAE. Historically speaking, three key factors could explain this outcome: using alienating and culturally irrelevant content matter, relying on Western ELT specialists who lack the cultural and linguistic background, and failure to invest in developing Arabic as evidenced by the lack of language policy and planning initiatives related to Arabization, translation, and research (Karmani, 2005, p. 95). Changing the language of instruction to English was meant to improve the situation. As seen in the literature, however, such a move, along with the unprecedented spread of English in general, has led to negative consequences, including a decline in the use of Arabic (Raddawi & Moslem, 2015; Ronesi, 2011), the classification of Arabic as a language “at risk” (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011, p. 3), and a feeling of being “swamped by English” with the introduction of the ‘New School Model’ in Abu Dhabi, where the language of instruction was changed from Arabic to English in public schools (Hopkins, 2014, p. 13).

To remedy the situation, instating bilingual programs and slowing down the pace of English spread have been recommended. Ronesi (2011) and Raddawi and Moslem (2015) suggested that dual language or two-way immersion Arabic/English programs could be established

and that the two languages should be celebrated rather than pitted against each other. Such programs can be highly effective in strengthening both languages. In addition, Hopkyns (2014) proposed a gentler approach where students use Arabic in primary school and English immersion in secondary schools. As far as the language of instruction is concerned, the choice of language of instruction should be based on the nature, goals, and context of individual programs of study. Adapting some type of bilingual education program in the UAE is one solution for creating a more equitable learning environment and a fairer labor market. The UAE can also learn a lot from European countries' discourse on parallel language use policy, or *parallellinguism*, wherein the national language is used in addition to other languages so that they complement rather than replace or abolish one another (Hultgren, 2016). While the implementation of this policy is not clear-cut and remains open to interpretation, it still offers some insight into possible alternatives.

Since many educational institutions in the UAE are still socioeconomically, ethnically, and linguistically segregated, the country's ultimate vision of strengthening its residents' sense of belonging and building citizenship based on equality remains shaky at best. That is the reason why implementing culturally and linguistically responsive instruction is crucial. One way of doing this is by including content derived directly from the students' environment (see Ahmed, 2011; Esseili, 2019). In addition, including genuine cross-cultural activities, assignments, readings, and events would be an asset to both public and private institutions. Stephenson and Rajendram (2018) recommended that these institutions work together in order to "develop a collective identity that is not marked by divisions in institutional prestige, socioeconomic stratification, or ethnic- and identity-based policies" (p. 901).

Moreover, endorsing language as a right and resource to diminish conflict and enhance social cohesion should be implemented (Esseili, 2011). Examining other Arab contexts, such as Lebanon, reveals the extent of the problems created by associating a foreign language with access to education and the job market. Students with limited proficiency in English who graduate from public schools or who come from disadvantaged or under-resourced backgrounds suffer the most, thus

creating a sense that Arabic is a barrier to success and increasing the social inequality gap (Esseili, 2017). Local students have the right to use their native language for instruction and should be provided with the resources to do so; just like non-citizens have the right to use their languages and to open their own schools in the UAE.

Conclusion

The preservation of national linguistic and cultural identity and the promotion of diversity, tolerance for other cultures, and multiple languages are not mutually exclusive and should be able to coexist in a globalized world. Rather than pitting the two against each other, the UAE has realized that the best strategy to cope with its demographic imbalance is to promote pluralism. It is no wonder then that the UAE launched the post of Minister of State for Tolerance in 2016 to fight against cultural and religious bigotry, which coincidentally occurred at the same time as the rise of Trumpism in the United States. The UAE can offer an alternative model for the world by forging an inclusive, pluralistic national identity where divisions among Emiratis and longstanding “expatriates” are diminished.

The country is already a leader in showing the world how nationalism can be harnessed for good. However, in trying to establish and promote its brand of civic nationalism by using soft power and diplomacy, the UAE has not adequately addressed language policy and planning pertaining to the preservation of Arabic. Thus, the policies, practices, and initiatives presented in the first section of this chapter do not align with the shift from Arabic to English as the language of instruction. There is no doubt that proficiency in English is essential, given the UAE’s regional and international status as an economic and educational hub. This should not, however, take place at the expense of the national language, Arabic. Students must be functionally immersed in the two languages at an early age. Language-in-education policies at schools and universities should be modified, as well as the practices of families in the home, so that Arabic is valued as much as English.

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5

Colombia's Language Politics: Neoliberalism Under the Guise of Messianic Nationalism

Marlon Valencia and Isabel Tejada Sánchez

The current unstable geopolitical, economic, and environmental climate is pushing numerous people to cross borders and look for opportunities to improve their living conditions in other countries. These migrants may or may not be perceived as threats by the locals, depending on the accumulated material or symbolic capital that they bring with them. Colombia is certainly no exception, as it receives the largest population of Venezuelans displaced by the present turmoil in the neighboring country (Grattan, 2019). This situation has created favorable conditions for the resurgence of a nationalist ideology, which is being capitalized upon by the political party in power, *Centro Democrático*, to win votes by appealing to socially-constructed imaginaries. These imaginaries of a unified Colombia are often fueled by the alleged common goal of creating a prosperous nation through self-motivated entrepreneurship,

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a leitmotif in neoliberal discourse (Holborow, 2015). As part of this ideology, being fluent in English is viewed as an indispensable element for the accumulation of cultural capital, which is described as inherently important to attracting transnational companies and foreign investors. Consequently, the Colombian government's enactment of language politics (Labrie, 2010) contributes to a significant increase in the existing social gap in an already highly-stratified country (Bonilla Carvajal & Tejada-Sánchez, 2016; Usma Wilches, 2009; Valencia, 2013).

In this critical conversation, we, the authors, engage in an interactive dialogue that revisits articles we have published on Colombia's National Program of Bilingualism and that questions the success of this policy in presenting Colombians with the possibility to achieve the common national goal of prosperity for all. In addition, we provide multiple examples in which we have joined pre-service and in-service teacher learners in unpacking these nationalist and neoliberal ideologies and explore ways in which language teacher education, as well as the EFL or social studies classrooms, can become safe spaces to discuss issues such as immigration, stereotypes, and politics.

Our Conceptual Lens

Throughout this chapter, we explicitly address the ways in which power relations are exercised in discursive multimodal practices. Discursive events and formations are analyzed in an archeological fashion (Foucault, 2003) with their corresponding sociocultural interstices during a given timeline being fundamental to the hermeneutical task. A handful of such events and formations are discussed and intertwined with the researchers' personal narratives, identities, and critical perspectives as educators, scholars and Colombian citizens.

The analysis conducted and reported in our interventions followed an operationalization of Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional framework wherein:

- The *textual dimension* is approached to dissect language constructions (lexicon, grammar, cohesion, structure, strength and coherence)

within the data pieces that evidence the use of certain types of constructions and word choices to serve a concrete purpose. For the scope of this chapter, the language units analyzed will remain at the sentence or paragraph level.

- The *discursive dimension* will be used to exhibit the way that asymmetrical power relations are laid out in the data, particularly in relation to the neoliberal agenda of Colombia's English language in education policy. In this analysis, we also refer to van Dijk's (1998) standpoint regarding the categories of social groups and identity.
- The *sociocultural dimension* will be explored to display particular contextual clues in which the neoliberal agenda, ideologies, asymmetrical power relations and inequitable educational practices are promoted.

As we discuss the often-unchallenged assumption of English as absolutely necessary for upward mobility, we also build on Gramsci's (2011) notion of ideology understood as common sense, which he eloquently describes as:

[...] the 'philosophy of non-philosophers'- in other words, the conception of the world *acritically* absorbed from the various social environments in which the moral individuality of the average person is developed. Common sense is not a single conception, identical in time and place. It is the 'folklore' of philosophy, and, like folklore, it appears in countless forms. The fundamental characteristic of common sense consists in its being a disjointed, incoherent, and inconsequential conception of the world that matches the character of the multitudes whose philosophy it is. (p. 333)

Consequently, common sense for Gramsci comprises a set of beliefs or views about the world that should not be questioned because they simply explain how things are. This set of beliefs lies at the core of the ideology of entrepreneurs in social imaginaries, which Holborow (2015) defines as risk-taking and wealth-seeking individuals, who "are the social icons of our neoliberal age" (p. 72).

In the same vein, throughout this chapter, we provide a critical view of how language politics shape a vision of education and its ultimate neoliberal goal. We endorse a view of education as an intersubjective practice which can no longer be viewed as a service or a product, but rather as a “thought-provoking endeavour” (Garcés, 2013, p. 92). In doing so, we aim to relate to authors from both the Global North and the Global South, where this understanding of education resonates.

Our Methodology: Duo-Ethnography

Duo-ethnography is an appropriate way of discussing how, as emerging Colombian and international scholars, our life stories intersected in a myriad of ways even before we met and started collaborating during our Ph.D. studies. Duo-ethnography is a rather new, unconventional, and somewhat contested research genre used in the social sciences and humanities (see Gagné, Herath, & Valencia, 2018). It is rooted in Pinar’s (1975) notion of “currere,” to imply autobiographical introspection, as well as the research traditions of storytelling. This postmodern method has gained popularity as a dialogic approach where educators’ and learners’ experiences, identities, realities and imaginaries intersect as a form of curriculum. Based on this principle, in duo/multi-ethnography, two or more people with comparable trajectories may come to understand the influence of their own life paths through critical reflections and exchanges. Additionally, this conversation aims to show the way that researchers can arrive to an understanding of complex social phenomena together, acknowledging and unpacking their own identities, perspectives, and insights (Norris & Sawyer, 2017; Sawyer & Norris, 2013).

As such, data collection takes form in the experiences and evidence that the researchers share, and their written interventions reveal the analytical process derived from this data. Both Marlon and Isabel have put themselves forward as authors and participants in this endeavor at the same time that they re-examine themselves in terms of their role as educators. According to Norris (2008), the reader and the authors in duo/multi-ethnography have a dynamic relationship, in which meaning

is co-constructed dialogically as the authors and researchers assist each other in the process.

To illustrate how our life-stories intersect in this duo-ethnography, it is necessary to provide some background information on how our academic career paths share many similarities, such as having completed our initial teacher education in Colombia and graduate school in the Global North (Europe and North America) (Table 5.1).

These pieces of data take multiple forms and emerge from a myriad of sources, which include the use of Google Docs for multiple drafts of this paper, survey questionnaires, WhatsApp instant messaging, Skype conversations, and e-mails. Core themes appear throughout the conversation as the dialogue evolves. As such, the reader will encounter references to media, in-service and pre-service teachers' voices, scholars' narratives,

Table 5.1 Our academic paths

	Marlon	Isabel
Languages	Spanish, English and French	Spanish, English, French and Catalan
Education	Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas (similar to a Concurrent B.Ed with a language teaching orientation), Universidad del Valle, Colombia M.A. in Foreign Languages and Cultures, Washington State University, United States M.A. in Applied Linguistics, York University, Canada Ph.D. in Language and Literacies Education, University of Toronto	Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras (similar to a Concurrent B.Ed with a language teaching orientation), Universidad del Valle, Colombia M.A. Sciences du Langage (Paris VIII, France) Ph.D. Sciences du Langage (Paris VIII, France); Comunicació Lingüística i Mediació Multilingüe (Universitat Pompeu Fabra - Barcelone)
Current position	Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Glendon College, York University, Canada.	Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.
Teaching experience	21 years	16 years

and policy papers. The conversation below will address the following themes:

1. The legitimization of a restrictive understanding of bilingualism
2. Learning English as personal entrepreneurship for the neoliberal job market
3. Neoliberalism as messianic nationalism
4. The exacerbation of favorable conditions for exploitation
5. A critical examination of teacher-learner beliefs and imaginaries.

Our Conversation

Marlon: As 2019 is already behind us, it is timely to look at Colombia's ambitious English language education policy formerly known as the National Program of Bilingualism 2004–2019 (henceforth NPB). This is particularly important given that you and I, along with numerous other scholars (de Mejía, 2011; Guerrero Nieto, 2008; Usma Wilches 2009) have criticized this policy, finding it problematic on many fronts, particularly for presenting highly unrealistic goals that we suspected would not be reached by its initial 2019 deadline. Thus, I would like to invite you in this duo-ethnography to revisit our work and examine how, as emerging scholars, our thinking and views on this language policy (LP) still have a similar orientation, while some other views have evolved over time. This is particularly important given the implications of this language policy in Colombia's highly-stratified society. Isabel, would you like to start by providing an overview of your policy analysis in Bonilla Carvajal and Tejada-Sánchez (2016)?

Isabel: Certainly. In this article, Camilo Andrés Bonilla and I started with a policy overview that spanned through the last century. In a nutshell, this paper summarized language policy concerning international languages such as French, which used to be the main L2 in Colombia up to the '80s, to English and the role of native languages in the most recent decades. It also questioned such historical language shifts and the neglect of indigenous languages within the national policy.

In fact, in the last 20 years, English language teaching (ELT) in mainstream education in Colombia has been marked by a series of contested decisions. In the history of ELT in Colombia, there has not been a more predominant reference in scholars' production and conversations than this English language policy that the Ministry of Education (MOE) launched in the early 2000s. The second most commented and referenced topic is the declaration of the 1991 Constitution, which made progress possible in language policy as Colombia was, for the first time, acknowledged as a culturally and linguistically diverse territory.¹

Over the past 20 years, there have been at least five different iterations of this national English language-in-education policy. Nevertheless, it was the national initiative known as NPB that caught scholars' imaginations and has become more salient due the fact that, as you say, 2019 has already passed. One of the main goals established by this policy was that by 2019 high-school graduates were expected to reach a B1 English level in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) benchmarks once they finished 11th grade, which is the last year of secondary school.

The critical reaction of Colombian scholars to this policy came swiftly, and as you mentioned, we joined this conversation. I had already returned to Colombia after finishing my Ph.D., while I remember you were still doing yours, and your article was highly informed by an LP analysis that you had done during your Master's. Could you please comment on what was the first thing about the NPB that got your attention?

Marlon: The first shortcoming that I observed in this LP was how the MOE lacked a clearly-justified and informed articulation of this policy, which de facto legitimized a narrow and highly problematic definition of bilingualism.

¹**ARTICULO 7.** El Estado reconoce y protege la diversidad étnica y cultural de la Nación colombiana.

ARTICULO 10. El castellano es el idioma oficial de Colombia. Las lenguas y dialectos de los grupos étnicos son también oficiales en sus territorios. La enseñanza que se imparta en las comunidades con tradiciones lingüísticas propias será bilingüe (Constitución Política de Colombia, n.d.).

The Legitimization of a Restrictive Understanding of Bilingualism

Isabel: Yes, and you were certainly not the only scholar who felt this way. As a matter of fact, a vast majority of the scholarly publications criticizing this policy focused on the use of the term “bilingualism” to refer to the ability to speak solely two languages: English and Spanish. At the same time, this situation also revealed an idiosyncratic connotation of the term which, as Guerrero Nieto (2008) and de Mejía (2011) have argued, neglects the existence of bilingualism between languages, and results in catapulting to English language proficiency as a must to join the workforce (Erin, n. d.).

Marlon: I see what you mean here, and I remember that, as I read your article, I felt our work had a lot in common. My initial contribution to this discussion was highlighting how the promotion of a highly restrictive notion of bilingualism contributed to multiple interpretations of what being bilingual is among Colombians. These varying understandings were reflected in unrealistic expectations with regard to users’ language proficiency, especially notable in the media and among employers. The most common assumption was the expectation that English language users had to be perfectly-balanced bilinguals with equal knowledge of both English and Spanish. How do you think this has played out in the long-run, especially regarding the government’s efforts to participate in a globalized economy?

Isabel: Well, the government’s projection of having Colombia actively participate in international forums and join intergovernmental supranational organizations materialized in two ways: First, the language policy ceased to refer insistently to “bilingualism” and instead focused their initiatives on English language learning (ELL) directly, involving the British Council’s support, which in turn has reached out for local scholars like you and me for the implementation of its strategies in the areas of materials development, teacher education, assessment and curriculum development (Secretaría de Educación Distrital, 2019).

Second, in early 2018, the country joined the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The excitement

and importance of this news could be seen when Juan Manuel Santos, Colombia's former president, announced that the country had joined the "major leagues" on his *Twitter* account because Colombia had been admitted as the 37th member of this organization (Santos, 2018). This was an achievement that Santos viewed as one of his main accomplishments, along with the Peace Agreement with the Colombian Armed Revolutionary Forces (or FARC, as they are known in Spanish). Once this announcement was made, critics questioned the OECD's recommendations for Colombia as a one-size-fits-all measure that perhaps could be feasibly applied in the majority of this organization's developed member countries, but which would be unsustainable in a country where social inequality and corruption seem to be the norm.

Marlon: That is a very interesting observation! This aligns with the common-sense ideology that Holborow (2015) argued equates English language proficiency with participation in a globalized economy and an indisputable requirement to be entrepreneurial in a neoliberal society. Allow me to elaborate more on this in the next section.

Learning English as Personal Entrepreneurship for the Neoliberal Job Market

Marlon: In my initial analysis of the NPB, I echoed the voices of other scholars who argued that this LP seemed to have been motivated by an assumption that Colombian citizens, in majority contexts where Spanish is the dominant language, had to learn English as a prerequisite to finding a good job (Guerrero Nieto, 2008; Usma Wilches 2009). This was an assumption closely-associated with the idea of making the country more attractive to transnational companies considering outsourcing their call centers and creating subsidiaries or branch offices in the country. This was simply assumed as common sense. This is a view that I think still holds true today, but as the years passed and I continued my doctoral research, I significantly enriched this perspective after reading more scholarly publications, particularly the work of Marnie Holborow.

Isabel: Yes, I distinctly remember this being a recurrent theme in our conversations. Could you elaborate on this idea that you've discussed with me of learning English as a personal entrepreneurial endeavor?

Marlon: Absolutely! In her book *Language and Neoliberalism*, Holborow (2015) provided a thought-provoking analysis of the transactional nature of language education in today's neoliberal world. An understanding of education as an economic transaction implies a view of students as clients and educational institutions as service providers; thus, those learners with greater economic and symbolic capital are served with the highest quality of language education. This critical view of language education adds to the common-sense ideology of English language proficiency as an uncontested skill needed to be competitive in an exceedingly demanding job market. It is also assumed that those learners coming from public schools know that they will not learn the English necessary to compete with students from well-resourced private elite schools. This is where the notion of the entrepreneur comes in. If these public-school students do not get the expected English language proficiency (or even sometimes an accent close to that of a native speaker), it is their fault because they were not entrepreneurial enough in terms of investing in their education to deserve those good jobs.

Isabel: I see your point. This ideology of English as an unquestionable requirement for entrepreneurship could be recently observed in a series of intensive English language learning campaigns tied to employment agencies. A clear example of these continuing education initiatives is the program *Talk to the World*, developed by the city of Bogotá and the local firm Invest in Bogotá. In 2013, this program allegedly graduated over 12,000 people with an intermediate level of English (stated as CEFR's B2). Explicitly, Invest in Bogotá has stated that this program is intended to boost the human resources offer for the multinational companies already present in the city, notably in the business process outsourcing (BPO) sector. At the end of their brief, they added the testimonials of people who enrolled in the course. Also, in such briefs, representatives of the firm argued:

Bilingualism is a determining element for the **growth of the city** and for the improvement of the **quality of life** of its inhabitants. For this reason, the **T2W** [Talk to the world] roadmap is to train bilingual staff to serve the **value-added** sectors that generate quality employment and transfer knowledge and technology. It is important that the city improves supply and continues to design tailored programs in relation to the demand for labor skills in these sectors. (Invest in Bogotá, 2013, para. 3, translated by the authors, emphasis in original)

This case clearly establishes a positive causal relationship between ELL and a better quality of life, illustrating a neoliberal universalist economic world order (Holborow, 2012). By referring to—and highlighting in bold—key notions such as “quality of life” and “growth of the city,” as well as the inherent “value” of companies that will “generate quality employment” if you speak English. This kind of initiative again demonstrates that knowledge of a certain intermediate level of English is already a sign of privilege and increased competence. The firm also mentioned Portuguese in their briefs about the program and added that this language is another asset in the job market (Invest in Bogotá, 2013, para. 4); however, it was not part of the intensive language course. What is not mentioned in these news briefs is what kinds of jobs people will be offered by the multinational companies and what they will do with the language skills they have recently acquired.

Marlon: Thank you for this overview of how private interests and ideologies intersect with English language teaching in Bogotá. Now, I would like to invite you to discuss your current thinking of how English language teaching within a neoliberal agenda connects to something that is not new, but that we have seen growing fairly recently: a resurgence of nationalism, which is being capitalized on by the right-wing political parties of Colombia.

Neoliberalism as Messianic Nationalism

Isabel: First, I'd like to explain that, contrary to what French political scientist Bernard Badie (2019) described as the neoconservative, neoliberal, and neo-national embodiments of the world order in the United

States with the Bush, Obama, and Trump governments respectively, the current situation of Colombia appears to be a marriage between neoliberalism and neo-nationalism (“Curious Marriage,” 2011; Davidson, 2008), a parallel economic and political reality shared and shaped by these ideologies.

On the one hand, the neoliberal agenda in this Latin-American country was made more openly notorious since the early 2010s, just as the country was taking advantage of an apparent “fresh start” in comparison to its past associations with drug-trafficking. Due to the complex circumstances of the Latin American region today, it seems clear that Colombia’s neighboring countries can hardly offer what this country can: a solid relationship over the years with the U.S. government (even during the peace agreement with the FARC), a vast territory, favorable geographic and weather conditions for international satellite offices and, most of all, an apparently flourishing economy reflected in the rise of independent entrepreneurship. Thus, Columbia is a viable place to make English its extra-official second language. This is illustrated by the rise of an entrepreneurship culture in the country based on North American patterns and trends, which has triggered the promotion of industrial growth in all its sectors: agricultural, manufacturing, technological, creative, and cultural. An example of this is that Colombia is one of the few Latin American countries (together with Mexico and Brazil) with a widely successful official version of the reality television show *Shark Tank*, which showcases entrepreneurial business presentations to potential investors.

In addition to this, President Iván Duque’s so-called “Orange Economy” has become a booming strategy for the creative and cultural industries. This allegedly revamped version of the creative economy was one of the hallmarks of Colombia’s current right-wing government election campaign and subsequent actions. It holds that these industries must aim at increasing the value of their ideas and creations. According to Metcalf (2017), the rapid appraisal to President Duque’s Orange Economy fits with the neoliberal modus operandi of making the market into the collective judge of people’s creations and turning them into objective information:

Hayek's Big Idea acts as the missing link between our subjective human nature, and nature itself. In so doing, it puts any value that cannot be expressed as a price – as the verdict of a market – on an equally unsure footing, as nothing more than opinion, preference, folklore or superstition. (para. 34)

On top of this trend, the sociopolitical agenda and reality of the country is inevitably attached to the current turmoil in Venezuela. The situation in the neighboring country was used as a persistent argument by right-wing, elected and aspiring politicians to influence voters against choosing a left-wing candidate. Mottos by the right-wing political party Centro Democrático, which later became common in the linguistic landscape and strengthened polarization, included: “We are the barrier against Chavist’s (i.e., Venezuelan) socialism”; “Which side are you on: The victims’ or the aggressors?”; and “Vote for Colombia so that it does not become another Venezuela” (Espinoza, 2019; “Martín Santos compara,” 2018; “Vallas del Centro Democrático,” 2019).

This campaign reinforced the idea that Colombia's economic potential today is infinite and thus can be fairly compared to countries of the Global North. Today, Colombia is one of the few nations that has not taken extreme measures to restrict the admission of Venezuelans into the country by imposing visas as Perú, Ecuador, and Chile have done. However, under these circumstances, Colombia has also become a refuge to perpetuate an idealized dream of getting one's life back together by opening a business or getting ahead with some kind of job (perhaps a Latin American version of the “rags-to-riches” story).

Marlon: This situation echoes the ideas that I discussed in my 2013 article regarding the creation of a two-tier job market, which favors those Colombians with the linguistic capital necessary for this increasingly demanding job market, while marginalizing anyone else without it. What other assumptions or associations between English speaking and upward mobility did you find in these political parties' campaigns, as well as news articles?

The Exacerbation of Favorable Conditions for Exploitation

Isabel: In the various news briefs described above, I also found it interesting that there are what seem like cherry-picked testimonials from professionals whose occupations are either in high demand or have high status, namely an accountant and a physics professor. Thus, it is difficult to predict how these will fit in the BPO sector. These professionals speak about the usefulness of the intensive course and the fact that it was free of charge because it would be unaffordable to many otherwise. In addition to this, there is an overemphasis on how English proficiency is a skill that makes them more competitive in the professional world right at this moment when foreign investment is landing in the city. Finally, these customer testimonials ultimately equate English with the development of Bogotá.

Marlon: The approach used by this company surely aligns with the notion I mentioned above of learning English as a necessary requirement to be bold and entrepreneurial in a highly-competitive job market. This reminds me of the young politician running for city council in Bogotá's electoral campaign. I remember you shared his ad with me in one of our conversations. English language education was surely a key element of his overall campaign. Could you speak about this billboard and this city councilor's advertisements?

Isabel: Absolutely! This political campaign appeared in the last third of 2019, when legislative elections took place throughout Colombia. As you mentioned, this particular ad (see Fig. 5.1) belonged to Fernando Merchán Ramos an aspiring and later elected Green Party councilor of Bogotá and was also accompanied by a video presented almost entirely in English (see Matiz, 2019, for a link to the video) The premise behind the campaign was to place a premium on the role of English in public education as a synonym for quality. When I read the discursive constructions underlying this ad, I saw three main ideas, and these were also found in the politician's speeches and interviews from his campaign: (1) English is still an unfamiliar language for the vast majority of people in Colombia. The sentence is purposely excluding those who apparently

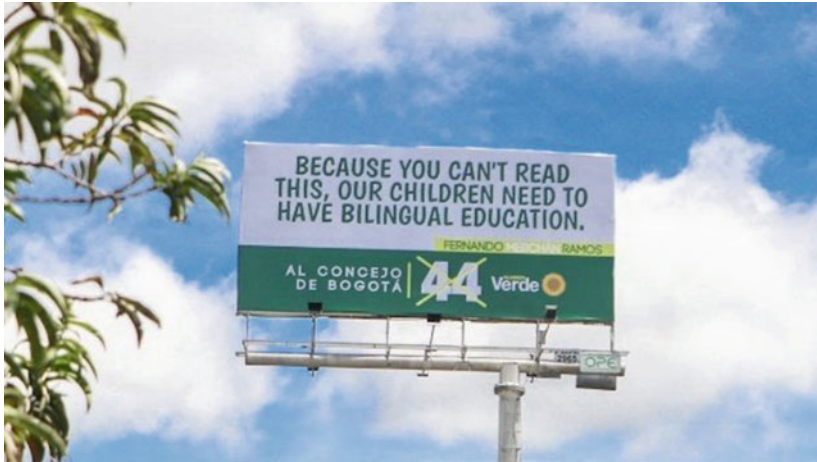


Fig. 5.1 Political campaign for legislative elections in Bogotá, Colombia (October, 2019)

cannot understand its meaning, and yet these people can understand that it is in English and realize that they do not understand. Thus, it makes English seem like a remaining challenge, something unattainable that has now become urgent: “it’s there upon us;” (2) bilingual education remains, as previously mentioned when we discussed the NPB 2004–2019, a synonym for English-medium instruction; and (3) the implication of word choice such as “our children” and “need” become the politician’s blunt promise that the future is bilingual education by submersion (Baker, 2001), with English unquestionably foreseen as the language of that future.

In his video, the politician insisted that English should be a “right” of public-school teachers and that he, as a former public-school graduate himself, had to travel overseas to “wash dishes” in order to learn the language. Additionally, on the video and in his interviews, he emphasized that the root cause of the problem lies in the intermediate level (CERF’s B2), which is hardly ever attained by teachers in the public school sector. This statement remains a constant argument by government officials. I think you could discuss this in terms of your idea of

how English language policy in Colombia was being used to manufacture Colombian citizen's consent for foreign intervention.

Marlon: In my 2013 article, I used Herman and Chomsky's (1988) notion of "manufacturing consent" to explain how the NPB was creating favorable conditions to have citizens accept as common sense that public education was highly inadequate to meet their English language learning and educational needs in general. I even discussed a futuristic ad that the Vice-president's office used on social networks called Colombia 2025. In this video, the country's prosperity had become a reality since the early 2020s, given how the government had created favorable conditions for foreign investment through the creation of call centers and other BPO projects. This was based on building human resources through education. This vision aligned with the idea of English as the language of globalization, as well as the nationalist imaginary of working hard and being entrepreneurial to improve the country's economy and bring prosperity to all.

What we have now, in 2020, is that job interviews for highly-competitive professional positions are increasingly being held in English, which benefits candidates from elite private educational institutions. Nevertheless, the futuristic view of how outsourcing jobs would become accessible to many Colombians has become a reality; however, these new jobs are of a very different nature. Colombia is ranked as second in the webcam model industry after Romania (van Doorn & Velthuis, 2018). The growth of this industry has been so fast and lucrative (for some) that even a Porn University was open by a former model ("¿Qué ha pasado," 2019), and English could be a determining factor directly impacting aspiring adult entertainers' income. Once more, English language proficiency may be seen like an entrepreneurial condition for upward mobility; however, the price of not speaking English for many young women (mostly) in this industry could mean working long hours for a studio and being constantly abused without making enough to pay their bills (Barret-Ibarria, 2020). It has also been widely reported that many Venezuelan immigrants are working in the sex-service industry in Colombia, which makes them even more vulnerable due to their irregular immigrant status.

Isabel: This is a reality that more scholars need to research. Now, I would like to share with you the perceptions of some of my in-service teacher learners regarding the NPB. So, if the future is today, after nearly two decades of striving to teach English in public schools, what has been achieved?

A Critical Examination of Teacher-Learners' Beliefs and Imaginaries

In a brief questionnaire, I asked a number of in-service EFL teachers from the public and private sectors about the role of English today in a brief survey, what they felt was the place of English in their lives, as well as that of their students, and also showed them a photo of the billboard discussed above (Fig. 5.1) to tap into their reactions. In teachers' answers, two trends were observed. The first trend appeals to the neoliberal understanding of English as a necessity that is directly equated to growth, improvement, finances, and an overall sense of upward mobility (Block, 2017). The second trend presents English as a mediating tool for professional and cultural practices, and also as a device that benefits its users differently (Table 5.2).

Marlon: Thanks for presenting these teachers' accounts. Now, I would like to share some of the work that I did with preservice teachers in my doctoral research to help them unpack common-sense ideologies, which deepen the social gap in Colombia and create that division of us vs. them.

In my dissertation (Valencia, 2017), I examined preservice teachers' construction of their imaginaries regarding their future job as teachers and their possible future learners in Canada, Chile, and Colombia. To facilitate preservice teachers' engagement in the storytelling of imagining their future learners, during individual interviews, I asked each of them three questions about different groups of students appearing in a set of photographs. Participants were shown photos of students from the contexts in which they were doing their teacher education programs. The photos depicted students from majority cultural groups and privileged socioeconomic backgrounds (e.g., white children in robustly-resourced schools), as well as diverse learners representing minority groups who

Table 5.2 Colombian in-service teachers' answers to questionnaire (unedited excerpts)

English as an economic must	English as a differentiated professional and cultural access device
"Today (...) to improve tourism in Colombia, improve resources for research and greater job opportunities "	"It is mainly used by privileged people from upper strata who since childhood have better opportunities thanks to their performance in this language "
"For the economy, finance, academy, tourism, some educational levels"	"In Colombia [English] is used to classify professionals , it is used by those who went beyond what they received in their basic school stage, which benefits from understanding different perspectives of the world around us"
"Use: read and understand texts, brochures and instructions, offer information to foreigners, communication with foreigners. Who: career, technical, technological and professional students. Benefits: companies that offer goods and services. It benefits society "	"There is a feeling that English is the most important language of the moment and this obviously benefits the native speakers (...). This can be evidenced in the large number of known call centers that are located in our country "
"It is used to negotiate, access higher education, it is used by people who, for work or necessity, use the English language. It benefits anyone who knows how to use English as a tool to access different sources of work or study "	" English is a cultural interest (...) English politically is an interest and state policy(...), partly to make society more competitive, to improve tourism and finally to demonstrate social investment, there are great political-economic interests in the management of such programs"
"We must all learn English , everyone"	"The majority of the population that saw this ad cannot read in English and do not understand the message"

(continued)

have access to education in less-resourced communities (e.g., immigrants and indigenous children).

The purpose of using these photographs was to ignite my participants' imagination and to examine how they construct their imaginaries with the images of children available to them in their contexts. Having in

Table 5.2 (continued)

English as an economic must	English as a differentiated professional and cultural access device
"Bilingual education coverage is needed for all students regardless of their social and economic classification"	"I do not consider it essential to learn English while our society demonstrates in the PISA tests that it fails in reading and mathematics (...) in order for our country to progress in science and technology, it is not necessary to speak English (...) when I see this, I think that it sells something that is not essential to the families"

mind that these socially constructed imaginaries can be both empowering and marginalizing, in my thesis I referred to each alternating group of learners as "privileged learners" for the first group and "diverse learners" for the latter. Participants were invited to observe each photograph and say anything that they imagined about the learners shown. Preservice teachers were constantly reminded that there was no right or wrong answer to the questions, and so any possible answer was equally valid. The following are the three questions they were asked:

1. Who are the students in the picture?
2. How would you teach these students English or French?
3. What would these students use their English or French for, right now and in the future?

The following is an example of how Tati (a pseudonym), one of my Colombian participants, answered each question and engaged in this storytelling about different learners, which allowed her to reflect on her own biases about others. Tati's words appear in **Comic Sans** font to differentiate her voice (Fig. 5.2).

1. Who are these learners?

They are children from an under-privileged background [...] playing, having fun. Under-privileged in all kinds of ways



Fig. 5.2 Diverse learners in Colombia

[...] They probably go to school, but maybe they have (an old-fashioned) chalk board [...] the chalk and 50 or more than 50 children in the same class [...] not organized in different grades, but all together in the same room, with an (uncomfortably) high temperature [...] facing lots of hardships in their classrooms due to a huge lack of resources.

2. How would it be to teach them English?

[Teaching them] would be difficult. Because you would have to be really creative in dealing with the lack of resources. The teacher must be really creative and understand the local social reality [...] if she is in a neighborhood where gunfights can happen any time and everybody dies [...] it's a reality that the teacher needs to keep in mind.

3. What would they use their English for?

For example, in the case of this photo [...] it may be that they (the students) live in a really complex reality, but the classroom can also be another reality for them. You know, there's a movie called *Freedom Writers* [...] I don't know if you've watched it. It's about a school teacher in a public school in the U.S. in which gangs are predominant among the immigrant student population [...] so in this movie it is very well explained that the English class could be a space in which all of these differences and borders are erased and everyone could be there to learn, get to know each other and grow together. That is my idea about how to- with such complex realities that one often encounters in classrooms- create a safe space in the English class that at the same time challenges their (learners') beliefs and thoughts. Taking what they (learners) learned beyond the classroom. In the future, I think that they can take what they learned in class to their lives (Fig. 5.3).

1. Who are these learners?



Fig. 5.3 Privileged learners in Colombia

They're so cute! (They are) girls wearing a school uniform too. We can't say the same that we said about the previous group. I don't know. Let's say that here in Colombia, they would be girls from high socioeconomic strata [...] because one has that 'image' that girls from high social strata are white, have light-colored eyes and blah blah blah... but let's say that this prejudice does not apply to other countries besides Colombia. That is why I thought a lot before saying it.

2. How would it be to teach them English?

These girls, because they are 7 or 8 years old, can be taught using rhymes playing, moving, coloring in English French or Spanish. It would be a challenging class. The teacher must be creative, I have to ask myself, 'How am I going to teach them and how are they going to learn?'

3. What would they use their English for?

[They would use English] for their class. Since they are young, if they have a positive experience, they can make English part of their everyday lives. As they grow, if they like English or French they can start looking for these languages in the different types of media that they use, like a song, a movie or they may look for friends who speak those languages. This way their appeal for their additional language will grow as well as their knowledge in it and about it. This is how their additional language will transcend their class.

Marlon: I find these excerpts from Tati's interview and her musings on what she imagines about each group of learners in the photographs extremely powerful. My intention with this activity was not to pass judgement regarding my participants' implicit or explicit views on learners and what it would be like to teach them; au contraire, I want to acknowledge that we all have biases and that these come from the

images of dominant and marginalized groups that we all acquire or learn in the sociocultural milieus in which we live, grow up, and are educated. Thus, I do not find it surprising that Tati has many more favorable things to say about the privileged learners in a seemingly urban context compared to the indigenous children in the rural setting. On the one hand, Tati acknowledged the many harsh social realities and challenges that underprivileged learners and their teachers face in Colombia, which may include a lack of resources, unappealing learning environments, and even extreme violence. On the other hand, Tati questioned her own biases as she associated learners' skin and hair color with their perceived socioeconomic status. Interestingly, she moved away from this view to focus on their age, arguing that teaching young learners could be challenging, but at the same time rewarding. Last, there was an acknowledgement that learning a foreign language might be more connected to the realities of learners with higher economic and cultural capital.

Isabel: This is so illuminating! I definitely think that if we, as educators, are to foster a sense of solidarity towards everyone inside and outside of our communities, we need to start by unpacking our own biases, as Tati did in your study.

Revisiting Our Conceptual Framework and Concluding Remarks

This critical conversation has allowed us to unpack some of our evolving ideas about language policy and English language teaching throughout nearly a decade of collaborative work. Building on our conceptual framework, we were able to analyze the language used to discuss English teaching and learning by members of the public and politicians (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1998). This led to a discussion of ideology under Gramsci's (2011) conceptualization of common sense as observed in the unquestioned assumption that every Colombian needs to learn English, and that English is the only language that could share the floor with Spanish when bilingualism is discussed.

As duo-ethnographers, we worked together to make sense of these complex social issues and to uncover the existing and often troubling power relations and social divisions magnified by this policy. The conversational nature of the chapter lent itself to reflect on our scholarly journeys and identities and to see how these intersect. This analysis made salient the prevalence of a neoliberal view of the world which favors an idealized form of entrepreneurship, and which puts the onus of learning and getting the expected high level English language proficiency needed to compete in an increasingly demanding job market on the individual, as well as the failure to succeed (Holborow, 2015).

The current troubling times demand deeper, more critical looks at the socio- and geo-political contexts (Walsh, 2003) since neoliberal and neonationalist ideologies are often closely aligned (Badie, 2019) and, as discussed in the political ads above, being used to promote xenophobia and further stigmatize those with less privileged backgrounds. It is interesting to note that, for the past year, President Duque has vehemently said in various international forums how he wants Colombia to become the new Silicon Valley (Euro News, 2019), suggesting abundant employment opportunities for Colombians in the information and communication technologies (ICTs) industry; however, Colombia now seems to have become more of a San Fernando Valley, also known as “Porn Valley,” thanks to ICTs.

Teacher-learners answers to the questions on both the survey about the NPB and the imagined stories about learners make a powerful case for the need to revisit Bourdieu’s (1998) warning about how the education system is used to accentuate power relations for those who benefit from such hierarchies: “Education is never taken account of *as such* at a time when it plays a determining role in the production of goods and services as in the production of the producers themselves” (para. 3, emphasis in original).

Likewise, conversations such as this aim to encourage peers to think of education as a means to experience, and to co-create realities together for preferred futures, taking into account both diversity and local wisdom. Education in Colombia, as Rojas Curieux (2019) argued, requires further attention, dedication and respect for the divergent thinking of all its peoples, as well as the presence of local languages in the curriculum. In

this way, language teacher education can become a means for uncovering prevalent common-sense ideologies, combating neo-nationalism, xenophobia, aporophobia, and fostering criticality along with a deep sense of solidarity among teacher-learners and the broader society.

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6

The Voices of Vietnamese Nationalism and Informal Discourse in Language Policy

Dat Bao and Le-Ha Phan

This chapter discusses Vietnamese nationalism as informally expressed through the social platform *Quora Digest*. This platform, based on our observations, provides a background for what Vietnamese nationalism is currently about and how it is being constructed through a shared social lens. At the heart of this discussion is an account of how the Vietnamese language is viewed, employed, and theorized as policy through dynamic public discourse regarding language learning, teaching, and use.

Structurally, the chapter is shaped by the duality of nationalism and language education. The first half looks at Vietnamese nationalism, while the second half delves into language use and education as revealed by the data and supported by the authors' interpretations. The chapter

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begins with an overview of the concept nationalism as it is understood and employed, which includes how Vietnamese people perceive it and what factors construct that perception. Secondly, the discussion brings forward our main argument of what constitutes the Vietnamese modern-day nationalism and how that understanding supports the discussion of language use, language appreciation, and how current ideology is being challenged. Thirdly, we present the data from *Quora Digest*, analyze nationalism as expressed by Vietnamese participants in this social forum, and highlight key characteristics of nationalism in which language plays an important role. Lastly, we unpack the significance for language teaching and learning that can be drawn from the data. In particular, the data speak of language as a space for national unity, a symbol of patriotism, a forum in which to voice informal versions of language policy and, finally, a set of implications for language education.

Methodologically, the main feature of this chapter is that it presents the everyday view of people as voluntarily expressed in a social media platform without being asked to do so by researchers. The discussion does not adopt an etic perspective of the observer in which social realities are explained through the use of the theoretical apparatus of social sciences. Instead, it takes an emic perspective of the group under study, wherein their perspectives, explanations, logic, meanings, and world-views are used to explain particular beliefs or practices. While other scholarly studies have examined social media and language learning, as well as social media platforms employed pedagogically to serve language classes (e.g., Lamy & Zourou, 2013), this project explores a neglected topic: the relationship between social media platforms and language learning. While many researchers have asked learners how they think about language learning, this project investigates the topic in the natural setting of its wider social space to see how language users perceive and utilize language.

Nationalism: The State, Everyday People, and New Meanings Over Time

Nationalism can be a double-edged sword. Engagement with nationalism has historically ripped this concept apart in two perfectly opposing directions: constructive and destructive (Plamenatz, 1975). On the one hand, nationalism can be a positive ideology that involves wholesome negotiation and the need to build a sense of solidarity and harmony among a group of people. Such nationalism is often expressed as patriotism, which reflects the love for one's country; citizenship, which denotes social responsibility; and loyalism, which comes from the desire to serve and contribute. Nationalism can also take on a negative form (see, for example, Orwell, 2018). It can be internalized as a counterattacking ideology, especially when it generates xenophobia. Some examples would be Anglophobia, which denotes an anti-English sentiment (Hussain & Miller, 2006); ethnic exclusionism, which signifies unfavorable attitudes towards minorities and immigrants (Coenders & Scheepers, 2003); and ethno-separatism, which draws on the emotions of the masses to assert authoritative status (Shiyuan, 2002). In extreme scenarios, it brings out isolationism, with attempts to limit progress or change. Neo-nationalism, to a great extent, has the inclination to go down these darker paths (see Gingrich, 2006).

In the case of Vietnam War, for example, there was a strong divide in the attitude of the American public towards the war during the 1960s and 1970s. A segment of the population was opposed to the war for, in their view, its injustice and lack of convincing justification. This group argued that love for one's country means ensuring that its people do the right thing. The other side defended America regardless of what it stood for. The general sentiment of this group was that one must love the country, no matter what. Even if involvement in the war was unjustifiable, America was still their nation, and they needed to defend it. Of course, both views reflect a kind of nationalism. To the moderate mind, one should make a distinction between support for the nation and for its leadership. This view argues that emotion and reasoning are two different matters; one can love the country but disapprove its government (see, for example, Sherry, 2007).

From another perspective, nationalism can be seen not just as an ideology but also as a form of behavior (Kellas, 1998). It may be difficult to distinguish between the two concepts since feelings toward one's nation can arguably become the basis for actions that may be political or non-political. Along these lines, Plamenatz (1975) defined nationalism as the desire to protect a cultural identity when that identity is threatened, or the desire to create what seems inadequate or lacking in the nation. For Yuval (2017), nationalism also refers to the ability to bring together a large number of people who care about each other, sympathize with one another, and come together for collective action. The construction and evolution of Vietnamese nationalism correspond to the above understandings but also provide some nuance, as elaborated below.

The Evolution of Vietnamese Nationalism

In Vietnam, as in other parts of the world, the local dimension of nationalism is infused with local ideology and accumulated knowledge of the world. Such nationalism takes on the complexity of multiple influences throughout the social, political, economic and cultural history of the country. Vietnamese nationalism over the centuries has never been settled or consistent but remains highly mutable. It bears features of feudalism, semi-feudalism, colonialism, post-colonialism, socialism and, recently, the market economy orientation with intensive exposure to globalization and neo-liberalism.

The concept of nationalism in Vietnam has historically experienced modifications. Scholarly discourse on Vietnamese nationalism was well documented since the 1950s when nationalism was presented as patriotism, colonial ideology, or a quest for political power (Vu, 2007). The concept has always been closely connected to both global and national contexts. For example, in the 1950s, nationalism faced the challenge of colonialism and what nation building involved. In the 1960s and early 1970s, much of the nationalism was related to attitudes toward the Vietnam War, or the anti-American War as the Vietnamese called it, where morality and unified vs. divided ideology was the essence of the debate. In the mid-1980s, it was contextualized by the end of the

Cold War, when Vietnam struggled between the constraints caused by the embargo and its aspirations for economic and political reforms.

In the mid-1990s, when the embargo was lifted and more globalized resources became accessible, foreign investment and international partnerships in all fields became important. Despite these changes, what seems to have survived is that nationalism is often internalized as the pride and connection one feels when considering the country's heritage or culture. This sentiment stands out in the media, public discourse, and education well into the twenty-first century. Whether one is living in Vietnam or has migrated to another country, Vietnamese nationalists tend to value their country's legacy. Diasporic communities also bring their culture, language and traditions with them, which contribute to those of their new countries. Such additions are often welcome, as they are perceived as enriching the host country and allowing Vietnamese nationalistic values to rejuvenate themselves (Nguyen, 2015).

This spirit can be understood as a malleable ideology, which values membership in a nation and which seeks distinction from other nations. Such nationalism is about preserving the nation and giving preference to that which represents it (Bieber, 2018). Amadeo (2019) stated that nationalism is a system formed by people who believe their nation has values unique from those of all other countries. For example, many Vietnamese scholars who speak of education reform in Vietnam often praise the country's critical stance towards Western influence and emphasize traditional values such as flexibility, practicality and mobility (Tran, Marginson, & Nguyen, 2014), as well as adaptation, appropriation, creativity, and patriotism (Trinh, 2018). In other words, Vietnam is seen as having a superior capacity to select what is useful rather than merely accepting Western dominance.

Nationalism is, in many cases, founded on the premise that the individual's loyalty and devotion to the nation-state surpass other individual or group interests (Kohn, 2020). As we will show, the nationalism exhibited by the Vietnamese on *Quora Digest* and in the surveyed posts does not demonstrate such a sense of superiority; however, many contributors do take a very restrained view of what makes the country and culture

worthy. In this way, nationalism contributes to the creation of a worldview, as well as a set of coherent ideas and values that seem meaningful to a social group.

Vietnamese nationalism extends beyond the home country. Ideologically and culturally, many Vietnamese identify themselves with a Sinosphere cultural legacy (Kelley, 2005), particularly in terms of their language and culture. By and large, East Asian countries are seen as sharing a certain set of common values. This feeling of membership in the nation and in the region is hereditary. That is, it includes values passed on by ancestors and shared root words in the language. When the Vietnamese on *Quora Digest* speak of preserving the beauty of their mother tongue, they often acknowledge the shared roots with Chinese and other East Asian languages. This phenomenon is often identified as cultural nationalism, a form of nationalism in which the nation is defined by a shared regional culture (Qiu, 2016).

Ever since Vietnam's reunification in 1975, nationalism has been reconceptualized as socialist citizenship, a concept employed to promote a collective political identity. Leaders who adopt this lens seek to build an enduring political community (Duong & Phan, 2018; Smith, 2003). Nationalism, in this sense, is constructed and promoted by political actors, and may or may not be the same as how ordinary Vietnamese construct it for themselves, whether they live inside or outside of the country. Since 1986, Vietnam has been moving into a market-oriented economy, and greater mobility and exposure to globalization have given Vietnamese people a sense of what they have become, who they wish to be, and how nationalism should constantly be evolving rather than settling on any pre-determined construct. The Doi-Moi (Reform/Open-Door) ideology, which has since 1986 cultivated the Vietnamese youth with patriotic and socialist values (Doan, 2005; Nguyen, 2015), continues to be held by many, while others have been taking on newly contextualized values. For example, the booming economy has given rise to a new middle class with access to globalized resources who do not need to seek help from the Communist Party.

Such experiences make some Vietnamese feel alienated from previously established socialist ideals. Because of this, there is a striking difference in values between the younger generation and older ones,

in that the former has more interest in networking with international partners, becoming more globally mobile, receiving information about human rights, trying new career paths, aspiring to get rich, and becoming more knowledgeable of the modern-day context. As a result, nationalism in Vietnam has taken on a stance which moves away from state dogma and policies, and yet this does not generate conflict but somehow is understood by the state. A review of published research by Phuong An Nguyen (2006) has shown evidence that the state and Party have become more tolerant of gatherings and demonstrations among the youth, which suggests that the state has actually reformed itself to accommodate an updated form of Vietnamese nationalism rather than holding on to the formerly-established socialist ways. As a matter of fact, recent educational policy in Vietnam aims to revamping the citizenship curriculum by giving strong focus to a competency-based approach, which includes components of twenty-first century skills, values, and civic virtues that align with Vietnam's socialist orientation and global integration (Duong & Phan, 2018; Phan, Vu, & Bao, 2014). This emerging blended system is similar to the current market economy in China, where public and private ownership co-exist (see, for example, Ding, 2009).

Nationalism as an Ongoing Social Process in Everyday Encounters

This chapter argues that social media platforms can be creatively examined as sites where an updated version of nationalism is intensely articulated, especially when contributors from the same cultural background, in this case Vietnamese, are not merely conversing among themselves. Rather, they circulate a range of voices, not always in harmony, which speak to the international community. It is through such a vigorous interface that nationalism becomes both individualized and contextualized, supported and challenged, united and divided, atypical and confirming, all at the same time. This complexity hidden within nationalistic expressions is worth researching since it would be static and unrepresentative to keep relying on economic figures, political decisions, and historical facts alone for an understanding nationalism (see Thorpe, 2008). More

importantly, it is by looking more into the everyday informal dimensions of nationalism that one is able to uncover multiple ways in which nationalist ideologies are constantly being composed and renewed in an ever-changing world.

As education scholars, we raise this question: Does the widespread dissatisfaction with globalization affect everybody, in all countries and contexts, in the same way? Perhaps not. At least that is not the case among many Vietnamese, as will be shown by the data collected for this chapter. Other chapters in this volume demonstrate how resistance to globalization has resulted in a resurgence of xenophobic ethno-nationalism (see, for example, Kasztalska & Swatek; Meadows). While recognizing such trends, we would like to paint a different picture of the relationship between globalization and nationalism that denotes the diversity of reality.

Indeed, while there are forces that seek to restrict movement of people, goods and services around the world, this chapter demonstrates how a set of voices, openly expressed on a social platform, can challenge such limitations. Many Vietnamese prefer to keep debates going regardless of ideological differences and geographical constraints. These debates also indicate that the dissatisfaction with globalization either does not affect them or remains outside of their concern. Arguably, the Vietnamese participants on *Quora Digest* represent a community that does not suffer from the above-mentioned limitations. Some ignore it; others fight against it by posting their views. Many move on with what they enjoy as discourse practice.

To bring such discourses to the fore, we set out to study how Vietnamese people, both inside and outside of the country, express their national ideology through *Quora Digest* (www.quora.com), an increasingly popular social medium in recent years where intercultural thoughts and worldviews are shared. On this forum, users initiate questions out of their own curiosity on any issue and about any country to invite answers from people either from that country or with experiences related to it. Through their posts, users then respond to such questions that are raised every day by the international community on issues of both unusual and common. Our main discussion is founded on this body of data. Specifically, we collected 341 forum posts about Vietnam, selected at random

over the past five years (2015–2020), and analyzed them to see how Vietnamese nationalism is shaped through public discourse, a process in which spoken language conducted through writing plays a vital role.

Quora Digest involves mutual knowledge and occasional confrontations from a wide range of perspectives, which tend to make discussion forums amusing to read and participate in. To maintain focus, we selected only contributions by citizens of Vietnam or diasporic Vietnamese who discussed issues related to Vietnamese language, culture, politics, or society. We paid particular attention to the voices that signified Vietnamese nationalism, a concept that has been broadly identified in the introduction and will be unpacked throughout our discussion of the data.

The reason for such data selection comes from our reading interests and participation in the forum. We find discussions in this space to be enriching, diverse, stimulating, and even provocative. Occasionally, people would ask inflammatory questions that might drive readers to respond with emotions such as anger, amusement, confusion, frustration, or sarcasm. It is the manipulation of feelings that makes these discussions intense, interesting, and highly enjoyable. Here are a few examples of how an issue can be initiated by the public, sometimes in silly and aggressive ways:

Is Vietnam part of China?
What country does Singapore belong to?
Why is Japan such a backward country?

These questions are without authors and dates. To provide background on the third question: the asker was frustrated to see that people keep prioritizing cash over credit in their everyday transactions, which, not unlike the first two questions, stemmed from the asker's own thinking. We do not know for sure how these questions were to be construed, whether out of limited knowledge of the world or attempts to elicit strong reactions.

Overview of Everyday Nationalism on *Quora Digest*

Table 6.1 contains a synopsis of data content from 341 posts over the past five years as collected from *Quora Digest*. The perspective adopted in this project to study the dynamics of nationalism takes a sociocultural stance. That means we looked at the topic through the eyes of the public to see what ordinary Vietnamese had to say about it and, through this process, identified their expressions of nationalism. The voices under study, therefore, come directly from the people rather than from any intellectual position. This decision rests on the fact that a great deal of discourse on nationalism has already been constructed from the perspective of academic researchers, often in contested ways (e.g., Kissane & Sitter, 2013; Ting, 2008). Besides, we consciously observed the social nature of the topic focus, as well as the emotions involved in participants' construction of nationalism. Since *Quora Digest* is an international social media platform, all of the posts are in English rather than in Vietnamese. When the topic of language is discussed, there may be examples in Vietnamese, which often come with English translations, and sometimes Chinese equivalents, if words happen to have Chinese roots. We present the data in the original form.

Participants' nationalist positioning towards Vietnam fell into four main categories: expressions of pride about Vietnam (30.2%), feelings of inferiority (22.06%), realistic or balanced views of Vietnam (25.18%), and discussions for sharing knowledge and understanding about the country (22.48%). Those who shared such knowledge felt that many aspects of Vietnamese culture such as language, religion, cuisine, hospitality, music, and arts helped to increase the popularity of Vietnam around the world.

Pride

Many participants felt proud of their cultural roots, noting a history that has spanned at least 4000 years. As one poster said, throughout history Vietnam "has been a major power in the region, a testament no less to the

Table 6.1 Break-down of nationalist content in *Quora Digest* data

No.	Sentimentality or content	Number of posts (out of 341)	Percentage (%)	Examples
1	Pride	103	30.2	"the strong spirit of Independence and Freedom that every Vietnamese should be proud of" (Đại Nguyễn Trần, July 25, 2018)
2	Balanced views of Vietnam	86	24.9	"We're not that powerful. We just want peace. Every war that we fought, we fought to end it. Had we raised a war for something else, we wouldn't have won" (Cường Nguyễn Tấn, March 27, 2018)
3	Inferiority	75	22.1	"Vietnamese homicide rate is so high" (Phong Tran, March 15, 2018)

(continued)

Table 6.1 (continued)

No.	Sentimentality or content	Number of posts (out of 341)	Percentage (%)	Examples
4	Language and linguistics	22	6.5	"After 1000 years conquered by China and we didn't lose our native language" (Nhu Anh Le Nguyen September 15, 2018)
5	Lifestyle, travel, living conditions, work experiences	22	6.4	"Vietnam is a safe and interesting country to travel to. Venture out a bit and you can surely see its beauty in every corner." (Quy An Nguyen Huu, September 23, 2017)

No.	Sentimentality or content	Number of posts (out of 341)	Percentage (%)	Examples
6	Art, music, education, religion, economy	15	4.1	<p>"Vietnam has such a rich and creative heritage of music. Firstly, all three regions, North, South and Central of Vietnam have invented their own genres of music that are so widely different from each other and that are unique and complex in their own ways." (Lan Phuong, May 26, 2017)</p> <p>"Most Vietnamese don't follow any religions, but we worship our ancestors and we believe when someone dies, their spirit remains, and the altar is where they be." (Tyler Nguyen, July 4, 2019)</p>

(continued)

Table 6.1 (continued)

No.	Sentimentality or content	Number of posts (out of 341)	Percentage (%)	Examples
7	Identity tensions	10	2.9	"As a fellow Vietnamese girl living in Scandinavia, I hated being Vietnamese when I was 7 up to 13 years old. I still dislike being Vietnamese sometimes, but have started to appreciate my ethnicity way more now when I follow this fellow Kpop group NCT as it was closer to where I am from and it made me get better self-esteem" (Anonymous, April 10, 2019)
8	Politics, fighting spirit; defending the country	9	2.6	"Vietnam is always ready to contribute positively and constructively to the restoration of peace and security on the South China sea" (Thien Luan Le, August 5, 2018)

ingenuity of the people and the knowledge and wisdom they inherited from the ancient East Asian civilization” (James Luong, June 4, 2018). Others pointed out that Vietnamese civilization can be traced back to the Hoa Binh and Dong Son, two of Asia’s significant prehistoric cultures, with remnants still found from Southern China to Indonesia. Many posts emphasized the fact that Vietnamese culture persists in all forms (e.g., language, literature, fine and performing arts, philosophy, education) despite eras of domination, and has even enriched itself through interactions with the dominating cultures.

Pride is expressed when one feels it is necessary to defend the community against unfair criticism and to maintain as many aspects of the national tradition as possible. The posts surveyed demonstrate resilience and a willingness to overcome challenges; express solidarity, affection and optimism about the country; promote a good reputation for Vietnam; and share cultural values and confidence in future prospects. However, the data also show that Vietnamese nationalism, as internalized both at home and in the diasporic community, does not take on a unified, coherent form, but is constantly modified through experiences and contexts; whether one is proud or not remains an individual decision. Pride and shame are two sides of Vietnamese nationalism.

Mixed and Nuanced Inferiority

Some of the data included conversations between Vietnamese who grew up in the United States and those who grew up in Vietnam. In general, the former did not feel proud to be Vietnamese, while the latter did. It is insightful to see how these emotions towards the nation are colored by their own experiences. These voices represent three distinctive views about being Vietnamese. The first group felt inferior, mixed, and unacknowledged by their peers in the United States, but did not lean towards their Vietnamese origins either. Some explained:

I hate being Vietnamese but feel proud to be American, is that okay?
(Anonymous, April 10, 2019)

I spent many years growing up in the US, not feeling like I fit in anywhere, not totally accepted or seen as 'American' by non-Asian Americans, especially Caucasians, and be seen as 'Americanized Vietnamese' by people in Vietnam. (April Erbe, August 25, 2018)

Others deviated from this view and become more expressive:

It's sad to see someone trying to deny their origin. I do not know why you hate it. (Nguyen Thang, October 27, 2019)

I love the horrible stories of history of my homeland. I accepted the insane dislikes of the Vietnam northerners towards their Vietnam southerners. I truly value most is the petite frame we were created with. I appreciate the beautiful ranges of delicious foods throughout Vietnam. What I greatly respect is the passion and love Vietnamese possess in culture. (Kelly Tran, September 27, 2019)

One contributor demonstrated a more balance view, arguing that one cannot simply feel proud or ashamed by default:

What have you done to earn being a Vietnamese? Did you toil away for hours to obtain the quality of being a Vietnamese? Should you be proud of a genetic accident? If you ask whether you should be proud of your ancestors' achievements, that's a slightly better question. Are you ashamed of your ancestors' failings? If you are then go ahead, take pride in past generations' accomplishments. If you are not, spend some time reflecting on your selective pride. (Duy Truong, May 11, 2018)

This post implies that pride needs to be built on a foundation of positive values that are created by individuals rather than simply inherited. Arguably, attempts to rely on race or genetics can be misleading. This is a rare opinion, which indicates that to be proud of the culture, one needs to learn to develop it without worrying about what blood or genes have to do with merit.

There also exists unenthusiastic sentimentality towards the country, which can lead to negative responses such as inferiority, embarrassment, and criticism often related to social disparity. Other comments included:

Vietnamese homicide rate is so high. (Phong Tran, March 15, 2018)

Regional discrimination. People from Thanh Hoa [a province in Vietnam] are extremely discriminated against. People from the south also discriminate against the north and vice versa. It is quite normal for northerners to charge a Southerner double for an item compare to other northerners. (Hoàng Hà Nguyễn Vĩnh, January 17, 2019)

There is no specific, uniform way to conclude what constitutes the internalized feeling of mediocrity among various communities of Vietnamese around the world; what makes one person proud might cause another to feel embarrassed. For example, to some, poverty might be shameful, as it means that the country is lagging behind the rest of the world; to others, being poor is the inevitable cost of winning the war. Some feel disadvantaged because they think the country is not being managed in the most efficient way; others connect themselves with their limited capability to advance the nation. This list of contested issues relates to the lack of national pride.

Balanced Views About Vietnam as a Nation

The data also demonstrated a fair view of the country, which included attempts towards justifying values, correcting the misperceptions of others, putting events in perspective, and adjusting subjective judgments about Vietnam. There were posts from overseas Vietnamese who used to think negatively about their home country, but have since changed their minds after having new experiences. As one wrote:

I moved back to Vietnam, I always find good things and acts done by people in a daily life. It makes me re-think many pre-disposed ideas that stuck in my head for years. (Mark Tran, June 27, 2019)

Such a balanced view of the country also involves correcting misperceptions and subjective comments about the country. For example, some provided statistics to justify their responses:

According to the latest IMF forecast (Oct. 6, 2019), Vietnam economy will end 2019 at 7% GDP growth and projects to maintain that growth rate through 2023, despite slowing global markets. Poverty level will be reduced to under 5% from current 6.5% by 2025 and middle-class growth is highest among ASEAN through 2030 (Hai Nguyen, October 14, 2019). Other voices come in with the same understanding: Have you ever come to Vietnam? Why did you say Vietnam is still a poor country? Or you just read the news on the internet 20 years ago. (Khanh, September 2, 2019)

Vietnamese economy is among the fastest growing in Asia. People have ample opportunities to enrich themselves if they have talents and know their ways. (James Luong, June 4, 2018)

In responding to the challenging question “Do the Vietnamese have a bad reputation in Japan, considering the rising incidents of theft involving Vietnamese nationals in the country?”, one contributor researched an answer. After sharing a chart that showed statistics about crimes from a Japanese source, he commented:

The number of Vietnamese crimes in Japan obviously is not too high compared to their neighbor like Chinese or Korean. So why do Vietnamese always think they had bad reputation in Japan? You are too self-deprecating when you supposed Vietnamese are this or are that. (Sang Phan, February 20, 2018)

While many were proud of achievements and victories, others attributed this to a basic need for survival and righteousness.

We’re not that powerful. We just want peace. Every war that we fought, we fought to end it. Had we raised a war for something else, we wouldn’t have won. (Cường Nguyễn Tấn, March 27, 2018)

In response to the question “What do Vietnamese people think of Americans?”, some contributors looked at various factors that shape such an attitude, like the fact that the new generation did not grow up with memories of war. Today, the need for cooperating with the United States

and other countries seems more important than looking back. One shared:

On a personal level, some of my best friends are American expats living overseas. History never seems to be factor in our friendships at all. Which brings me to the most important point: when people have a chance to observe and interact with each other on an individual level, hatred and resentment towards an abstract faceless group starts to fade and be gradually replaced by empathy, understanding and kindness. (Huyen Nguyen, September 23, 2018)

Together, these voices seem to be speaking to international readers rather than other Vietnamese. Defending the country in the face of misunderstanding by the rest of the world represents a responsible way of demonstrating nationalism:

Many foreigners said the prosperous Vietnam with big buildings and luxurious restaurant is not real Vietnam. In their eyes Vietnam is poor and what we have today thanks to “the blessing of Western civilization.” His attitude to the above is “everything laughable and ridiculous.” (Hoan Go, on July 1, 2019)

Many of the questions raised on *Quora Digest* reflected not only the interrogator’s interest in Vietnam but also occasional hostility or misperception about the country. When the latter occurred, respondents tended to express their support for Vietnam. Although the feelings of pride ranged from strong to weak, when being confronted with unfavorable views, many preferred to adopt a more balanced stance by simultaneously acknowledging problems and defending the nation.

Language and Manifestations of Nationalism

The rest of the chapter is devoted to language use and various manifestations of nationalism as revealed by the data, together with our analysis and interpretation. We look at the significance of the Vietnamese language as internalized by participants, which embraces important

notions such as pride, unity, and a symbol of nationalism. A range of implications for language policy and education are drawn from all these values and understanding.

Nationalism and language have an intimate relationship. In fact, language is often recognized as one constituent of nationalism (Breuilly, 1993) and is sometimes identified as being symbolic of a nation's ideology (Smith, 2010). Arguably, if language differs greatly among countries, then so does nationalism. Like language, nationalism takes on a discursive nature that guides how people "understand the world, navigate interaction, engage in coordinate actions, and made political claims" (Bonikowski, 2016, p. 430). One example of how nationalism might diverge among nations can be seen a 2015 survey conducted by Gallup International, which polled people across 64 countries and found that 61% would be willing to fight for their countries, while 27% would not. Most strikingly, the degree of willingness varies in 64 different levels, ranging from 11% willingness in Japan to 94% in Morocco (Gallup International, 2015).

In the same poll, Vietnam ranked among the most willing at 89%. Much of this fighting spirit has to do with the widely promoted narrative that Vietnam has had a long history of resistance against foreign aggression. As a result, Vietnamese people are characterized by their efforts to resist, adapt, collaborate, appropriate, and maintain their cultural unity. One example of the intensity of such an ideology can be seen in the responses to the statement that "Vietnam belongs to China" in the forum. Most forum contributors who are Vietnamese found this a deeply insulting statement.

Language as Pride and Cultural Appreciation

Twenty-two (6.5%) out of 341 posts discussed Vietnamese language issues. Many felt satisfied with the fact that, after 1000 years of conquest by China, Vietnam did not lose its native language (as mentioned in a post by Nhu Anh Le Nguyen on September 15, 2018). Overall, contributors expressed their knowledge and pride of the Vietnamese language.

Quite a few overseas Vietnamese, who grew up in the United States, Europe, and other parts of the world, have managed to preserve their original language and culture as well. Some acknowledged being highly fluent in both verbal and written forms of the language, although their schooling in Vietnam did not exceed the primary level. One explained:

I have the fortune of being brought up in a family who loves to read, sing and write poetry in Vietnamese. Even though my parents encouraged their kids to learn and speak English well to get ahead in the US, they also encouraged us kids to also make an effort to speak Vietnamese at home. Our home was always filled with Vietnamese language books, magazines and newspapers. My brother who plays the guitar well, was always singing Vietnamese songs and encouraged me to sing and write poetry as well. Due to that kind of exposure to the language, I grew up knowledgeable in Vietnamese literature and culture unlike a lot of my Vietnamese American friends who also came in 1975 and grew up in the US with very little knowledge of Vietnamese culture. (April Erbe, August 25, 2018)

Some are interested in discussing language use and structure. Linguistic nationalism may relate to the use of each nation's own language to exercise its dominance or the use of linguistics to foster nationalistic ideologies. For example, the way Vietnamese people express their nationalism differs by using a variety of words to show their pride of the Vietnamese language. Others enjoy explaining how the language works. This includes, for example, the two words for "love" (Yêu and Thu'ớng) in Vietnamese. While the former denotes romantic attachment, the latter conveys understanding and acceptance (such as in an entry by Loan Quanh on February 8, 2019).

While praising the beauty of the language, a number of contributors expressed recognition of borrowed words that enrich Vietnamese. Examples included *ga lăng* (galant), *la-va-bô* (lavabo), *khăn mùi soa* (mouchoir) (in French) while 帽 *Muselvam Mũ* (nón) 鞋 *Hài Hài* (giày), 臘腸 *lạp sớselvamng*. Lạp xớselvamng, 樓 *lầu*. (Nhà), 打 *Tá 1 tá* (12) (in Chinese). One person commented on the significance of naming:

What I love about Vietnamese names is that all of them have a meaning, and you could just interpret someone's name on the spot. For example,

some common boys' names are —Dũng/Hùng (strength/courageous), Minh/Trí (intelligence), Đức (morality); and some common girls' names are Tuyết (snow), Hoa (flowers), Ngọc (gem), Mỹ (beauty), and so on. (Loan Kim Vuong, Sep 23, 2018)

Multilingualism and Language as Unity

Multilingualism is a common social phenomenon in Vietnam. Across the country, people use Vietnamese, Khmer, Chinese dialects, English, Russian, and French on a daily basis. The languages are selected according to communicative circumstances, interlocutors, and social habits. While in some countries, people may be frowned upon for conversing in a language other than their mother tongue, this is not the case in Vietnam where switching between different languages when necessary or desirable has become increasingly accepted. This reality, however, does not mean there has been no historical shift in Vietnamese perspectives towards language policy in the country.

The significance of foreign languages, especially English and French, has changed dramatically in the eyes of the Vietnamese people and state. In war times, these were seen as the languages of the former colonizers, while today they have been neutralized as the languages of international communication. As Vietnam adopted an open-market policy, it embraced globalization enough to modify its political perspective towards language and culture in ways that conform with the need for economic development and intercultural understanding. Bianco (2003) acknowledged this phenomenon of radical change (i.e., the shift from exclusion to neutrality) across many countries in Asia and Africa, which used to be colonies of Western powers. In the meantime, the Vietnamese language has continued to assert a political role in both the affairs of the state and the hearts of the people. It is a language powerfully connected with national identity or, as Simpson (2007, p. 17) put it, the national language is often internalized as having “sacred” significance rather than just being a tool for communication.

For many Vietnamese, multilingualism has always been an accepted reality in one way or another, and the use of any one language is far from mutually exclusive. In the data, however, the national language holds a

special position of pride and identity for the Vietnamese people. It is acknowledged in some posts that Vietnamese is descended from an old language family that dates back to at least 2000 BCE. It has diverged greatly from its origins and taken on influences that make it unique. As a result, many feel proud of their mother tongue.

Today it stands among popular Asian languages, befitting the growing status of Vietnam and a testament to the continuity of Vietnamese civilizations. (James Luong, June 4, 2018)

Responding to the question “What makes the Vietnamese language unique?”, contributors shared a variety of reasons related to its linguistic characteristics, including the rich vocabulary, regularity of pronunciation, tonal system, shared vocabulary with other Sinosphere languages, and melodious sound. Below are some justifications evident from the data:

Vietnamese has 6 tones, so for just each word in English like ‘ca’, we have 6 different versions: ca, cá, cà, caselvam, cã, cạ. Each word has different pronunciation and different meaning [...] The pronunciation is not irregular so if you know the rules, you can pronounce all the Vietnamese words. (Vũ Văn Lý, December 20, 2015)

We are very lucky to have such a unique mother tongue like Vietnamese. We were influenced by the Chinese, so Chinese languages are somewhat easier to learn. Our currently in use writing system was invented by a Portuguese, thus we must have an edge over European languages. Vietnam is a southeast Asian country, so we should be familiar with some other SEA languages. (Nguyệt Thanh Trần, June 12, 2017)

Many people say that Vietnamese is the language of musicality. And it sure is. It also reflects the richness of our culture, history and national identity in more than 4000 years of constructing and protecting the country. It’s not a common language, but absolutely it will add an unforgettable experience into your knowledge of this great world around us. (Hoang Nguyen Minh, August 2, 2018)

In many cases, feelings about beauty of the language were subjective and slightly romanticized, as in this rather elaborate post:

The Vietnamese language is unique and has its own kind that nothing else has, as like every language. When you speak it, it likes some sort of rhythm, some melody. The three parts of Vietnam has its own dialect: The Norths are like those news reporters you'd see. The Middles are like literally, upbeat and downbeat songs. The Souths are like a gentle wind on an autumn day. A person loves their mother-tongue language. Me too, as a Vietnamese, adore it, seeing it as if the language is crystal sparkling under the blue sea. (Thuận Bá, June 28, 2019)

There is hardly a unified version of the language. Those who live in Vietnam and those who have settled overseas for a long time might use Vietnamese in very different ways, given their varied everyday experiences, language development, and accountability as citizens. To domestic Vietnamese ears, there are “unfamiliar phonemes, new vowel combinations, differing tonal changes, and perhaps sometimes the acute accents” (Gilbert Duy Doan, June 1, 2019).

Implications for Language Policy and Education

This chapter has contributed a set of informal policies of language use in four areas. Firstly, the preservation of language is viewed through social collaborative means whereby everyone promotes language, offers encouragement, and keeps each other informed. There is strong awareness of preserving the national language and culture no matter where one lives. Secondly, contextualized practices need to be authentically initiated, which happens through constant use of the language and through shared interests such as poetry, history, and travel, among others. Thirdly, mutual learning is vibrantly expressed through social mediums whereby people learn from one another and constitute social discourse outside of conventional educational contexts. Fourthly, knowledge about the language is constantly renewed. This includes language awareness, such

as the knowledge of grammar rules and lexical roots, recognition of borrowed words, and an understanding of the origins of the language and the constituents that make it unique.

In our view, language education as a focus does not always have to come from scholars, educators, theorists, and teachers. Instead, it can be refreshing to take on the view of real people who know and use language, and who establish their own stances on it. It is hard to visualize how anyone survives or integrates into today's globalized world without learning another language. The participants who contributed the data for this project are language learners-users, as demonstrated in the following manners:

- They know more than one language (Vietnamese, Chinese, English);
- They have developed their own perspectives and enjoy discussing Vietnamese and other languages;
- They assist fellow Vietnamese and international readers alike in acquiring knowledge of the language and developing views about language use in the real world.

Arguably, these actions show that these participants are learners and, to some extent, educators themselves, if not by profession then in practice. By focusing on everyday people who express their views on languages in a public forum, we are acknowledging the perspectives of language users in the real world rather than the stances of policymakers, theorists, and teachers. Four implications can be drawn from the above understanding.

First, there is the need for contextualization of language use in which communication is studied in action, rather than artificially and pedagogically imagined in formal settings. Next, educators may wish to consider extended ways of using language in real world with communication features of a more controversial, debatable and confrontational nature, but with mutual understanding and respect. Some of these features are not always well utilized in the classroom. Learners should be organized to act more often as the initiators of their own discussions. Issues of debate need to come from them rather than being dictated by textbooks, predetermined by the curriculum, or designed by educators. Lastly, it is important to involve learners more in discovery rather than training

in linguistic information. Educators may wish to have learners explore language by themselves in terms of developing their own policies, sharing their views on language, and participating as owners of the language, not as recipients of rules and knowledge.

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Part II

Practices



7

The Role of Language in Social Media During the European Migrant Crisis

Ramona Kreis

Right-wing, nationalist discourses are on the rise across the world (Leschzyk, 2017; Ott, 2017; Wodak, 2019). In Europe, right-wing, nationalist discourses are not, however, a new phenomenon (Wodak, 2015). Politicians such as Marine Le Pen of France or Geert Wilders of the Netherlands have long employed a nationalist, anti-immigrant rhetoric and their political parties have received significant numbers of votes during multiple elections in their countries. The increased popularity of right-wing discourses is also connected to the revitalization of nationalist ideologies in Europe. After decades of European countries strengthening their ties and increasingly delegating power to supranational institutions such as the European Union (EU), Europe has seen a rise in anti-EU sentiments, with member states striving to regain sovereignty and return to the nation-state. This movement was also

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fueled by the European migrant crisis, for example, because of attempts by the EU to distribute asylum seekers among member states, which was met with refusal by several. The effect of anti-EU sentiments can be seen most clearly in the Brexit. In recent years, right-wing political parties advocating for the revitalization and sovereignty claims of the nation-state have thus gained power throughout the European Union. This includes the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), Lega Nord in Italy, Law and Justice (PiS) in Poland, and the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), among others. In Germany, the migrant crisis also led to the strengthening of a new far-right political party, the Alternative for Deutschland (AfD), which openly exhibits xenophobic positions and makes use of Nazi-diction. By 2019, the party had entered the German national parliament, as well as all 16 state parliaments.

Right-wing, nationalist discourses employ a variety of topoi. One common topos is the construction of the “dangerous other” and the threat of the other to national identity and security. The term “right-wing” has different connotations in different regions, but a common denominator is typically the preservation of the national identity and culture. Nationalist discourse supports the concept of a nation as an existing, bound, and homogeneous entity that is sovereign and superior to other nations. It is further characterized by the conservation of national identity and culture, and traditional values (Wodak, 2015). In right-wing, nationalist discourses, the nation-state and its borders are threatened and need to be secured from foreigners in order to maintain the national identity and culture. This national identity and culture is based on the construction of an “imagined community” (Anderson, 1983) that is depicted “as an essentially bounded entity whose integrity is threatened by the presence of residents supposedly belonging to a different ‘culture’ and not being willing to learn and adopt ‘our’ conventions and norms, or assimilate” (Wodak, 2008, p. 66). While belonging can be defined by citizenship, heritage or ethnicity, group membership may also be determined through language. Language requirements are often used as “gatekeepers” to keep immigrants out when they are required to show a certain level of proficiency in the official language of the state. Furthermore, immigrants may be required to take integration courses and expected to assimilate to the respective culture (see Gulliver,

Chapter 10 in this volume). Such policies legitimate the discursive constructions of migrants as others because language and language use determine group membership and legitimize inclusion and exclusion. Many European countries including Austria, Germany, Greece, the United Kingdom, and some East European countries have language policies for immigrants and foster the migrants' assimilation to the host country in order for the migrants to be welcome (Blackledge, 2005; Hansen-Thomas, 2007; Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2013; Michalowski, 2011; Piller, 2001; van Oers, Kostakopoulou, & Ersbøll, 2010; Wodak & Boukala, 2015).

Language played a crucial role in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when modern nation-states were formed. As Wright (2016) pointed out:

[...] language was at the heart of nationalism. In the struggle for independence, it could be enlisted to define the ethnicity of the group and, after independence, it could be fostered to provide the statewide community of communication that nationalism seemed to require. (p. 9)

A national language was thus central to the formation of the nation-state and reinforced by “the idea that each national group is unique and needs its own state to be truly authentic” (Wright, 2016, p. 39). The national language can also contribute to the uniqueness of a state, and “an early objective in the nationalist project was thus to achieve linguistic convergence within the group and to differentiate the national language from all allied dialects on the continuum” (Wright, 2016, p. 40). During German unification in the nineteenth century, for instance, the German language was a prerequisite. While linguistic diversity continued to exist, high German (*Hochdeutsch*) served as the literary standard and created linguistic cohesion in the written language (Wright, 2016).

The ideology that one nation equals one language has continued to exist since the nineteenth century in many countries (Langer & Davies, 2005; Mar-Molinero, 1994); however, internationalization and globalization have led to English becoming a dominant language in many domains such as academia, technology, politics, and entertainment (Oakes, 2005), thus loosening the ties between the nation-state

and its national language (Mar-Molinero, 1994). In the light of a nationalist revival, the one-nation-one-language ideology is therefore a useful tool for the construction of an imagined community (Oakes, 2005). Right-wing, nationalist discourses employ linguistic purism and promote protective language planning, aiming to preserve the national language. Langer and Davies (2005) argued that the national or dominant language is threatened and needs to be preserved. Any foreign or non-standard element in the language is devalued. Language is thus constructed as a homogeneous entity that plays an important role for the national identity.

As mentioned above, the English language is influential in many domains and is also a dominant language in digital media (Tagg, 2015). Even though other languages are becoming more visible, English is still frequently used to communicate online. Users may choose English as a lingua franca in order to reach a wider audience that they might not reach when using their native language (Bruns, Highfield, & Burgess, 2013). Social media users may also use English in order to claim group membership. Kytölä and Westinen's (2015) study on the tweets of a Finnish soccer player illustrated both aspects. While playing for a German club, the soccer player tweets predominately in English, combining both standard and non-standard English features. By using English as opposed to Finnish, the player reaches a wider audience, and by using non-standard English, he expresses his interest in and knowledge of (African American) hip hop culture (Kytölä & Westinen, 2015). Other studies have also shown how English as a second language is used as a performative act in digital communication (e.g., Barton & Lee, 2013; Lee & Barton, 2009) and how it has the "ability to bring local issues to national or global attention" (Tagg, 2015, p. 195).

Supporters of right-wing, nationalist discourses advocate the use of the national language, but the use of English in online platforms may facilitate the spread of their ideologies and help them to connect across geopolitical and linguistic boundaries. Baumgarten's study (2017), for instance, demonstrated that English is used as a lingua franca within the right-wing online community in order to connect on a global level. The author analyzed the extreme-right website, Stormfront, and found that othering not only targeted individuals but also "potentially diverse

entities” (p. 4) such as organizations, social institutions, geographical entities, cultural practices and belief systems, and social processes. The analysis further demonstrated that English was used as a lingua franca to discuss local contexts and build a globally connected right-wing online community. While studies have shown how right-wing groups connect through and disseminate their ideology in participatory online communities (Baumgarten, 2017; Daniels, 2009), a publicly available platform like Twitter offers a much wider reach for right-wing discourses to be shared.

Right-Wing Discourses and Counter-Discourses in Social Media

Right-wing, nationalist discourses of the elites have been studied extensively, ranging from mass media texts such as newspapers to various forms of political discourse such as legislation, policy documents, and political party leaflets (Baker et al., 2008, Richardson & Colombo, 2014; Wodak & Boukala, 2015; Zaslove, 2004). These studies have examined the discursive construction of national identity (Wodak, 2015), negative representations of immigrants and refugees (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008), and right-wing discourses on nativism (Richardson & Wodak, 2009). Given that digital and social media have become part of many people’s daily lives (KhosraviNik & Unger, 2016), we also need to explore the role of new media in the (re)production of right-wing, nationalist discourses, as the “imagined” community is not only shaped by top-down discourses of the elites but also through social language-in-use. “Grassroots” activity plays a role in circulating right-wing, nationalist discourses bottom-up. Digital communication tools have contributed substantially to bottom-up activity, and right-wing, nationalist discourses have leveraged the affordances of digital and social media in order to spread their ideologies, reach larger audiences, or connect across geopolitical and linguistic boundaries (e.g., Baumgarten, 2017; Daniels, 2009; Doerr, 2017). Furthermore, right-wing populist politicians and political parties use social media to communicate directly with the people without

any gatekeepers (Ott, 2017), and social media have contributed to the rise of right-wing populist parties, for example, the AfD (Lohse, 2016).

Digital and social media play an important role in many people's lives because they are not only used to communicate, but also to get informed about the news. Social media share "many traits and functions often ascribed to traditional mass media, not least by framing issues and events and thus shaping people's perceptions of reality and of social and political issues" (Moscovici & Duveen, 2000, as cited in Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016, p. 403). Moreover, digital and social media users are often not just passive consumers and observers, but they have become content "curators," "distributors," and "creators" (Tagg, 2015). Users share news with their social network and consume news shared by their network. Studies have analyzed the effect of this "prosumer" behavior on so-called filter bubbles (e.g., Ott, 2017). Filter bubbles are facilitated by algorithms that select and recommend web content based on the user's online behavior. Therefore, users keep seeing information with the same perspectives and ideologies, which may lead to the reproduction of discourses. Consequently, social media may contribute to the normalization of socially unacceptable, non-mainstream discourses when right-wing discourses are continuously repeated in these filter bubbles (O'Callaghan et al., 2013).

The focus of research has been on the analysis of right-wing discourses, but studies have also examined social media users' reactions to right-wing positions. For instance, Cisneros and Nakayama (2015) examined user reactions to racist comments on Twitter in the context of the victory of the first Indian American Miss America. Racist tweets generated a strong backlash on Twitter. Users expressed anger and attacked and shamed the authors of the racist tweets. Rasmussen's (2015) study analyzed Twitter users' reactions to discriminatory tweets in the context of a terror alert in Norway. The author found that "twice as many [users took] a stand against the blaming of minorities" (p. 208) and challenged the negative depiction and generalizations of Muslims. Pantti (2016) also investigated the Scandinavian context and analyzed social media users' reactions to an anti-asylum protest in Finland where a protestor was dressed like a member of the Ku Klux Klan while waving a Finnish flag. In her analysis of tweets and comments, Pantti found that disgust "worked as an

expression of severe moral judgment against the violence expressed in the comments posted on Twitter” (p. 370). In both Cisneros and Nakayama’s (2015) and Pantti’s (2016) studies, social media users constructed a negative image of right-wing supporters.

Neumayer and Valtysson (2013) focused on the German context and investigated how Twitter is used strategically by anti-fascist protesters in East Germany. The researchers described how groups protesting against nationalist rallies form alliances on Twitter by using specific hashtags. Twitter is not only used to express solidarity, to share information, and to challenge right-wing groups and mainstream news media coverage but also to “interact” with neo-Nazis, or rather, to “[spam] the hashtag of the opponents” (p. 11) in order to create a symbolic online blockage. These strategies demonstrate how Twitter-specific affordances can be used to engage in social resistance and how social media “can be appropriated for subversive action to challenge power and lead to political change” (p. 4).

While a lot of research has been conducted on right-wing discourses, few studies have explored both right-wing discourses and counter-discourses. Moreover, few have investigated counter-discourses in the context of the European migrant crisis. Therefore, the following study explores right-wing discourses and counter-discourses on Twitter to illustrate how social media users leverage technological and communicative affordances to construct and reproduce right-wing, nationalist ideologies as well as to challenge these ideologies. I specifically focus on the 2016 Berlin terrorist attack.

On December 19, 2016, a man hijacked a truck and drove into a Christmas market in Berlin. In the attack, 12 people were killed and 56 were injured. The perpetrator had entered Germany in the summer of 2015 to seek asylum which was not granted. However, this information was not known until days after the attack. Immediately after the attack, social media users made claims about the cause-effect relationship between Germany’s refugee policy and the terror attack. The German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, was blamed for the attack; in fact, a German far-right politician tweeted that the victims died because of her by tweeting “They are Merkel’s dead” (German: *Es sind Merckels Tote*).

The present study examines the following research questions: (1). What discursive strategies and semiotic resources are employed in right-wing discourses on Twitter? and (2). What discursive strategies and semiotic resources are employed in counter-discourses to right-wing positions?

Theoretical Framework, Data Collection and Analysis

The study is guided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Multimodal Discourse Analysis. CDA tools help to explore the “role of discourse in the (re)production and challenge of dominance” (van Dijk, 1993, p. 249) and how social representations of the “other” are constructed through discourse. I adopt the discourse-historical approach (DHA) to CDA because “it integrates and triangulates knowledge about historical, intertextual sources and the background of the social and political fields within which discursive events are embedded” (Wodak, 2012, p. 529). Specifically, I analyze discursive strategies to reveal how hidden values, assumptions, and ideologies contribute to the construction of a homogeneous community and national identity and to the legitimization of inclusion/exclusion and discrimination against the other. I draw on the following discursive strategies proposed by Reisigl and Wodak (2009): referential/nomination (How is the other referred to?), predication (What qualities and characteristics are attributed to the other?), argumentation (What arguments are used to support these characterizations?), perspectivization (From whose perspectives are such descriptions and arguments expressed?), and intensification/mitigation (How are these utterances intensified or mitigated?).

Social media are “inherently and substantially multimodal” (KhosraviNik & Unger, 2016, p. 211). When analyzing digital discourse, it is important to take into account multimodality and the platform-specific affordances of digital communication. The combination of modes as well as the organization of this ensemble are meaningful; they are constructed, shaped, and influenced by cultural, historical, social, and situational

contexts and conventions as well as technological affordances. Multimodal discourse analysis “provides tools for analysing and describing the full repertoire of meaning-making resources which people use to communicate” (Jewitt, 2014, p. 15).

Twitter is one of the most popular social networking sites and has generated new forms of interaction with specific conventions and communication practices (Squires, 2015). Although tweets are subject to a character limit, users can employ various multimodal features and semiotic resources to create meaning. Tweets can include emojis, images, videos, and links. Moreover, users can address other users with the @-character and thus directly engage with other users.

Micro-blogging on Twitter is a semiotic activity. Hashtags are often used to make tweets searchable by other users. This activity establishes a community with similar values. Zappavigna (2012) pointed out that “discourse tagging is the beginning of *searchable talk*, a change in social relations whereby we mark our discourse so that it can be found by others, in effect so that we can bond around particular values” (p. 1). Therefore, hashtags are ideological resources and indicate identity, beliefs, and group membership. Furthermore, they allow users to connect with others based on shared values and to create “ambient affiliation” (Zappavigna, 2011, 2012). Ambient affiliation refers to the process of “bonding around evolving topics of interest” (Zappavigna, 2011, p. 800).

In order to analyze right-wing, nationalist discourses and counter-discourses after the 2016 Berlin terrorist attack, I collected publicly available tweets that contain #BerlinAttack and were tweeted within a limited time period, that is within the first 24 hours after the Berlin terrorist attack. #BerlinAttack was chosen because it was a trending hashtag at that time and thus seen and used by many Twitter users and because the hashtag itself does not contain an evaluative stance as opposed to other hashtags like #refugeesnotwelcome (Kreis, 2017). For this study, the first 150 tweets were collected and analyzed.

To analyze the data, I first read each tweet and took notes on the information about the immediate, text-internal linguistic context, the use of semiotic and multimodal resources, as well as the user-established intertextuality for example in the form of hyperlinks. Then I coded

each tweet for linguistic features (e.g., use of pronouns, agency), discursive strategies (e.g., referential/nomination, argumentation), topics (e.g., burden, threat), and semiotic and multimodal resources (e.g., emojis, visuals). Lastly, I searched for relationships between tweets and connected the particular linguistic and semiotic choices to the social meanings in order to interpret the relationships between the discourse on Twitter and society (Page et al., 2014).

Findings

#BerlinAttack: Features of Right-Wing Discourses

The findings show that Twitter users describe refugees negatively as “Jihadists” and “Islamic terrorists.” They are characterized as dangerous and as a threat to the safety of Europe and Germany. This threat is also insinuated by the blend *rapefugees* in Example 1. By blending “rape” and “refugees,” the author of the tweet establishes a semantic connection between the two words and thus facilitates the construction of a negative image of refugees. In Example 2, the threat is further reinforced by calling refugees indirectly Muslim invaders (*#muslim #invasion*). References to invasion as well as to refugees as Muslims occur frequently in right-wing discourse. The threat of a Muslim invasion culminates in the claim that sharia law would be implemented in Germany. The tweets also illustrate how the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, is held responsible for the *#muslim #invasion* and the threat to the people. Refugees are frequently described as guest who were invited by Chancellor Merkel. For instance, refugees are referred to as “Merkel’s guests, or her adoptive sons.” Such references imply the prioritization of refugees over German nationals and draw on the perception that refugees are mostly young men. Example 2 also illustrates the frequent use of hashtags. The tweet contains 15 words out of which nine are hashtags. The hashtags are not additional labels added at the end of the tweet but are part of the

syntactic structure. This excessive use of hashtags could potentially make the tweet more visible.

Example 1:

Could you watch your country burn in a sea of **rapefugees** and still sleep at night? Merkel somehow can. The witch. #BerlinAttack.

Example 2:

#**AngelaMerkel Welcomes** the #**muslim #invasion** & will make #**ShariaLaw** legal in #Germany! #BerlinAttack #SyrianRefugees #Cologne #Hamburg.

A common theme in right-wing discourse is the negative reference to Islam. The religion is criticized for being reactionary and radical (*#Islamic propaganda*), and Muslims are portrayed as dangerous to the Judeo-Christian values of Europe and Germany. Not only does this over-generalize Muslims, but it also presupposes a homogeneous community in Germany and Europe. Additionally, the legitimacy of the migrants' status as refugees is questioned by using quotation marks in Example 3.

Example 3:

Ban immigration from #Muslim countries. Deport all "**refugees**". Scrub the Internet of all #**Islamic propaganda**. #BerlinAttack #Merkel.

As mentioned before, Chancellor Merkel is held responsible for the "Muslim invasion" and threat to the German people. She is called a "witch" and blamed for the terrorist attack and the victims.

Apart from using negative descriptions and associations, right-wing discourse also employs argumentative structures that imply that the nation, constructed as a homogeneous entity, is under attack. This serves the purpose of othering and legitimizes the exclusion of migrants and refugees. The following example shows how the Berlin attack is directly connected to Germany's refugee policy. The German government and particularly the Chancellor Merkel are blamed for a failed refugee policy and therefore for the victims of the attack. As a consequence, users

request Merkel's resignation, as in Example 4 (#MerkelGo!) and in Example 5 ("Angela Merkel should resign...").

Example 4:

#BerlinAttack ist **direkte Konsequenz der deutschen Flüchtlingspolitik**. Volle Verantwortung dafür trägt aktuelle Bundesregierung. #MerkelGeh!

English translation: **#BerlinAttack** is the **direct consequence of German refugee politics**. The current government is fully responsible for that. #MerkelGo!

Example 5:

#Berlinattack Angela Merkel **should resign after her open door policy has caused so many deaths** #Bloodonherhands pic.twitter.com/kpSJGyiAi4.

Her responsibility is made clear with the hashtag reference to her having blood on her hands (*#Bloodonherhands*), implying it would be the blood of the victims. In Example 5, this figurative concept is represented visually; the tweet includes an image that shows a portrait of Merkel with her face, upper body, and hands splattered with blood, which visually reinforces the perspective of her being responsible for the death of the victims. The actual depiction of Merkel with blood on her body conveys the figurative concept and is easily remembered. Moreover, it can be understood across languages. When we see someone with literal blood on their hands, it triggers the perception that this person may be guilty while being caught in the proverbial act.

Many tweets do not include a direct addressee of a tweet. Either someone is referred to in third person, as in "Angela Merkel should resign," or an author poses a rhetorical question as in "Could you watch your country burn ...?" Even requests often do not have a direct addressee (with the exception of #MerkelGo!). For instance, it is unclear who is supposed to "ban immigration" and "scrub the Internet" (Example 3). But in the following example, the author formulates an

apology to the Polish people for *our* #refugee policy and asks them to help *us* to get rid of #Merkel.

Example 6:

I want to apologize to the Polish people for our #refugee policy Please help **us** to get rid of #Merkel ! #berlin #berlinAttack #Poland #cdu.

The Polish people are addressed in this apology because a Polish truck was hijacked and used for the attack after the Polish truck driver was shot. The user does not specify how the Polish people are supposed to help get rid of the Chancellor, but the use of the pronoun “us” points to the construction of an imagined homogeneous people.

Another common discursive strategy is the citing of experts and media sources because it may make statements and claims more credible. In the dataset, mainstream media, tabloids, and right-wing websites are referenced. The quality of a source may not always be transparent due to the abundance of media that are being circulated on social media and because of the fact that users often only read the headlines and not the entire article that was shared within their network. For this reason, the wording of the headlines and the users’ framing of the articles are relevant for the portrayed position. For instance, in Example 7, the author quotes the headline of an article from *Fox News Insider*, which is, according to their website’s mission, “the official blog of Fox News Channel.” The headline starts with the word “expert,” which makes the statement look more credible. The wording of the statement, however, illustrates a judgmental presumption.

Example 7:

Expert: ‘Merkel Has Been Importing Jihadists in Massive Numbers’
<http://insider.foxnews.com/2016/12/20/counterterrorism-expert-berlin-terror-attack-german-chancellor-angela-merkel>

Man darf es auch anders sehen! #BerlinAttack

English translation: **Expert: ‘Merkel Has Been Importing Jihadists in Massive Numbers’** [Link to article]

You are allowed to see it a different way! #BerlinAttack.

Apart from the headline and a link to the article, the author of the tweet also includes an implicit critique of mainstream media in Germany,

which suggests that German mainstream media impose a biased perspective of the attack. Various other users also claim that mainstream media are not reporting the truth and that they are used to cover up the connection between the government's refugee policies and the attack. One user even claims that the government is censoring media and hence implies that Germany were to be an authoritarian regime (Example 8).

Example 8:

Many people seem surprised at the **lack of new information** about the #BerlinAttack. Anyone familiar with Merkel's media **censorship** is not.

These examples illustrate that mainstream media are delegitimized as gatekeepers, while unmediated media platforms, as in the following example, are supported. The following example (Example 9) is a tweet that consists of a YouTube link to a video from Infowars.com, owned by U.S. conspiracy theorist, Alex Jones. The narrator spreads the idea that the German government and mainstream media are covering up the attack. Chancellor Merkel is held responsible for the victims because of her government's open-door refugee policy. In the video, she is depicted with blood on her hands, the same reference that was made in Example 5. The tweet also contains multiple hashtags, including the English and German word for Germany and #PrayForBerlin. It can be assumed that the excessive use of hashtags and the use of hashtags that are not inherently right-wing or nationalist is deliberate because it may increase the tweet's and thus the video's visibility.

Example 9:

<https://youtu.be/WC2e70qRSdY> #Politics of #terrorism #Germany releases #terror suspect #PrayForBerlin #BerlinAttack #merkel #Germany #deutschland.

Semiotic and Multimodal Resources

Tweets with #BerlinAttack include a variety of semiotic and multimodal resources such as emojis, images, letter capitalizations, and the use of multiple hashtags. As described above, images and videos contribute to the meaning-making processes. Furthermore, images may also be used to make intertextual references. For instance, in the summer of

2015, Hungary took harsh measures to deter refugees, including anti-refugee propaganda, the erection of fences and monitoring systems, and violence against refugees. Therefore, a positive reference to Hungary in the context of migrants points to a positive evaluation of Hungary's actions and is indicative of a right-wing, anti-refugee position (Kreis, 2017). In Example 9, we see how a positive reference to Hungary is still meaningful in December 2016. The tweet includes a collage of four images. The two top images show typical pictures of Christmas markets and captioned "HUNGARY BUILT A FENCE TO KEEP 'REFUGEES' OUT." The scare quotes again point to the questioning of the legitimacy of the migrants' status as refugees.

Example 10:

#BerlinAttack #MerkelMussWeg pic.twitter.com/YPIMoqQnrf.

The two bottom pictures are scenes from German Christmas markets. In the left picture, one can see four police officers standing in front of a Christmas market stall. The picture on the right shows the truck that drove into the Christmas market, identifiable by the damaged windshield and the label of the Polish logistics company. Those pictures are captioned *GERMANY WELCOMED THEM IN*. In between the top and bottom pictures, it says *SPOT THE DIFFERENCE*. The meme insinuates that Christmas markets in Hungary are peaceful while Christmas markets in Germany are threatened. The visual elements in combination with the textual elements imply that places that kept refugees out are safe, whereas places that welcomed refugees are under attack.

Apart from Hungary, there are other right-wing references. It is common to include hashtags with the name of right-wing political parties or politicians as in the following example that includes references to the mainstream political party, *CDU* and the far-right political party, *AfD*, as well as references to right-wing politicians: AfD politician Frauke Petry, FPÖ politician Norbert Hofer, and U.S. President Donald Trump. Additionally, the tweet contains an indirect request, that is, the removal of Merkel from office, #MerkelMUSSweg (#MerkelMUSTgo), and buzzword like *ISIS* and *Brexit*. *Pegida* is an acronym for "Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident" (German: Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes) and stands

for a far-right movement in Germany with offshoots in Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the UK.

Example 11:

#MerkelMUSSweg #CDU #AfD #FraukePetry #Hofer #ISIS #Brexit #Trump #BerlinAttack #Berlin #Pegida pic.twitter.com/d3gD1LqKQJ.

The tweet also includes a photoshopped image. In the background of the image, one can see the truck that was used for the attack, the same as in Example 10. In front of the truck, there are three smiling young women holding a colorful “Refugees Welcome” banner. The image was clearly photoshopped because the attire of the women does not fit the weather conditions in Berlin on December 20, 2016, when the tweet was published. The organization of the image suggests a cause-effect relationship between welcoming refugees and the terror attack. At the time of the tweet, the police investigations had not been completed; therefore, any presumption that the attacker was a refugee was speculative.

Another common topic in right-wing discourse is the depiction of the downfall of the nation. Twitter users depict Germany and Europe powerless to stop economic and political decline. Right-wing, nationalist discourses criticize the loss of sovereignty to supranational institutions and promote the return to the nation-state. The national flag is an important symbol of the nation-state and commonly displayed in many countries without having negative connotations. However, in Germany the non-official display of its flag is not as widely accepted due to Germany’s history. In fact, if the German flag is used privately outside of a sporting event, it is likely to be perceived as an expression of right-wing, nationalist positions. Example 12 illustrates the ambivalence of the relationship between Germans and their flag, as well as the importance of context. The author of the tweet criticizes Merkel’s reaction when a fellow party member waves a small German flag on the stage of a political party event; she takes the flag away and slightly shakes her head. The Twitter user is upset about her reaction, which is indicated by three angry and two crying emojis. The clip was taken from a victory party in 2013, but it is now used to portray Merkel as anti-German and to

construct a connection between her pro-refugee position and the threat to the German people (Roßmann, 2016).

Example 12:

The #BerlinAttack occurs and all Merkel is worried about is not waving the German flag 🙄🙄🙄 #berlinchristmas 🥲🎄🎄🎄🥲
#GermanChristmasMarket pic.twitter.com/f3vjBqF00Y.

It is unclear whether the user knew that the clip was from 2013; however, the fact that the user shared it suggests that the user is connected to users with right-wing, nationalist ideologies as such users were responsible for the sharing of this clip in December 2016 (Roßmann, 2016).

#BerlinAttack: Features of Counter-Discourses

In the aftermath of tragedies, social media are often used to express sympathy with those affected. In the following example, the author not only uses the phrase “prayers and thoughts w/the victims” to express sympathy but also promotes equality by adding #COEXIST at the end of the tweet. The word is often used to promote people from different backgrounds living together peacefully. The capitalization of coexist adds emphasis. While right-wing, nationalist discourses construct Islam as dangerous by equating it with threats and terror in order to legitimize the exclusion of Muslims, the author of this tweet seems to be promoting diversity and peaceful coexistence.

Example 13:

#BerlinAttack is heartbreaking - **prayers and thoughts w/the victims. We're dedicated to working towards peace & equality on earth #COEXIST.**

The findings on right-wing discourse presented previously illustrated that Muslims and Islam are represented negatively. Users make references to a “Muslim invasion,” “sharia law,” and “Jihadists.” The topic of religion is thus exploited to make negative generalizations about Muslims and to construct the imminent threat of Muslims as a homogeneous group. Conversely, counter-discourses reject this generalization and emphasize that Islam is a peaceful religion and that Muslims oppose

terror, as in Example 14. Some users even turn the tables; the author of Example 15 blames right-wing supporters for being the cause of violence and extremism. The user criticizes their discursive strategies, and calls them *cowards*.

Example 14:

Islam heißt Frieden #MuslimeGegenTerror #BerlinAttack

English translation: **Islam means peace #MuslimsAgainstTerror #BerlinAttack.**

Example 15:

Yeah here we go – **right wing cowards** start **blaming all muslims for the extremism they helped unleash in the first place.** #BerlinAttack.

In Example 15, the user generalizes about right-wing supporters, but does not directly address anyone. Other users address their criticism more directly by including an addressee such as the AfD. For instance, in Example 16, the political party is criticized for exploiting the attack to incite hatred against refugees and to criticize government and mainstream media. The tweet includes an article from the online news portal *Meedia.de*. The AfD and an AfD politician are directly addressed by username, @AfD_Bund and @MarcusPretzell, which makes the tweet visible to these accounts and their followers. Syntactically, the addressees are referred to in third person because of the demonstrative determiner *this* preceding @AfD_Bund, and the prepositional phrase *with his statements* following @MarcusPretzell, *his* being an anaphoric reference. The author of the tweet adds a negative evaluation of the addressees, *repulsive*, in order to distance him- or herself from the addressees and their positions and ideologies, which is further supported by the hyperlink to an article which criticizes the actions of the AfD.

Example 16:

Einfach nur **abstoßend**, **diese @AfD_Bund**, **insbesondere @MarcusPretzell** mit seinen Äußerungen zu #BerlinAttack <http://meedia.de/2016/12/20/merkels-tote-so-instrumentalisiert-die-afd-den-lkw-ans-chlag-in-berlin-in-den-sozialen-medien-fuer-ihre-zwecke/>.

English translation: Simply **repulsive this @AfD_Bund**, **especially @MarcusPretzell** with his statements about #BerlinAttack [Link to article].

Another Twitter user shared an article to provide a more differentiated view of the situation.

Example 17:

Wichtiger Kontrapunkt zu Kritik an #Merkel – #Flüchtlingspolitik nach #Breitscheidplatz <http://www.gq-magazine.co.uk/article/berlin-market-attack-2016> ... #AfD #CSU #BerlinAttack

English translation: **Important counterpoint to the criticism of #Merkel** – #Refugeepolicies after #Breitscheidplatz [Link to article].

The tweet begins with an “important counterpoint to the criticism of #Merkel” and continues with the headline and link for an article by the British online version of the international monthly men’s magazine, *Gentlemen’s Quarterly*. The article criticizes the claims and premature conclusions of British and German far-right politicians that Merkel’s refugee policy caused the attack and that she is to be held responsible.

As described above, many tweets criticize Chancellor Merkel and her refugee policies and seek to establish a cause-effect relationship between her refugee policies and the attack. However, there is also support for Chancellor Merkel and her refugee policies as shown in the following example. The tweet positively evaluates Merkel’s immigration policy by calling it “enlightened,” by claiming that Germany’s immigration policy would “beat terrorism in the long run,” and by establishing a connection between the immigration policy and humanity.

Example 18:

Angela Merkel’s **enlightened** immigration policy will beat terrorism in the long run. Don’t let one mad man defeat **humanity** #BerlinAttack. In December 2016, Germany’s government still supported the so-called open-door policy as regards refugees. With the statement “Don’t let one mad man defeat humanity,” the user shows support for this policy and rejects right-wing attempts to close borders and enforce stricter immigration laws. The attack is portrayed as an isolated event, as opposed to the widespread and unstoppable threat depicted in right-wing discourse.

Discussion and Conclusion

Right-wing supporters use Twitter to discursively construct refugees as dangerous and violent, posing an imminent threat to the safety of German citizens. Religion is commonly used to justify this threat as users draw on negative stereotypes of Islam and make references to “Muslim invasion” and “Jihadists.” These findings align with previous research on right-wing discourses (e.g., Baumgarten, 2017; Doerr, 2017; Richardson & Wodak, 2009; Wodak, 2015). Refugees are also referred to as “Merkel’s guests” and “adoptive sons,” which implies the government’s prioritization of refugees over citizens and also draws on the topoi of financial and social burden. Moreover, Germany’s open-border refugee policy in 2015 is directly linked to—and portrayed as a cause of—the terrorist attack in 2016. The findings also show that Twitter users leverage the communicative and technological affordances of Twitter. The platform’s character limitation promotes simple and informal language. Tweets are characterized by repetition and the use of buzzwords and multiple hashtags, which also contributes to the simple style and promotes the wider dissemination of the tweets. The excessive use of hashtags can be described as “inter-ideological mingling” (Graham, 2016) since the different hashtags that are used in right-wing tweets denote different and at times opposing stances. Another common strategy is the use of images to support the negative representation of refugees and of Chancellor Merkel.

The features of counter-discourses differ from right-wing discourses. In counter-discourses, the German refugee policy is evaluated positively, and right-wing supporters are criticized and blamed for their exploitation of the attack for their own purposes. Supporters of counter-discourses argue against generalizations of refugees and Muslims and provide counter-arguments supported by media sources. Counter-discourses thus employ discursive strategies to justify inclusion rather than exclusion and call out right-wing rhetoric by identifying and explaining the discursive strategies employed by right-wing supporters.

This study has shown that users from both discourse communities use a variety of discursive strategies and semiotic resources to express their opinions, but right-wing tweets contain more hashtags and images.

Furthermore, the majority of the tweets in this dataset that represent right-wing discourses were written in English, despite the context being more relevant for German users. The number of English tweets suggests that the language is being used translocally to connect across geopolitical boundaries. It seems that English is also used by German nationals because of the pronouns in phrases such as *our #refugee policy* and *help us to get rid of #Merkel*. The use of English helps to bring international attention to German issues and allows more users to participate in conversations about these issues, which benefits the dissemination of right-wing, nationalist discourses. Therefore, right-wing supporters are not only able to bond and affiliate around their opinions and ideologies, but also to widen their audience and increase the number of followers by recontextualizing mainstream discourses. As Klein (2012) pointed out, far-right ideas and ideologies may turn into “information” because they are made available, shared, and taken up by mainstream users and mainstream media. Repetition and re-appropriation lead to normalization.

For this reason, it is important to continue to reveal the strategies used in right-wing, nationalist discourses and to react to these discourses by not reducing and simplifying complex contexts, but by providing different perspectives in a civil manner and creating more spaces for dialogue online and in society at large in order to prevent the naturalization of these discourses through repetition, downplaying, and misinformation. It is equally relevant to educate social media users, as social media like Twitter are becoming an “increasingly important source for the (re)production of discursive power in society, [... and are] a unique source for studying everyday discourses outside the scope of mass media” (Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016, p. 402).

The counter-discourses explored in this chapter illustrate some of the strategies that are used to challenge and condemn right-wing discourses. Examining both right-wing discourses and their counter-discourses may help raise awareness, contribute to the development of policy guidelines to educate users of all ages about social media usage and the dangers of ideological manipulation and confirmation bias, and hopefully prevent the naturalization of these discourses and the discrimination against minorities. Schools and universities, for example, should make efforts

to foster students' digital media competence by providing guidelines on how to detect manipulative strategies and make informed judgments about claims and fake news spread via Twitter and other social networking sites and by teaching positive norms online. Students in the field of applied linguistics in particular should be encouraged to question ideologies and to critically examine language and its role for issues of power and (in)equality. Lastly, promoting the study of foreign languages plays an important role because the exposure and study of another language and culture can help students become more aware and understanding of different cultures and diverse perspectives, which can stifle the revitalization of nationalism.

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8

Ideologies of Pluriculturalism and Neo-Nationalism in EFL Classrooms in Poland: An Exploratory Study of Teachers' Self-Reports

Aleksandra Kasztalska and Aleksandra Swatek

Learning a foreign language involves the act of imagining traveling to places where we can meet users of other tongues. In countries like Poland, whose national language is spoken in relatively few places outside its borders, learning of a foreign language is perceived as a necessity. Consequently, the typical Polish student in public school receives twelve years of foreign language instruction in at least two languages—a sign that the government sees foreign language proficiency as an essential skill for contemporary Poles. However, foreign language classes provide not only exercises in grammar and vocabulary but also space for discussions of how language, culture, and national identities are interwoven.

Because of the growing emphasis placed on foreign language teaching (FLT) in Poland, it is important to examine both the official curriculum

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and the “hidden curriculum” (Anyon, 1980), which contains the often-implicit lessons embedded in education. Consequently, in foreign language classes, students and teachers are not only engaged in learning about “others,” but also in building their sense of identity (i.e., what it means to be Polish and not Irish or French). In 2020, one of the most prominent forces shaping discussions on national identity in Europe and other parts of the world is neo-nationalism (The Conversation, 2017; “Europe and Right-Wing Nationalism,” 2019), which places one’s national community at the center and emphasizes its “sameness,” while simultaneously raising suspicion of diversity and of other national, racial, or linguistic groups (Gingrich & Banks, 2006).

Neo-nationalism has played a key role in Poland’s recent sociopolitical life. The 2015 and 2020 elections of conservative President Andrzej Duda and the victory of the right-wing, populist Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice, or PiS) party in the 2015 and 2019 parliamentary elections have been linked to a resurgence of neo-nationalist, anti-immigrant, and anti-EU discourses (Cap, 2018; Lyman & Berendt, 2015). Support for the PiS, which “built its election campaign and government on loyalty to the nation-state” (Zuk, 2018, p. 1048), is most prevalent among the older generations, while enthusiasm for arguably even more extreme nationalist parties and coalitions, like Konfederacja, is the highest among younger voters (“Wyniki Exit Poll,” 2019).

At least some of the support for populist and neo-nationalist parties in Poland can be attributed to anti-elite and anti-EU sentiment among those who are dissatisfied with the economic and societal changes that took place after 1989 (Kalb, 2009; Shields, 2012). In particular, some working-class Poles feel exploited and forgotten and see the growing liberal movement in Poland—such as concern over LGBTQ or Muslim refugee rights—as a distraction from the struggles of everyday working people (Kalb, 2009). Additionally, progressive, liberal agendas are framed by nationalist and right-wing figures as promoting Western values that clash with traditional Catholic definitions of marriage and family (Ayoub, 2014; Douglas, 2019; Hajdari, 2019). Recently, these and other polarizing topics have been much debated in the context of Polish education, vis-a-vis the ruling party’s claim that one of the goals of schooling

should be developing patriotic attitudes (Hejwosz-Gromkowska, 2017; Żuk, 2018).

Although Żuk (2018) argued that Poland's education system has long promoted patriotism mixed with nationalism and ethnic prejudice, these tendencies have become more contested since Poland joined the EU in 2004. In entering the EU, Poland set out on a path toward integrating into a wider European community that values diversity and mobility; thus, nationalist movements may be regarded as a response to the pluralistic agenda of the EU. This agenda is reflected in language education through widespread implementation across the EU of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). CEFR lists as one of the goals of foreign language education "to convert diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding" (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 3). Moreover, the Council of Europe explains in CEFR that FLT should foster learners' "integrated pluricultural competence," in which "various cultures (national, regional, social) to which that person has gained access...are compared, contrasted and actively interact" (p. 6). Importantly, pluriculturalism is contrasted in EU publications with multiculturalism, defined as a "policy that endorses the principle of cultural diversity and supports the right of different cultural and ethnic groups to retain distinctive cultural identities" (Multiculturalism, n.d.). In other words, pluriculturalism emphasizes the integration and interaction of cultures, while multiculturalism focuses on preserving their uniqueness. It appears then that in critiquing the EU agenda, the current Polish government and nationalist groups tend to reject pluriculturalism, while focusing on preserving distinctions between cultures. Consequently, potential for cultural interaction brought by immigration may be framed as a threat to Poland's national identity (Cap, 2018; "Kaczyński o 'fali agresji' imigrantów," 2017; Żuk, 2018).

To date, little research to date has examined the role and potential impact of the contrasting ideologies of pluriculturalism and neo-nationalism on FLT in Poland. The goal of our exploratory study is to gain some preliminary insights into the role of these ideologies in English as a foreign language (EFL) education in Poland. Our primary research question is: What role do the ideologies of pluriculturalism

and neo-nationalism play in EFL classrooms in Poland, and how do teachers perceive their role in promoting values of multilingualism and pluriculturalism?

English language classes, an obligatory part of public and higher education in Poland, are an important site for discussing the role of language, culture, and nations in the modern world. To understand how these concepts might play out in EFL classrooms, we interviewed four instructors at various educational levels and asked them to share their views on the role of pluriculturalism and multiculturalism in their teaching vis-a-vis the current political climate in Poland. In our analysis, we drew on theories of nationalism, anti-nationalist language pedagogies, and information on recent sociopolitical trends in Poland to begin to understand teachers' and students' attitudes toward other cultures, to identify challenges faced by instructors in teaching intercultural sensitivity, and to offer curricular recommendations for multicultural and pluricultural education in FLT.

Literature Review

Nationalism and Neo-Nationalism in Poland

One of the most influential definitions of the term “nation” was coined by Anderson (1983), who called it “an imagined political community” (p. 6) that relies on the collective imagination of its members to exist. Contemporary scholars have largely agreed that nations are not natural or primordial human collectives, but rather historical and social constructs that are created and reinforced over time through shared beliefs and symbols, such as assumed blood ties, race, region, religion, customs, language (Geertz, 1994), as well as the “sentiment of sacrifices” (Renan, 1994, p. 17) and a sense of historical continuity (Surzyn, 2016). These concepts are core components of nationalism, which posits that each nation is different and unique, and in practice often reinforces feelings of “superiority” over other nations’ cultural values (Weber, 1994, p. 25). Thus, while nationalism “leads to a lively sympathy with all

fellow members” of the same group, it simultaneously engenders “indifference to or distrust and hate of fellow men outside the national orbit” (Kohn, 1994, p. 163). One particularly powerful type of nationalism is what Billig (1995) called “banal nationalism,” which is concealed within everyday objects, events, and language choices—including flags, sporting events, and words. As Billig argued, banal nationalism is especially difficult to confront, because it is well hidden and embedded into our daily experiences.

According to Kohn (1994), while in Western Europe the rise of nationalism was largely motivated by political reasons, Eastern European nationalism “grew in protest against and in conflict with the existing state pattern” (p. 164) because of the perceived incongruence between political and ethnic divisions at the time. A case in point, Polish nationalism thrived after the final partitioning of Poland in 1795, which effectively erased the Polish state from the map of Europe for 123 years. Faced with the threat of losing their national identity, many prominent nineteenth and twentieth-century Poles—including Romantic writers, composers, and painters—advocated for the preservation and cultivation of Polish linguistic and cultural traditions. The emerging nationalist movement drew heavily on Christian symbolism, perpetuating the idea that suffering of the Polish nation was a necessary sacrifice (Kohn, 1953, p. 31). As Romantic poet Kazimierz Brodziński claimed, the “mission” of the Polish nation was to “stand guard in the midst of storms on the frontier which divides barbarism and civilization” (as cited in and translated by Kohn, 1953, p. 38).

Nationalism has helped shape public discourse since Poland’s independence in 1918 (Koczanowicz, 2016), although the twentieth-century Polish state underwent massive demographic changes. Specifically, while post-1918 Poland was ethnically diverse, the subsequent World War II losses and redrawing of state borders in 1945 led to a much more homogenous nation (Zuk, 2018). This remains largely the case today, as foreign residents make up only about 1% of the total population (“Cudzoziemcy w Polsce,” 2019; Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2019).

In contemporary Poland, the recent resurgence of nationalism (often referred to as neo-nationalism), has been linked to promoting a rhetoric

of “fear, danger, and national downfall” (Jaskółkowski, 2013). In addition, such discourses are often framed through “historical politics,” or the tendency to view Poland’s history, including perceived past injustices against the Polish nation, as a prism through which current events are discussed (Galasińska & Galasiński, 2010; Koczanowicz, 2016). Historical politics has been largely used by right-wing groups, as well as by some prominent figures within the Catholic Church (Kuciński, 2014), which has “obtain[ed] an exceptionally influential position in cultural and social life” in post-communist Poland (Koczanowicz, 2016, p. 83).

Nationalism and Foreign Language Teaching

The relationship between nationalism and language education has been the subject of growing scholarly scrutiny. As Byram (2008) argued, contemporary schools engender nationalism, because they place emphasis on teaching the local language, history, and so on, and thus they more or less explicitly foster a sense of national identity, unity, and loyalty. On the other hand, FLT generally highlights other countries and their own languages, histories, and traditions (Byram, 2008). However, both local and foreign language classes are characterized by the belief that the teaching of any language is inextricably linked with the teaching of culture. The connection between language and culture underlies many contemporary approaches to FLT, where it is widely acknowledged that successful “language use must be associated with culturally appropriate behavior” (Biell & Doff, 2014, p. 78).

Risager (2007) used the term *culture pedagogy* to describe the perceived connection between the teaching of language and culture. As she argued, an important implication of culture pedagogy is the broadening of the role of foreign language teachers: These educators are seen as *generalists* who teach not only the target language but also the culture associated with that language (p. 6). Culture pedagogy thus reflects a shift in FLT towards a more “holistic” and “humanistic” understanding of language and language learning (Risager, 2007, p. 9), but it can lead to a *national paradigm* that promotes a simplified view of the world, wherein a particular state is associated with a homogenous culture and

language. In other words, because foreign language teaching does not sufficiently question assumptions about language and culture, it can in practice lead to nationalist thinking, thus “reinforcing the very borders [it] aspire[s] to transcend” (Meadows, 2010, p. 262).

This critique of culture pedagogy and national paradigm has led some scholars and educators to advocate that foreign language teachers and curriculum designers should critically re-examine how they conceptualize cultures and nations and take a more explicit anti-nationalist stance to challenge everyday nationalism and to help students succeed in a global, cosmopolitan world. Risager (2007) proposed the *transnational paradigm*, which challenges the portrayal of nations as monolingual, monocultural, and disconnected. What this means in practice is a critique of homogeneous, native speaker language norms, with Risager instead calling for adopting more heterogeneous, translingual practices in the classroom. Byram (2008) extended Risager’s (2007) framework to offer an *internationalist* approach, which is founded on humanistic, democratic principles of equality and human rights, and which sees language as an important tool in fostering collaborative, peaceful dispositions among the learners, who are encouraged to work together to solve pressing global problems.

Byram (2008) has advocated for an internationalist language curriculum, claiming that international approaches have not fulfilled their promise of creating truly global citizens. An example is provided by Pennycook (2017), who contended that English as an international language has failed to ask important questions about the global spread of English and the English teaching industry. Pennycook further argued that English instruction is far from “natural, neutral and beneficial” (p. 35), and that it is important to recognize and critically examine the “worldliness” of this language (p. 34), as well as its role in promoting international and intranational power structures, or what Phillipson (1992) called *linguistic imperialism*.

The ideological nature of FLT, and EFL in particular, is increasingly perceived as a double-edged sword. As mentioned earlier, foreign language classes can potentially reinforce nationalist attitudes and assumptions, but they can also function as transformational sites, where students start to question these assumptions. For example, Byram’s

(1997) influential Intercultural Communicative Competence paradigm emphasized knowledge, skills, and attitudes that a language learner should develop in order to successfully interact with individuals from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and is thus at its core anti-nationalist. Biell and Doff (2014) built on Byram's work and proposed a model of Inter-/Trans-cultural Communicative Competence, which encourages students to critically examine the plurality and hybridity of cultural and linguistic practices, and to recognize power asymmetries in these practices. Another approach is offered by Meadows (2010, 2018), whose research and teaching has focused on understanding and challenging reproductions of traditional power structures and national boundaries in English language classes. Finally, it is important to also acknowledge globally-minded educational programs and curricula, like the International Baccalaureate (Castro, Lundgren, & Woodin, 2015) and Osler and Starkey's (2003) *education for cosmopolitan citizenship*.

Current Exploratory Study

Data Collection

In this exploratory qualitative study, we conducted four interviews with teachers who work across different educational levels in Poland. To recruit participants, we first advertised the study via social media, including a large Facebook group for English teachers in Poland, contacted professionals through e-mail via university databases, and privately reached out to English tutors via tutoring websites. After an initial exchange with the participants, the local investigator (Swatek) conducted three online interviews (Barbara, Cezary, Danuta) and one face-to-face interview (Anna). These semi-structured interviews lasted between 35 and 65 minutes and were conducted mostly in Polish, at the request of the participants. Also, at the request of the participants, two interviews (Anna, Danuta) were recorded in the form of notes only, while the other two were audio-recorded (Barbara, Cezary). To protect the participants' identities, all data were de-identified, and each interviewee was given a pseudonym.

Table 8.1 Participant profiles

	Anna	Barbara	Cezary	Danuta
Gender	Woman	Woman	Man	Woman
Approximate age	50s	40s	30s	30s
Educational degree	Ph.D. in English/TESOL	M.A.	M.A. in English	M.A. in English/TESOL
Primary teaching experience	Graduate TESOL courses to M.A. students training to become English teachers (and prior work with high school students)	English courses for high school students (and some private tutoring)	English and history courses at private high schools in a large city (and prior work in grade school)	English courses at grade school in a small city (and prior work in pre-K12)
Approximate length of experience	15 years	20 years	14 years	10 years

Participants

The participants included three women and one man between the ages of 30 and 50 (see Table 8.1). All had graduate degrees in English and/or TESOL and were experienced language teachers, having anywhere between 10 and 20 years of professional experience at the time of the study. While Barbara and Danuta taught only English, Cezary was also a history teacher, and Anna offered TESOL courses for MA students who were working on obtaining their teaching license. Barbara and Cezary taught primarily at the high school level, while Danuta worked with grade school students.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data relied primarily on thematic coding of the interviews. The coding was iterative, in that the data were originally coded following each interview, and initial codes were then revised once data

collection was completed. The analysis proceeded from mostly descriptive and pattern codes to more interpretive codes in the later stages of the study (Creswell, 2013). Because of the small data pool and the narrow focus of the study, the emerging themes were jointly coded by both investigators.

Limitations

The small number of participants is the primary limitation of this study and is likely associated with the focus of our research: an exploration of topics tied to the current political climate in Poland. The potentially controversial nature of our study may have contributed to the low recruitment rate of participants. Even the subsequently added incentive—payment to private tutors who would be willing to take part in an interview—did not increase the number of participants. Consequently, the results of our study are not representative of the whole community of Polish EFL educators. Instead, our study is exploratory in nature and offers a much-needed, if limited, glimpse into still understudied issues in contemporary EFL education.

Results

Despite the limited scope of the study, we were able to identify several recurring themes in the data gathered from the interviews. Three most relevant findings are reported below.

Teachers' Beliefs About the Role of Language and Culture in EFL Education

Firstly, all participants emphasized the importance of teaching of foreign languages for real-life communication and of fostering tolerance through EFL instruction. For example, Anna wanted her graduate students to know that language is used to communicate with diverse individuals and that language learners need to be open to diversity and not make

assumptions about other users of the target language. Anna also listed flexibility and the repair of communicative breakdowns as important skills that can help students successfully communicate in international contexts. She cited pragmatic differences between British English and Polish, like conventions of politeness and directness in greetings, which she said learners need to be aware of. Similarly, Barbara argued that the teaching of a language goes hand-in-hand with the teaching of tolerance.

Cezary saw language as an important tool for communication, closely connected to popular culture. His English classes included discussions of contemporary U.S. movies, trips to theaters and museums, and even mentions of slang and curse words—a favorite topic for teenage language learners—which he believed made students more interested in the language. Danuta also actively engaged her grade school students through music, songs, dancing, and other kinetic, hands-on activities. Additionally, to encourage her students to reflect on the lives of children in other countries, Danuta used materials that highlight diversity, such as readings about multicultural issues, posters of differently abled kids, images of national flags, and movies featuring U.K. landmarks. National symbols of the United Kingdom and United States were frequently mentioned by the interviewees as elements in their teaching, although the participants believed that learners also need to be aware of world Englishes.

Students' Attitudes Toward Cultural Diversity

The participants offered insights into learners' attitudes toward other cultures and languages. Cezary, who was the only teacher working in a private school, had the most positive experience with teaching cultural diversity, which his high school students were generally open to discussing. Although his students occasionally made inappropriate jokes about non-standard English varieties, Cezary felt confident and comfortable discussing cultural topics and controversial issues in his classes. In contrast, both Barbara and Danuta believed that students had “changed,” and that today's generation has a more cautious and sometimes negative outlook on diversity than previous generations. Specifically, these

participants claimed that today's youth do not want to have discussions on topics like healthcare, climate change, or gay rights because they are afraid of confrontations and cannot find common ground. Barbara added that these debates can be "difficult" because some students are very conservative or deeply religious, which "limits the ground for discussion." As a result, Barbara felt that students cannot be as forthcoming with their teachers and classmates as they used to be, and that gay and non-binary students in particular may not feel safe at school. Additionally, Barbara explained that, because some topics have become taboo, she and other EFL teachers avoid using polarizing topics in her classes for fear of backlash from students, parents, and even priests.

One noteworthy example of a taboo topic mentioned by three participants was that of Halloween, which some Polish students and their parents may see as an "evil" holiday. Danuta recounted that some of her younger students had covered their ears when she mentioned Halloween. In another instance, a parent was concerned that Cezary was promoting a foreign culture when discussing Halloween in his class. In response, Cezary explained that he was presenting Halloween from a historical, rather than cultural, perspective. Halloween has also become a hotly debated topic among Polish EFL teachers, many of whom deliberately do not discuss it with their students to avoid potential backlash.

Furthermore, the participants felt that many Polish students do not seem interested in learning about other cultures or interacting with people from other countries. For example, Anna had seen Polish students not engage with Erasmus exchange program students who come to her university from all over Europe, which she interpreted as a "lack of curiosity" towards international students. Furthermore, some of Anna's graduate students—and even some EFL teachers she knows—seemed to have negative attitudes toward non-standard Englishes; for example, she observed students laughing at an audio recording of Indian English that she presented in class. Anna hypothesized that students' attitudes and behaviors are symptomatic of a larger problem, in that many Poles are convinced of their superiority and are increasingly turning their back on the West and on Western Europe in particular. Barbara also posited that topics like diversity may be difficult to discuss for Poles because their society is so "homogeneous," and so they have little first-hand experience

with diversity. Polish media, she added, is also likely contributing to the students' attitudes toward other cultures. In contrast, Danuta pointed out that even younger students today have more contact with foreigners than prior generations, since many travel internationally to vacation or visit family living in other EU countries.

Interactions Between Cultural Diversity and Nationalism in EFL Classrooms

One of the most interesting findings from our data analysis was the way that teachers approached discussing topics that could be perceived as controversial: Some participants either actively avoided topics that could cause backlash or carefully framed potentially polarizing ones. Moreover, Barbara felt that many EFL teachers in Poland were afraid to discuss topics that could be perceived as foreign cultural impositions, such as Halloween. Although Barbara noted that instructors are not explicitly prohibited from discussing particular ideas with their students, she nonetheless felt that the risk is too high. As a result, she said that EFL teachers in Poland “impose a certain kind of censorship” on themselves and choose safety over freedom of expression. In fact, some teachers may be actively reinforcing this censorship: Here, Barbara recalled a teacher who once tore off and stomped on a flyer advertising a national program promoting LGBTQ rights; as she further explained, the teacher was supported by some of his colleagues.

While Barbara saw this self-censorship in EFL classrooms as largely self-imposed, Cezary claimed that when he had worked at a public school, he faced restrictions regarding the kinds of teaching methods and discussion topics he could use in his classes. Since he felt that his “hands were tied,” he began working at private schools, where he had more freedom to cover interesting current events. However, he preferred to discuss current events happening outside of Poland, steering away from local topics and, when discussing topics like Halloween, focusing on their historical aspects to avoid being accused of promoting foreign values.

Danuta highlighted another way in which discussions of outside countries and cultures are limited in EFL classrooms: Usually, these topics are

covered in a “schematic” or cookie-cutter manner, by comparing and contrasting holidays, customs, and traditions between countries. The compare/contrast method was also used in Barbara’s and Cezary’s high school courses, where students were often asked to identify similarities and differences between customs in predominantly English-speaking countries, such as the United States, United Kingdom, or New Zealand. Moreover, Danuta claimed that culture-related topics are generally left for the very end of the semester, and teachers sometimes run out of time to cover them, or they focus on grammar instead, since the latter is assessed. Likewise, Barbara admitted that much of her EFL instruction today is focused on preparing high school students for the Matura (i.e., a high-stakes high school exit exam), so that cultural issues are in practice given little attention.

As a result, Barbara wondered aloud whether she had really helped her students become more culturally sensitive. These doubts were also expressed by Anna, who—despite her extensive education and training in TESOL—questioned the point of her work, calling it a truly “Sisyphean” effort to foster tolerance and openness among students. Such work may be especially difficult since EFL educators receive little training or support in teaching about cultural diversity; neither Barbara’s nor Cezary’s graduate programs or current employers offered professional development that focused on these topics. Consequently, some teachers like Cezary and Danuta were concerned about the appropriateness of exposing their students to other cultures and value systems, as they did not wish to impose their own morals or beliefs. Although instructors can increasingly find multicultural materials in course textbooks, Anna cautioned that without appropriate training teachers can easily fall back on stereotypical images of other countries and cultures, something she has tried to avoid in her own graduate courses.

Discussion and Implications

Our participants offered insightful preliminary information about the current state of EFL teaching in Poland, particularly about the potential

role of the often-conflicting ideologies of neo-nationalism and multiculturalism in EFL classrooms. Below we outline the key take-aways and implications of our findings.

Practical Challenges in Teaching Intercultural Competence and Openness to Diversity in EFL Courses in Poland

All participants framed openness to diversity as a positive concept that should play an important role in the FLT. The participants explained that, in order to be successful users of a global language like English, students need to be able to communicate with diverse interlocutors. As a result, language learners must develop not only linguistic abilities but also certain skills and dispositions, like “openness” and “tolerance” toward other cultures and English varieties. In a way then, the interviewees argued that EFL instruction in Poland should have as one of its goals the development of learners’ intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997). However, the participants admitted that teaching intercultural communicative skills and dispositions is in practice difficult for two primary reasons. Firstly, the participants—with the exception of Anna—seemed to have limited education and training in this domain. Another challenge is the mandated EFL curriculum itself, which places more emphasis on grammatical competence than on intercultural communicative competence, with culturally diverse topics sometimes hurriedly covered but not assessed.

Moreover, the teaching of intercultural skills remains at a rather superficial level, focusing on country-level comparisons and emphasizing traditional national boundaries through the use of symbols (e.g., flags) and imagery (e.g., famous landmarks) that represent a particular national community. EFL classrooms in Poland therefore may promote the national paradigm (Risager, 2007), wherein national borders are taken to demarcate real differences between people, while intranational differences are downplayed or ignored. The national paradigm in EFL teaching not only helps to conceal the imagined aspect of national

groups, but may also reinforce a homogenous view of nations. Additionally, focus on nations and national symbols may inadvertently promote banal nationalism, which Billig (1995) presented as a particularly potent and dangerous form of nationalism (see also Gulliver, Chapter 10 in this volume). In sum, although the EFL teachers in our study were keenly aware of the obvious dangers of the national paradigm—like stereotyping—they struggled to avoid these pitfalls in their own teaching. Even with more training, it may be difficult to offer a nuanced portrayal of other cultural and linguistic groups in an EFL classroom because of practical constraints, such as limited time and resources. With so little focus already placed on the teaching of culture in the curriculum, it is surely challenging to convey the diversity, intersectionality, and fluidity of human communities and identities.

Thus, the “generalist” view of foreign language teaching (Risager, 2007, p. 6), which sees language teachers as experts on both the target language and culture, may be putting EFL teachers in Poland in a kind of a catch-22; while teaching culture alongside language is seen as desirable and even necessary to cultivate global citizens, in practice it can promote stereotypes and undesirable attitudes towards others. Additionally, by reinforcing conventional national distinctions, this pedagogy may reinforce nationalistic assumptions and attitudes among learners, as suggested by Meadows (2010, 2018). This, of course, is contrary to our participants’ goals, and so we advocate that national curriculum designers and educators in Poland carefully examine EFL teachers’ pedagogical practice and its potential impact on students’ attitudes towards members of other cultural and national communities, and toward their own communities.

Furthermore, we argue that teaching standards and learning objectives for FLT should place a greater emphasis on developing students’ intercultural communicative competence. Currently, this goal is given relatively little attention in both the foreign language and the general education curriculum published by Poland’s Ministry of National Education. For example, of the 14 learning objectives listed for high school learners of foreign languages, only one stipulates that:

IX. The student possesses [Uczeń posiada]:

1. basic knowledge about countries, societies, and cultures of communities that use the given modern foreign language and about their native country, within the local, European, and global contexts [podstawową wiedzę o krajach, społeczeństwach i kulturach społeczności, które posługują się danym językiem obcym nowożytnym oraz o kraju ojczystym, z uwzględnieniem kontekstu lokalnego, europejskiego i globalnego];
2. awareness of the relationship between their own culture and foreign cultures, and intercultural sensitivity [świadomość związku między kulturą własną i obcą oraz wrażliwość międzykulturową]. (“Język obcy nowożytny,” n.d.)

These learning objectives for foreign language education are explicitly linked to the EU's *CEFR* standards, which place significant emphasis on the role of language learning in promoting tolerance, mutual understanding, and collaboration between EU member states (Council of Europe, 2001). Thus, while Poland's national curriculum acknowledges the importance of nurturing a more global orientation among students, this goal is somewhat overshadowed by the other learning objectives. In response, we propose that the curriculum not only place more emphasis on the intercultural aspect of FLT but also provide detailed operational definitions of key terms like “intercultural sensitivity.” While this seems to draw on Byram's (1997) paradigm, we argue that the curriculum could also make use of more recent work, such as Biell and Doff's (2014) Inter-/Transcultural Communicative Competence and Osler and Starkey's (2003) education for cosmopolitan citizenship.

Challenges Stemming from Stakeholders' Attitudes Toward Foreign Cultures

As explained in the previous section, our participants shared the belief that foreign language instructors should encourage students to be more open-minded and tolerant of other cultures and nationalities, but they often struggled with teaching intercultural communicative competence. This is likely due in part to the aforementioned limited education and training, but our participants listed another reason: fear of backlash

from key stakeholders, including students and parents. The participants—perhaps with the exception of Cezary—painted a picture of contemporary Polish youth as unable or unwilling to discuss topics and issues that may be seen as incompatible with traditional Polish values. One particularly controversial topic is LGBTQ rights, but the most commonly cited example was Halloween. We were surprised when this topic was spontaneously mentioned by three out of four participants, who eagerly discussed the various ways that key stakeholders, including parents and students, reacted to it.

Halloween has become such a taboo topic in EFL classrooms in Poland that teachers may avoid any mention of it altogether to prevent negative reactions from students and parents who see this holiday as “evil.” To understand why this is such a polarizing topic, it is important to note that Halloween is celebrated on the night before All Saints’ Day, an immensely important national holiday in Poland closely tied to Catholic traditions. Consequently, the solemn, religious character of this national holiday contrasts with the entertaining nature and pagan roots of Halloween. In particular, the more commercialized contemporary image of Halloween is interpreted by some conservative Poles as glorifying decadence and the occult (“Cukierek albo psikus!” 2019; “Halloween: pogańskie święto,” 2019; “Halloween w Polsce,” 2019). For example, one church in Poland recently cautioned its parishioners against celebrating this “dark, occult holiday,” which it called a “dangerous festival of ugliness of the human soul” (“Diabeł nie żartuje,” 2019).

The controversy over Halloween seems to partly stem from its association with paganism, which may be viewed as an encroachment on or a threat to Catholicism. Because 92% of Poles aged 16 and up identify as Catholic (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2018), and the Catholic Church plays an important role in contemporary Poland (Koczanowicz, 2016; Kohn, 1953), the Church’s condemnation of Halloween may influence some deeply religious students’ attitudes toward this and other foreign holidays. In addition, discussing Halloween in an EFL classroom may be seen as a type of Western indoctrination, as revealed by an angry parent who accused one of our participants of promoting foreign cultural values in his classroom.

Such reactions from parents suggest that EFL teachers in Poland may face a challenge in presenting foreign cultural traditions, since their mere inclusion could be seen as an endorsement. In a way then, *culture pedagogy*, which stipulates that the teaching of a foreign language should be embedded within the target culture (Risager, 2007), may be misinterpreted by some stakeholders as advocating said culture. In contemporary Poland, where right-wing and neo-nationalist figures often frame outside cultural influences as a threat to the very identity and survival of the Polish nation (Jaskułkowski, 2013), the teaching of English may be viewed with suspicion. Specifically, an EFL curriculum that draws on intercultural communicative methods may be perceived as contrary to a key goal of education: nurturing patriotism and loyalty to the state (Żuk, 2018).

The Role of Nationalism and Cultural Education in Poland

While Poland's national curriculum for FLT lists as one of the learning objectives nurturing students' intercultural sensitivity and awareness of Poland's place in Europe, the general education curriculum also suggests that schooling in Poland should play a role in fostering national identity and patriotism. This supports Byram's (2008) claim that schools play a key role in reinforcing a sense of national identity. For example, Poland's general educational curriculum states that, even at the kindergarten level, children should be able to "list the name of their country and its capital city, recognize national symbols (emblem, flag, hymn)" ("Przedszkole," n.d.), while high schools should "strengthen [students'] national, ethnic, and regional identity, attachment to history and national tradition" ("Liceum/Technikum," n.d.). Poland's national curriculum thus draws on nationalist symbolism and a sense of historical continuity (Billig, 1995; Geertz, 1994; Surzyn, 2016), but it also acknowledges the importance of developing a more global orientation. As such, the curriculum is informed by two ideologies: nationalism and multiculturalism.

However, the national curriculum does not frame these two ideologies as contradictory, and we argue that the development of a national identity and patriotic disposition does not in itself preclude or impede the development of one's identity as a member of a larger community, like the EU or the global community. However, Żuk (2018) has argued that in the educational reforms being drafted by the current Polish government "there is no room for cultural diversity and the multiplicity of cultural or religious traditions," because the ruling party defines patriotism as "nationalism and conservatism" (p. 1053). Since nationalism, at its core, frames the nation as distinct from—and often distrustful of—the rest of the world (Kohn, 1994; Weber, 1994), a nationalist approach to education is likely to frame cultural diversity and global-mindedness as clashing with the country's interests. Indeed, the current administration draws on a long history of nationalist rhetoric when it uses negatively charged language to refer to national, religious, and other groups, such as Muslim immigrants and refugees (Cap, 2018), the LGBT community (O'Dwyer & Vermeersch, 2016), and pro-EU elites (Kalb, 2009). These groups are said to harbor values, attitudes, and intentions that are "anti-Polish," and thus present a threat to Poland's identity and survival (Jaskułkowski, 2013).

Support for nationalist and populist parties in Poland may also be compounded by the racial, linguistic, and cultural homogeneity of Polish society. For example, even though in the last decade the number of foreign residents with work permits in Poland has increased four-fold, these individuals make up only a tiny fraction of the country's population. One of our participants hypothesizes, as does Żuk (2018), that this characteristic of Polish society could mean that students have few opportunities to interact with members of other nationalities and may therefore feel unprepared for these situations or even actively avoid them.

However, surveys of Poles' attitudes toward other nationalities reveal mixed trends. Attitudes toward foreigners have worsened in the last decade, but they have also slightly improved since the 2015 election of the PiS-led government. At the same time, attitudes toward nations that are arguably the most different linguistically, racially, and religiously—such as Saudi Arabia and China—are more nuanced. For example, since 2016, the percentage of Poles who hold positive attitudes toward Arabs

has increased from 8 to 13%, but over the last *decade* the percentage of Poles with positive attitudes toward Arabs decreased from 24 to 13%, while the percentage of Poles with negative attitudes towards Arabs increased from 43 to 65% (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, 2019). These data suggest that the political influence of nationalist and populist parties in Poland in the last five years is not necessarily correlated with a significant decline in Poles' attitudes towards people from other nations. However, our participants' observations that Polish students have "changed" and that the new generation is more closed-minded and indifferent towards others may be borne out by the increasingly negative attitudes Poles have expressed over the last ten years toward certain national, racial, and religious communities.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of an exploratory study that examined the role of cultural diversity and neo-nationalist ideology in EFL teaching in Poland. The teachers who participated in our study discussed their attempts to engage students with complex representation of diversity in terms of language and culture at the university level, and more simplistic representations of national identity at lower educational levels. The participants also pointed to what they saw as a relatively recent phenomenon: the self-censorship that some EFL educators—irrespective of the educational level or institution type—impose on themselves. As these participants explained, certain topics like Halloween may be seen as imposing on or threatening the integrity of Polish national or Catholic religious identity. Our interviewees also commented on their students' indifferent or inappropriate reactions to diverse groups of English users, suggesting that these educators have a nuanced understanding of diversity and are actively encouraging learners to develop a similar sensitivity. However, the participants questioned the impact of their instruction on students' development of intercultural communicative skills and dispositions.

In light of these results, we argue that a more programmatic, top-down approach is needed to introduce complex discussions of the relationship

between nationality, culture, and language in foreign language classrooms. Currently, these topics seem to be an afterthought in the EFL curriculum in Poland, especially as teachers are pressed to focus less on culture and more on grammar, which will later be assessed on high stakes exams. In addition, we propose that more training is needed to help EFL teachers present cultural topics that are potentially controversial but close to students' everyday lives, since the younger Polish generations increasingly participate in international travel and global pop culture. The question remains, however, if the changes proposed herein would be welcome in the current educational and political climate, in which simplistic representations of Polish identity are frequently used by leading political figures. For example, during the Syrian refugee crisis, the PiS-led government took an anti-immigration stance and refused to accept any newcomers, with the party leader justifying this decision by citing fears that the influx of refugees might not only increase the risk of terrorism but also "completely change our [Polish] culture" ("Kaczyński o 'fali agresji' imigrantów," 2017). Consequently, a nuanced discussion of how diversity impacts representations of culture in education might be unwelcome when political decisions depend on simplistic representations of national identity.

More research is needed to understand not only the current state of EFL teaching in Poland but also the potential impact of critical, globally-minded approaches to FLT. Such research should incorporate classroom observations, interviews, and surveys to broaden the admittedly limited picture of EFL instruction that is presented in this chapter. Moreover, future studies could examine students' attitudes towards diverse language groups, to validate or complicate the way these learners are portrayed by our participants. Finally, as neo-nationalist ideologies continue to shape public discourse and education in Poland and across Europe, we believe it is important to document how education practices can be used to counteract positions that might impede students' preparation for life and work in the EU and their participation in the wider global community.

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9

From “Sick Man” to Strong Man: The Changing Role of English Language Teaching in China in an Era of Rising Nationalism and Global Ambitions

Paul McPherron and Kyle McIntosh

Since assuming leadership of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 2013, President Xi Jinping has enacted a series of sweeping political reforms aimed at cracking down on corruption, dissent, and the dissemination of ideas deemed harmful by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), while at the same time promoting a vision of individual prosperity, national unity, and global influence commonly referred to as the “Chinese Dream” (中国梦). These actions have been viewed by some media commentators (Buckley, 2018; Ma, 2018) and scholars

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(Bhattacharya, 2019; Gao, 2018; Wang & Yao, 2017) as signs of a resurgent nationalism that has accompanied Xi's rise to—and consolidation of—power. Interestingly, the term “neo-nationalism” rarely appears in these discussions (Gao, 2018, being a notable exception). Perhaps this is because there is nothing particularly new about nationalism in China. From Qin Shi Huangdi, the first emperor who united the country over two thousand years ago, to Zhang Yimou's 2002 film *Hero*, a fictionalized retelling of those events that ennobled the sacrifice of the individual for the greater good, the idea of a strong, unified China has been central to its near-mythological “5,000 years of history,” even during periods when the country was weak or divided.

The previous two centuries were particularly tumultuous for China, with various uprisings, invasions, and disasters threatening its unity. Accompanying much of this unrest was the question of the role that English, as the international language of commerce, higher education, science and technology, should play in bringing stability and prosperity to the nation. In this chapter, we provide a brief history of English in China, followed by more recent discussions about its role in the internationalization of Chinese universities (Bolton & Graddol, 2012; Feng, 2011; McPherron, 2017). We then examine changes that have occurred over the past two decades with regard to English language teaching (ELT) at a coastal university in southern China through the eyes of students and faculty, ourselves included. Our recounting of these experiences reveals a range of impacts that recent policy decisions have had on ELT practices in the PRC and point to pedagogical interventions that may help to balance the country's nationalist and internationalist desires.

A Brief History of English in China

Empire, Colonialization, and Revolution: 1664–1979

Although there had been limited prior contact with the language, English officially arrived in China in 1664, when British ships sailed into Canton (Guangzhou) and later established a trading outpost on Shamian Island in the Pearl River, the only place where foreigners were then allowed to

reside (Pride & Liu, 1988). At the time, China was arguably the richest country on earth, and the European desire for silk, porcelain, and tea was so great that Britain, France, the Netherlands, and other colonial powers willingly accepted the restrictions that the ruling Qing Dynasty placed on their movements and interactions in exchange for access to these goods. Imperial law forbade teaching Chinese to foreigners, and so business was carried out mainly in pidgin versions of English and other European languages. To balance its trade deficit, the British soon began importing opium from India to sell to the Chinese.

By the early nineteenth century, China found itself weakened by the scourge of opium addiction. Government efforts to crack down on the drug trade prompted Britain to send gunboats up the Pearl River, kicking off a series of armed conflicts known as the First and Second Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1869, respectively). After several defeats, China was forced to sign unequal treaties that gave the British control of Hong Kong and greater access to the Mainland. Christian missionaries soon found many Chinese eager to learn English in order to gain the scientific and technical knowledge needed to modernize their country. Of course, English and Christianity also met with anti-foreign hostility, which culminated in the Boxer Uprising and subsequent invasion by the Eight-Nation Alliance of foreign armies (1900–1901). These events helped to solidify a conflicted view of English as both “a threat to national integrity” and “a conduit for strengthening China’s position in the world” (Adamson, 2002, p. 231), with official government positions and popular opinion continuing to vacillate between these two extremes.

By the start of the twentieth century, China was widely viewed as what the philosopher Liang Qichao called “the sick man of Asia” (Osno, 2018),¹ with many of its port cities controlled by colonial powers and the imperial government losing its grip on power elsewhere. The nationalist revolution led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen brought an end to the Qing

¹While the term “sick man of Asia” was coined by a Chinese national, it is important to note that it is also regarded as derogatory by many Chinese today and was, in fact, the source of a recent controversy surrounding an opinion piece in *The Wall Street Journal* by Walter Russel Mead titled “China is the Real Sick Man of Asia,” which criticized the central government’s response to the coronavirus outbreak in 2019. As a result, three foreign journalists were expelled from the country (“China Expels Three”).

Dynasty in 1912 and ushered in a brief period of renewed hope that post-imperial China could finally modernize, with a little help from English. To that end, many young Chinese went to study abroad, especially in the United States, while Chinese schools modeled themselves on the American education system, despite pushback from those who desired a more “indigenous philosophy and system of education” (Adamson, 2002, p. 236). Such hopes were soon dashed, however, when civil war broke out between the Nationalists and Communists in 1927, followed by the Japanese invasion in 1937, which resulted in a temporary truce between the two sides. Once World War II ended, civil war resumed, with the Communists eventually winning and driving the Nationalists to the island of Taiwan.

Cold War hostilities between the United States and the Soviet Union led to Russian replacing English as the preferred foreign language in Chinese schools, although Mao Zedong later split with Khrushchev over the policy of de-Stalinization, which sparked a brief period of renewed interest in English (Gil & Adamson, 2011, p. 28). By the start of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, however, English had been banned and anyone speaking it was subject to “reeducation.” After Nixon’s visit to the PRC in 1972, the ban was gradually lifted, but it was Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms in 1979 that led to English becoming a required subject at nearly every level of Chinese education.

The “Third Wave” of English: 1980–2012

The opening of China to the outside world caused a surge in enthusiasm for learning English, which Feng (2011) referred to as part of the “third wave” or “multidirectional movement brought on by the forces of globalisation” (p. 6), which was distinct from the first two unidirectional waves (i.e., British settler colonialism and exploitation colonialism, respectively). Bolton and Graddol (2012) documented evidence of this “third wave” of English learning in China including: a 2010 statistic that showed a US\$4.7 billion English language-training market; the inclusion of English, along with Chinese and mathematics, as a required subject on the *gaokao*, the national university entrance exam, which is taken by

about 10 million students every year; and the requirement that all university students pass the College English Test (CET) in order to graduate. They also noted that Chinese universities have continued to expand since the 1980s, thus allowing more Chinese access to higher education and, as of the early 2000s, giving China the largest university student population in the world (Bolton & Graddol, 2012, p. 3). In addition, there are now an estimated 400,000 foreign teachers in China, with up to two-thirds of those working without official papers (Quinn, 2019). The number of Chinese students studying at universities overseas, primarily in English-dominant countries, has also increased dramatically, reaching over 650,000 in 2018 (Shuo, 2019). As a result of all this activity, research on ELT in China has flourished in recent years (see Wang & Gao, 2008).

The growing enthusiasm for English has reignited questions about the threat that foreign languages pose to the Chinese sense of national identity. In the early 1990s, a young entrepreneur named Li Yang addressed this paradox head on by creating a unique pedagogical approach called “Crazy English,” which encouraged Chinese youth to overcome their inhibitions by shouting English phrases at the top of their lungs in order to, as he claimed, “conquer English to make China strong” (Hitchings, 2011). While Bolton (2002) dismissed this as “huckster nationalism” (p. 197), there is little doubt that Li Yang has helped to promote the view of English as a vehicle not only for importing ideas from the West but also for spreading Chinese culture and innovations to the rest of the world (Gao, 2012).

In many ways, the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing served as China’s “coming out party” to the world, with millions in attendance and millions more watching on TV. Soon after, China eclipsed Japan as the world’s 2nd largest economy. Within less than a century, Asia’s “sick man” had fully recovered and was ready to assume the role of the “strong man” once again. Xi Jinping has embodied this transformation more than anyone. He removed presidential term limits and assumed the mantle of “People’s Leader” (人民领袖), a title not used since Mao died. Through the Belt and Road Initiative, Xi’s administration is exercising the soft power of foreign aid and infrastructure development to extend China’s influence from

Pakistan to Nigeria, while a series of military reforms have strengthened its naval and air capabilities in the Asia-Pacific region.

Following the 2016 election of Donald Trump as U.S. President and the trade war that he initiated with China, as well as ongoing disputes over intellectual property rights and the political status of Taiwan, relations between the two nations have become strained. In 2017, the number of new college students from China studying in the United States had its sharpest decline in over a decade (Zhou, 2018). With the global COVID-19 pandemic and recent moves by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (2020) to remove temporary exemptions allowing F-1 and M-1 visa holders to remain in the United States while taking classes entirely online, those numbers are likely to drop even further.

While English retains a central role in Chinese education, there are signs that the country's enthusiasm for the language may be waning. The weight of the English section of the *gaokao* has recently been reduced, and there is growing opposition to the CET as a requirement for graduation (Yan, 2019). Part of this is the recognition that not every field of study or profession has equal need for English, but as Shao and Gao (2016) pointed out, "concerns about the status of English have also been related to the growing assertiveness of China's nationalism" (p. 25). Nevertheless, there remains a strong instrumental motivation for learning English as evidenced by the fact that most Chinese employers who conduct international business continue to prefer applicants who receive high scores on the CET. Expanding on Adamson's (2002) notion of English as both a threat and a boon to the nation, Yihong Gao (2009) proposed that these tensions are best viewed as a dialectic between the Chinese concepts of 体 ('ti,' meaning body or essence) and 用 ('yong,' utility or function), in which foreign languages and ideas are regarded as useful only in terms of their economic value; learning English was never meant to be part of the "essence" of Chinese education and identity.

China Southern University: A Case Study of the “Third Wave” of English Learning and Rising Nationalism in China

As instructors at a university in southern China throughout the 2000s, the authors of this chapter observed numerous instances of the tension between utility and identity in our daily interactions with our students. For example, in 2004, Paul received an email from a student with the English name Guy who wrote, “To be honest, I don’t think many Chinese students really love English, include me. I don’t love learning English, I learn it just because I need it, sometimes [...] maybe I need it more in the future” (McPherron, 2017, p. viii). This email raised concerns about whether students really “need” to learn English and what role it actually plays in modern life for the majority of Chinese citizens. The student was clearly responding to an educational trend that began in the early 1980s and had reached its apex by the early 2000s. In fact, the student’s stated reluctance to learn English echoed the long history of ambivalence toward the language that began when those first British trading ships landed in 1664: identity versus utility, threat versus aid.

Drawing on the broad survey of ELT in China in the previous section, the chapter now investigates in more depth the recent history and accompanying tensions of English teaching in China through the lens of this comprehensive public university in southern China, where both of the authors have taught intermittently since 2004. We use the pseudonym of China Southern University (CSU) in the following sections and draw on the following collected data sources: (1) interviews with current and former CSU instructors and administrators; (2) student journal writing from a class trip to a local museum; and (3) the CSU website’s mission and curriculum descriptions. As we begin to move out of the “third wave” of the early 2000s, this analysis provides a case study of the complex relationship between ELT in China and the rise of a new nationalist movement in the Xi Jinping era. Therefore, we focus on the following research questions: (1) What impact is renewed Chinese nationalism having on the way that English is viewed and taught at CSU? (2) How is English being used inside and outside of classrooms there to balance China’s global ambitions with its national goals?

CSU's Program for College English: A New Model for ELT in China

Founded in 1981 near a coastal city in Guangdong Province, CSU was the first university to be built in the region as part of the larger national modernization project. The initial funds for the university came from a prominent Hong Kong businessperson and, in the decades that followed, his philanthropic foundation continued to support the university and have a sizable influence on shaping its projects and policies. In aligning with national goals, the foundation attempted to mold CSU into a public Chinese university with an international focus that would serve as a link between the surrounding region and business communities outside of mainland China. To that end, the foundation implemented a number of curricular and cultural changes at the university, including a credit system in which students take classes with others outside of their major, a requirement for students in all majors to achieve a high level of English proficiency, and an increase in co-curricular activities dedicated to practicing English. To coordinate these efforts, the foundation created the Program for College English (PCE, a pseudonym) in 2000 and pushed for hiring more international instructors at CSU. To this day, the PCE organizes and teaches the various levels of English courses that all students must take until they meet the levels of proficiency required by their major. As a 2011 report stated, the program was created “for the sake of aligning the university with international standards, helping its students use English as a tool to explore Western culture and expanding its students’ horizons by teaching and encouraging critical thinking” (Liu & Xiao, 2011, p. 40).

From its inception, the PCE was tied to national educational reforms in China that advocated for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches and student-centered classrooms. In 2008, the PCE’s mission statement noted:

We believe that a high-level of communicative competence (i.e., grammatical, pragmatic, discourse, and strategic competencies) is the ultimate goal for our students. We also believe that teaching innovation is informed by research, and students’ critical thinking strategies and learner

autonomy should be developed through both curricular and co-curricular activities. (CSU website, accessed March 3, 2008)

The statement later notes the program’s desire to align its practices with the “international community” and repeats ideas about teaching approaches found in various Chinese Ministry of Education policy statements from the 2000s (Feng, 2009). The PCE draws on common descriptions of CLT with such collocated terms as “teacher innovation,” “informed by research,” and “curricular and co-curricular activities” with the goal of “a high-level of communicative competence” (Duff, 2014; Nunan, 2014).

Furthermore, as part of these CLT-based approaches, directors of the PCE—working in close coordination with the Hong Kong foundation—attempted to inculcate CSU students with the view that English is a part of “who they are,” and not just a professional qualification or national addendum. For example, one former director, who we call Gene (all participants received pseudonyms) argued that the curriculum at CSU and other top universities in China should foster in students a desire to seek opportunities to use English outside of the classroom:

A lot of the students perceive the question as “do I need to use English.” More and more students are looking at this one question “need to,” but the other question is “do I have the opportunity to use it?” Too often students expect that they are going to be forced to [...] I think the students are partly changing how to look at that because I suspect some job situations are not that they are forced to, but maybe if they are conscious about it, they will seek out English. (personal communication, October 22, 2013)

Like other past directors, Gene viewed the work of the PCE as shaping students’ identities, something closer to a “hearts and minds” description of the role of English in the lives of students than to the *yong* (utility) of Li Yang’s prescription to “conquer English.”

Trip to the Cultural Revolution Museum

As an illustration of the critical thinking, internationalization, and independent learning encouraged at the PCE in the 2000s, we present a class trip and writing activity that we did with our advanced writing students in the spring of 2007. For this activity, the PCE chartered a bus to take students to a nearby museum that had opened in 2005 and was the first dedicated to the history and atrocities of the Cultural Revolution, a political campaign begun by Chairman Mao in 1966 in which as many as half a million people were killed (French, 2005). The museum itself is situated in the countryside amidst lush rolling hills and resembles an outdoor park and shrine with visitors walking between open-air pagodas and monuments that chronicle devastating events and honor heroes from that period (see Fig. 9.1). Mao is shown growing increasingly old and powerless as students turn on each other and “the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution began to devour its own children” (French, 2005). We felt



Fig. 9.1 Cultural Revolution Museum mural and pagoda (June, 2007)

that exploring such a difficult period would provide our students with a link to a discussion of what makes a country "great" and how to come to terms with the more troubling aspects of its past. As part of the preparation for the trip, we read about and discussed a variety of historical events including slavery in North America, the Japanese occupation of China, and the Holocaust.

During the trip, we asked students to take notes about what they saw and then, following the visit, to write in their journals on the topic of how a country should remember and learn from its past. In their responses, many of the students focused on their shock at learning for the first time about this part of Chinese history. One student with the English name of Sunny wrote:

As Paul said, maybe every country has its own crazy history, such as Hitler made German kill Jew, America white people killed American Indian nation. But in Cultural Revolution, Chinese killed or persecuted Chinese. Actually, Hanese killed or persecuted Hanese! They were the same race or nation! Chinese never fought for religious problem. I don't know why they lose their human nature, maybe as a person said, they just exhibited the human nature. Usually, we just talked about the Cultural Revolution's process, how it happened, how it went on, and who is the main role in this process. But we may forget the basic and original questions: Why did it happen, why did public become crazy, why did it go so long, and why did the main roles acted at that time? (student journal, June 11, 2007)

She was shocked not only by the atrocities themselves but also by the fact that Chinese people were committing these acts upon each other without racial or religious motivations. Through her list of "whys," it appeared that, for the first time, Sunny was questioning the notion of a unified Chinese nation and people.

Other students went even further, directly criticizing the government and connecting its reluctance to address the Cultural Revolution to current political problems. For example, a student called Windy wrote in her journal about environmental concerns and the lack of representative democracy:

To tell the truth, many people still respect Mao as our government holds the media in hand. Few people would like to talk about Mao's big mistakes. As a student, I don't think China is now or soon will be a great nation. China has a long, long way to go. There are many social problems and environmental problems in China. Chinese government is still young. They have a lot of work to do. I can see Chinese people are controlled by the government. We Chinese have no real vote right and equal treatment in many respects. (student journal, June 11, 2007)

Another student named Joe similarly critiqued the absence of a free press:

There were many lessons we can learn from the Culture Revolution. But for me, I think the most important thing is that we should not believe the press easily. If I haven't visited the museum I will not know the reality and believe in what textbooks tell. So we must investigate and analyze anything [that] happens in the world. (student journal, June 11, 2007)

It is important to note that these students might not have felt comfortable offering such criticisms if they had been writing in Chinese or to a non-foreign teacher. However, the trip was approved by the university and clearly fit with its goals of encouraging co-curricular activities and critical thinking (in fact, the businessman who helped found CSU had also donated to the museum). Although tensions about the role of English still existed, there was a sense then that universities such as CSU would continue to have more and more freedom to challenge students through these types of activities. Sadly, the museum was shuttered in 2016, only to be reopened later with a new focus on "Socialist Core Values" and all mention of the Cultural Revolution removed (Tatlow, 2016).

Rising Nationalism at CSU

Since coming to power, President Xi has, as noted above, enacted a number of political reforms aimed at strengthening government control across all parts of Chinese society while, at the same time, limiting the influence of Western ideas and values. At the university level, he

launched campaigns to ensure that teachers “cultivate and practice the core values of socialism in their teaching” (Holtz, 2018). Meanwhile, China’s Ministry of Education has called for bans on textbooks that promote Western values (Buckley, 2015).

Perhaps due to its strong ties to the Hong Kong business community and distance from Beijing, CSU was largely able to continue its mission of nurturing critical thinking and learner autonomy. Over the course of the 2016–2017 academic year, however, a CCP inspection team compiled a critical report of the university’s curriculum and practices, which concluded that the government needed to “strengthen its supervision of foreign teachers, classroom discussions, and even online posts” (Holtz, 2018). Unsurprisingly, the report had repercussions that were felt throughout the university. Among English language teachers at CSU, who were accustomed to leading thought-provoking discussions and activities such as our field trip to the Cultural Revolution museum, there are now concerns about the mission of the university going forward and the role that English will play. In June 2019, the businessman whose foundation has strongly supported CSU since its inception did not attend its graduation ceremony for the first time in 18 years, with media reports speculating on whether the two have severed ties (Zhang, 2019).

In the next section, we analyze PCE faculty perspectives in light of the recent nationalist wave in Chinese education and politics, focusing on two themes that emerged from our interviews: (1) fear that CSU will not retain its reputation for internationalization and innovative teaching practices; and (2) pride in the history and mission of CSU and the PCE.

Fear: “They Would Just Remain Utterly Silent”

As instructors at CSU, we were labeled as “foreign experts” on our official residency cards and as “foreign teachers” by our students and colleagues. This was in contrast to the label of “local teacher,” as instructors with Chinese citizenship were called. At other Chinese universities, local and foreign teachers may not interact frequently or collaborate on curriculum and assessment, but CSU has always actively encouraged partnerships

between them, thus creating a sense of community in which all instructors feel like they are valued and belong (McPherron, 2016). Despite the CCP review and critique of CSU in 2017, both local and foreign teachers still value their close collaborations and shared work goals, but many of them, and foreign teachers in particular, fear that the growing governmental oversight could divide the two groups, thereby weakening the university's reputation for international cooperation and innovative teaching. One reason for this fear was the recent movement of the PCE within the Division of Arts and Sciences. Since its inception, the PCE had been its own unit that reported directly to the Provost's Office and was given a fair degree of autonomy in setting its learning objectives. The change has affected the role of the PCE and English in general at CSU, as Beth, another former director, noted:

There seem to be certain political restrictions again on foreign influence, which obviously also concerns English teaching. It is still necessary for the economic and scientific development of the country but it is definitely put under control, also regarding who is invited to teach and take on administrative responsibility [...] due to this movement, the influence and support of the foundation has diminished considerably. One recent change is that [PCE] is again under the umbrella of liberal arts, albeit as a separate unit I believe. That is a concentration of power and will have effects depending on who is in charge. (personal communication, September 25, 2019)

Xander, a local English teacher with over thirty years of experience, also saw some of the changes that occurred following the departmental restructuring as having a negative impact on the English instruction provided by the PCE, although he attributed these mainly to the rapid growth that the university had experienced in recent years and a push for more double-majors.

Lots of students started choosing English as their second major and, because of this, they didn't have much time. They didn't have many credit hours for them to choose other elective courses in English. So, starting in 2016, [and] especially 2017, our elective courses haven't been very successful because not very many students signed up for them, fewer

than 10, [and so] definitely that course should be canceled. And right now, because of the expansion, [CSU] has recruited more students, and we don't have enough teachers. (personal communication, June 29, 2019)

Another local teacher, Ethan, who graduated from university in an English-dominant country, echoed these concerns about how growing enrollments were putting a strain on the quality of education that could be delivered in the English classroom.

Recently the university required the increase of student numbers in one class, which, to some extent, created certain negative impacts on how students would communicate and interact with each other. Another issue is related to teacher training as some teachers do not have any idea on teaching methodology. Although this claim might be too absolute, I see the necessity of more teacher training and professional development. (personal communication, August 8, 2019)

In discussing these changes, Ethan also mentioned the ongoing debate about “whether the Chinese language and culture will be ‘contaminated’ when people learn a foreign language,” but he did not see this as a major concern for most students at CSU.

Some foreign instructors, however, remarked that topics they had once openly discussed in class were no longer permissible, even if no official edict had been handed down. According to Rick, who had been living and teaching in China for nearly two decades:

I remember in 2013 or 2014, we fairly openly discussed the Umbrella Revolution, the stuff that happened in Hong Kong, and it would never even occur to me to raise that topic in class nowadays because your ability to teach, and especially with second language learners, depends on a willingness to speak, to communicate about something. They would be so nervous and recognize that it's something politically dangerous, they would just remain utterly silent. So, for one there would be no point. (personal communication, July 12, 2019)

He found it ironic that, at a time when the students in his classes displayed higher levels of English proficiency than in the past, the

subjects that they could speak and write about were being limited in other ways. He continued:

The students in those early days, like 2004, were very eager and kind of open, but their actual abilities and knowledge, most of them were fairly limited. The students nowadays in China [...] their knowledge level and their skill level, their sophistication with the language and their English ability, and just their general world knowledge, are phenomenal [...] That sea change of super knowledgeable, elite, educated, proficient university students in this foreign language school is still very foreign to them [government and school officials]. The part structure is somehow threatened, and this needs to be reined in or it's gone too far. (personal communication, July 12, 2019)

Rick also mentioned a feature of teaching at CSU that many instructors have noticed and one that is, in fact, promoted via its websites and promotional materials: students have many more opportunities to use their English abilities through travel, work, and exchanges between CSU and its partner universities. At the same time, the freedom that instructors once had to lead innovative curricular and co-curricular activities, such as our field trip to the Cultural Revolution, has been limited or completely stifled. The censoring of open discourse, whether explicit or implicit, led Rick to wonder if it is even ethical to ask students to think critically about sensitive topics and investigate them through standard research practices when “following them to their logical end would get a young person in trouble” (personal communication, July 12, 2019).

Even with such fears lingering, most of the CSU instructors that we interviewed still believed that English would continue to be taught at universities throughout China, although one foreign teacher named Jerry felt that its role in the internationalization of Chinese education was changing.

I do not feel that English learning is continuing to grow, based on my own observations over time. We started with enthusiasm in the early 2000s, which persisted and grew into the early 2010s, but in later years I felt an increase in apathy toward—if not resistance to—English-related activities at [CSU], even as numbers of attendance increased [...] Though

I don't know the details, I think it's clear that there are political reasons for the decline of English—so quickly after a surge in the popularity of the language. A general sense of anti-colonial face-saving combined with the rise of a notion that Chinese language can be a contender for a lingua franca. (personal communication, August 22, 2019)

Many Chinese wish to see Mandarin become a global lingua franca, and indeed the language is expanding along with China's economic might, but it remains a long way from reaching the international status of English (see Gil, 2011). Nevertheless, Jerry worried that English would soon be “placed on a backburner,” in much the same way that Russian as a foreign language had lost favor in the past. He noted “an attitude shift” at CSU through the “downgrading of the role of the [PCE].” In fact, Jerry decided that the political climate had changed too much, and he returned to the United States in 2018 after over 20 years as an English instructor in China.

Pride: “We Still Play the Role that We Have Been Playing”

Although some of the foreign teachers we interviewed expressed fears that the CSU community they had helped to build was increasingly unwelcoming to outside influence, most of them continued to praise the innovative teaching approaches. Likewise, the local teachers felt a strong sense of pride in the unique position that CSU has occupied among Chinese universities in terms of its international focus and communicative approach to ELT. As Xander pointed out:

In the past, we mainly focused on teaching students the kind of skills to pass each test because, at that time, passing CET-4 is a requirement for graduation, and there's a certain score students need to pass. Otherwise, they couldn't get a degree [...] So our main task is just to help them cover the material, help them to pass the test. But with the establishment of the [PCE], we changed to really focus on communication. That's why you [foreign teachers] came and you know that's kind of different from other universities in China. (personal communication, June 29, 2019)

Furthermore, he noted that the recruitment of “foreign experts” has been helpful not only for students but also for his own English proficiency, and he valued the sense of community that had been created between local and foreign teachers.

Despite the changes that had occurred over the last decade and the general sense of uncertainty about the future of international cooperation on Chinese university campuses, our participants continued to believe that an emphasis on ELT would remain at CSU. As a former director of PCE, Gene noticed that “there have been dramatic changes in ELT in China since the early 1980s, with much more focus on actual English proficiency. While levels of interest in learning English have always been relatively high, my sense is that this is actually still increasing rather than declining.” Xander also believed that the PCE would continue with its mission, even if it had less autonomy than in the past.

Let me put it this way, I would still like to say that even now the students know that [PCE] has become part of [the Division of Arts and Sciences], we still play the role that we have been playing. That means English education here is still very important, and I’m sure the school leaders also attach great importance to English education here, even though now it’s kind of merged [that] doesn’t mean they don’t think English is important. (personal communication, June 29, 2019)

Jerry, the former PCE instructor who returned to the United States, was less optimistic about the state of ELT in China, which he saw as declining after peaking in the early 2010s, although he too felt that enthusiasm for English still remained strong at CSU.

There is a core of hard-working students and teachers who remain dedicated to the promotion of both ELT and collaborative learning. If only that core remains as English becomes an option rather than a requirement, I doubt that consequences would be severe, other than fewer job opportunities for foreign teachers. (personal communication, August 22, 2019)

Local teacher Ethan expressed a similarly conflicted view of the role that English plays—and will continue to play—in Chinese higher education,

but he too sees the utility of English serving as a stronger motivation for studying it than any requirements for matriculation or graduation that may or may not change in the near future.

I once doubted the role of English for students' future career, especially some graduates who worked at jobs that do not require English. I also doubted whether English should be a required subject for all students at [CSU] and I really do not have a clear answer, for all Chinese universities too. I think it is still important for English to be a required subject of the *gao kao* as long as *gao kao* exists [...] If made optional, most students would still choose to take English because they never know their future career and further education. (personal communication, August 8, 2019)

For Ethan, the globalized economy and greater mobility would continue to stoke enthusiasm among the Chinese people for learning English, but he felt that an overemphasis on testing had obscured more pressing concerns.

The issue lies in how teaching and assessment can reflect the reality of language use. Another issue is how English teaching can be directed to a more sociolinguistic and sociocultural aspects instead of teaching English as a language per se, as well as how local ELT professionals can be empowered to take the ownership of English. (personal communication, August 8, 2019)

While the outlooks of our participants on the future of English education in China varied somewhat, there was a shared sense of pride in the contributions that CSU had made, and it appeared that, at least outwardly, the university continued to view ELT as central to its broader goals, as illustrated in a recent online listing for a position in the PCE. In seeking new instructors, the job description states that CSU is “aggressively internationalizing its program and expanding its English-medium course offerings.” Furthermore, the PCE is described in the advertisement as “a pioneering program of language instruction that emphasizes not only practical language proficiency but also critical thinking skills, intercultural competence, and sustainable independent language learning.” For the authors of this chapter, the description differs

little from the one that they read when they first applied to work at CSU in 2004, which suggests that the shifting political winds blowing down from Beijing were not yet strong enough to knock the university off course.

Some of our participants wondered if this was simply the calm before the storm, and it is reasonable to be concerned about the future of ELT in China and the roles that foreign teachers will play. At the same time, the PCE continues to seek instructors who can bring innovative teaching practices and outside perspectives to this vibrant academic community. Hopefully, CSU and other Chinese universities will continue to serve as spaces for international dialogue and cooperation rather than falling prey to the fear of foreign ideas, influence, and individuals that is the hallmark of neo-nationalism around the world.

Conclusion: Which Way Will the Wave Break?

Throughout much of the past two hundred years, China has moved between opening up to the outside world and retreating into isolation. In much the same way, attitudes toward the teaching and learning of English have often shifted between valuing its utility as an international language and rejecting its foreign essence as a malady that could cause a relapse of the “sick man” condition. In this era of rising nationalism, it remains difficult to tell which way the latest wave will break.

While some of the instructors who we interviewed felt that the current political climate had put restraints on the topics that could be safely addressed in the classroom, most were fairly certain that English would remain an important subject in Chinese higher education, even if requirements were lessened or abandoned altogether. For them, the utility that students saw in studying English as an international language and the opportunities it presented for furthering their personal careers, while simultaneously helping to strengthen the nation as a whole, would ultimately win out over any fears they may have about the potentially harmful effects of foreign languages and ideas on national unity.

We remain cautiously optimistic that the internationalization of Chinese higher education has progressed too far since the 1980s to

ever again be cut off entirely from the rest of the world. Nevertheless, instructors may need to be more creative with the pedagogical interventions they stage as they continue to promote critical thinking and global perspectives in the classroom. One option would be to have students conduct sociolinguistic field research to see how English was actually being used in the community (e.g., on campus, billboards, tourist attractions). Another possibility would be to set up email exchanges between university students in China and those elsewhere in the world using English as a *lingua franca*. Students could prepare interview questions for each other about college life, professional goals, and other topics of interest, and then use the responses to write profiles of their foreign counterparts that examined where similarities and differences might lie.

On the institutional level, Chinese universities would ideally continue to create and provide financial assistance for study abroad programs. CSU has many partner universities that students can attend for a semester or more, and we were encouraged to learn that, despite recent developments, these opportunities have continued and, in some cases, even expanded. In addition, CSU and other universities could welcome more teacher education programs from abroad that would provide Chinese students with additional opportunities to connect with an international English-speaking world.

Of course, these opportunities could still lead to the same tensions, difficult questions, and eventual censure that our trip to the Cultural Revolution Museum faced, but we contend that such tensions are actually what make a country great, so long as they are not suppressed. Furthermore, opportunities for internationalization could be conducted in any language—after all, students, scholars, and professionals from around the world are learning Mandarin as an additional language, and Spanish is now a major at CSU—but the desire to learn English will remain strong as long as students in China have the ability to connect with people from other countries, whether through online communication, study abroad, or contact with foreign teachers in the classroom. In this way, English will remain vital to Chinese higher education and, perhaps more importantly for government officials, to the larger goal of strengthening the nation.

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10

Nationalism, Redemptive and Banal, in Canadian ESL Textbooks and Citizenship Study Guides

Trevor Gulliver

Canada is represented in ESL textbooks and citizenship study guides as a proud nation, but not a nationalistic one; a nation that has made mistakes, but not racist ones; a nation in which newcomers are welcomed, but not without obligations. ESL textbooks and citizenship guides in Canada do not participate in the ‘hot’ nationalism of a new nation or a nation insecure about its identity, but in the forms of nationalism more typical of already legitimized nations. These texts participate in both banal nationalism through their everyday markings of nation (Billig, 1995) and in the construction of imagined communities (Anderson, 2006) through the stories they tell about Canada.

This chapter synthesizes and summarizes a program of critical discourse analytic research into constructions of national identity in ESL textbooks and citizenship study guides used in adult ESL education in Canada, bringing together several different threads of this research

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together in a succinct form. A survey of Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) instructors (Gulliver, 2009) identified a sampling of 24 textbooks and citizenship study guides used in the LINC program. I have consulted new versions of these textbooks and study guides since. The goal for selection was to find both the more popular texts and a range of texts used in the LINC program. The LINC program has, as its specific rationale, to provide language education to newcomers to Canada and to help newcomers to adapt to “the Canadian way of life” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2004). It has called for language classrooms to be a site of the inculcation of ‘national values’ and social-integration (Derwing & Thomson, 2005, p. 46). The program and its rationale are believed to have an influence on discourses in textbooks (p. 47).

The analysis that follows is not intended to be accusatory. In identifying racist and sexist elements in nationalizing discourses within these texts, I am not suggesting these texts (or their authors) are particularly racist or sexist; simply that they reproduce the dominant historical narrative in Canada, which is one that has centred and privileged the contributions of white males, while downplaying a history of racism and colonialism. ESL textbooks, which often draw upon newspaper articles, and official citizenship study guides reproduce this dominant historical narrative. It would be difficult to produce a recognizable representation of Canada that did not.

Banal Nationalism

Billig (1995) noted that the term “nationalist” is usually applied to other people’s nationalism or to the “hot” varieties that flare up during times of tension and conflict when national symbols are being actively redefined. Already defined and identified nations and the symbols used to represent them are not considered nationalist; their performances are simply representative of the current state of affairs, or just the way things are. Billig gave the term “banal nationalism” to this cooler form of uncontested and unremarkable everyday nationalism; the flag waving on the post outside of the public school, the names and faces on postage stamps,

the routine deixis and pronouns that construct ‘us’ as part of ‘the nation’ in subtle linguistic ways, and the playing of anthems before sporting events are all examples of these banal flaggings of nation. Banal nationalism reproduces the nation on a daily basis involving us in what Renan (1990) called “a daily plebiscite,” whereby the nation is affirmed to exist. We consent to nation through our quiet acquiescence to these constant symbols, through the licking of flag-adorned stamps, and through the occasional standing for anthems no matter how unenthusiastically.

Billig (1995) observed that the ideology of nationalism operates unnoticed, partly because it is so ubiquitous. The everyday markings of nation become unremarkable because they are so commonplace. The nation, being everywhere, is forgotten:

National identity in established nations is remembered because it is embedded in routines of life, which constantly remind, or ‘flag’, nationhood. However, these reminders, or ‘flaggings’, are so numerous and they are such a familiar part of the social environment, that they operated mindlessly, rather than mindfully. (p. 38)

Nations are affirmed through a “daily plebiscite,” but this plebiscite is largely one of automatic or routine performances that indicate one’s status as a national subject. The nation remains in the background of our social and political lives.

Banal Nationalism in ESL Textbooks

The examples of banal nationalism found in ESL textbooks in Canada are wide and varied (Gulliver, 2011a). They include:

- flags, which appear prominently in the texts, sometimes on the cover but also as a recurring graphic throughout and incorporated into other illustrations;
- other images that “flag” Canada such as currency, stamps, and national symbols;
- claims to provide factual information about Canada such as history, geography, culture and politics;

- stereotypical claims about the characteristics of Canadians, like “Canadians are proud of their country but most would not describe themselves as patriotic flag-wavers” (Berish & Thibaudeau, 1998a, p. 6);
- the words to the national anthem, ‘O Canada,’ in one or more of the two official languages;
- and, a wide variety of maps.

The repeated flaggings in these textbooks is part of the process through which the symbols become unremarkable.

There is a fluidity to these banal markings, but it becomes visible only by comparison or as a textbook ages. A younger reader might find the inclusion of “yogurt” in the “foreign foods” illustration in an older textbook to be odd. Textbooks and guides vary in the extent to which they draw upon symbols of the British monarchy. Maps in these textbooks rarely point to the contestation regarding borders or disputes over territories, but some texts invite discussion over gendered words in the Canadian national anthem:

Some people feel that the third line in O Canada—“True patriot love in all thy sons command”—should be “True patriot love in all of us command” to reflect all Canadians. Other people think that the word “sons” refers to soldiers who have given their lives for Canada. They believe it would be disrespectful to change the words. What do you think? (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 42)

While this opens up the possibility for discussion and debate over exactly how we perform our nationalism, none of the texts that included anthems asked whether readers should sing anthems or why people do. The content may change from nation to nation or over time, but the forms through which nations mark themselves as nations are ubiquitous and enduring.

Teaching Banal Nationalism

While banal nationalism, as explored by Billig (1995), remains in the background of our lives and largely unconscious and unremarked on, the textbooks and citizenship guides take on the pedagogical responsibility of teaching the flag to student readers. The texts explain the symbols. Unlike most consumers of banal nationalism, readers are positioned by these ESL textbooks and citizenship guides as people who need to be taught these symbols and to learn the reflexive understandings that should accompany viewing them.

Canadian ESL textbooks make explicit that which is intended to become barely noticed. They teach the flag's appearance, its origins, and the thoughts Canadians should have when viewing it: "Canadians think of their country whenever they see it" (Bates, 1991, p. 75). Students are invited also to perform their "Canadian-ness" by singing the national anthem (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 42). Maps are not just displayed, but taught; students are invited to learn the names and places on the maps.

The repeated mapping, flagging, and naming of the nation in these texts assumes a shared ideology of nationalism, at least, in its cooler, quieter flavor, and promotes a sense of national identity. The ideology of nationalism is assumed and the ways of flagging Canadian nationalism are taught. None of this should be very surprising to most readers or teachers of these texts, because this is just what nations do.

Imagined Community and Legitimizations of Nation

Anderson (2006) described nations as "imagined communities," whose particular imaginings are reproduced through various forms of media. The ideology of nation is so predominant, he argued, that it can be difficult to think of it as anything other than objectively real. We treat nations as primordial and objective, as if they have always been here and always will be. Theorists of nationalism (Anderson, 2006; Bhabha, 1990; Billig, 1995; Renan, 1990) have reminded us that the nation-state is a relatively

modern phenomenon, and the nation is by no means a necessary form of political organization. The banal nationalism discussed above is one way in which nations “are reproduced as nations and their citizenry as nationals” (Billig, 1995, p. 6). The nation is also reproduced through the stories it tells about itself.

Canadian ESL textbooks and citizenship guides tell stories about Canada and Canadians. These stories are intended to be sincere representations of Canadian reality, but are often idealizations of the nation as told from the perspective of those whose interests are hegemonically manifested in the nation. The stories are told from a perspective that privileges and centers the experience of white males. The histories in these texts, as they align with the dominant histories of Canada, legitimize racism and hide the injustices of colonization. Their descriptions of current Canadian society position newcomers as marginally Canadian, people who may become full members of their communities only through their hard work and through the nation’s redemptive qualities.

Texts that attempt to instruct in regards to an imagined community of Canada reproduce the status quo’s imagined better selves. These stories reproduce the established tropes regarding the nation and its origins. The danger of such imaginings is always the extent to which they exclude and marginalize as they attempt to inform (Stanley, 2006, p. 33). The already imagined communities that enter classrooms through such nationalizing discourses should be critically contested and continually reexamined in citizenship classrooms.

Canada the Redeemer

Roman and Stanley (1997) identified the trope of “Canada the Redeemer” in young people’s discussions about racism. They found that young people already had access to a narrative in which Canada saved immigrant others, which they had to position themselves in regards to in discussions of their own experiences with racism. Schick and St. Denis (2005) identified this narrative as one that enters into school curriculum and works towards the maintenance of white privilege. Robson (2013) further explained the phrase:

The intentionally ironic phrase “Canada the Redeemer” refers to the discourse that surrounds Canadian culture as being perhaps a “little bit racist” but “nowhere as bad as the United States,” and that Canada “saves” people from racism and provides a safe haven. (p. 46)

Discursive constructions of Canada as benevolent towards immigrant others show up in ESL textbooks and citizenship guides. Readers are taught that Canadians are committed to diversity and equality and told stories that downplay racism in Canada’s past. Representations of ‘Canadian’ values are used as guides for immigrant newcomers who are positioned by the texts as possibly not sharing these values. Readers are introduced to ‘great Canadians,’ mostly male and mostly white individuals, who are lauded for their contributions to the nation. Readers are also introduced to successful immigrants, beneficiaries of Canada’s generosity and commitment to equality. The Canada imagined in these texts is one in which racism is in the past and the present is more meritocratic.

Canadians as Valuing Diversity

Gulliver (2011b) sorted the representations of Canada that appear in citizenship study guides into eight themes, which are listed below in order of the frequency with which they appeared in the latest study guide (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012):

1. Canadians are diverse and value diversity;
2. Canadians serve in the military;
3. Canadians are equal and value equality;
4. Canadians work hard and are prosperous;
5. Canadians are proud;
6. Canadians create;
7. Canadians honor the Queen, and;
8. Canadians play hockey.

These representations of Canada and Canadians differ from those in previous citizenship study guides, particularly around the number of references to military service.

Other citizenship study guides also represent Canada and Canadians as committed to diversity and equality, while being opposed to forms of discrimination:

- “Today, diversity enriches Canadians’ lives, particularly in our cities” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 25).
- “Canadians celebrate the gift of one another’s presence and work hard to respect pluralism and live in harmony” (p. 8).
- “The prosperity and diversity of our country depend on all Canadians working together to face challenges of the future” (p. 27).
- Canadians “try to understand and appreciate the cultures, customs and traditions of all Canadians, whether they were born in Canada or came here from another country” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007, p. 7).

The same citizenship guides, however, contain images and representations that present non-Canadians as lacking in this appreciation of equality and rights:

In Canada, men and women are equal under the law. Canada’s openness and generosity do not extend to barbaric cultural practices that tolerate spousal abuse, ‘honour killings,’ female genital mutilation, forced marriage or other gender-based violence. Those guilty of these crimes are severely punished under Canada’s criminal laws. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 9)

Discover Canada also implies that new Canadians may hold extreme prejudice that will create problems for this more egalitarian society: “Some Canadians immigrate from places where they have experienced warfare or conflict. Such experiences do not justify bringing to Canada violent, extreme or hateful prejudices. In becoming Canadian, newcomers are expected to embrace democratic principles such as the rule of law” (p. 12).

Conformity Authorization

In these guides, representations of the ingroup, Canada and Canadians, are often positioned as a rationale for expectations upon a second, marginally included group: the immigrant newcomer reader. This is known as “conformity authorization” in Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999), which legitimates discourses through references to group norms:

‘Conformity authorization’ rests on the principle that something is legitimate when ‘everybody does it’, or ‘everybody says so’. This is typically expressed through a numerative element in the relevant nominal group (‘The majority of immigrants ...’, ‘most immigrants ...’). (p. 105)

This form of authorization is particularly interesting as it seems to be brought into play when social norms cannot be enforced due to legal protections of individual rights that prevent certain values from being prescribed by law. It thus serves to legitimize certain expectations that could be seen as unfair or controversial. Conformity authorization, in these texts, is invoked in assertions about the behavior of “most Canadians,” “many Canadians,” or, quite often, simply “Canadians.”

Throughout the identified textbooks and citizenship study guides, certain behaviors are banally constructed as Canadian:

- Most Canadians use an alarm clock to wake up every day (Berish & Thibaudeau, 1997a, p. 82).
- Canadians talk on the telephone a lot. Perhaps it is because some people don’t like to go outside when it is cold! (Berish & Thibaudeau, 1997b, p. 19)
- Canadians like to talk about the weather (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 13).
- Bread is a basic food in Canada. Many Canadians eat bread two or three times a day. There are many different kinds of bread (Berish & Thibaudeau, 1997b, p. 89).
- In Canada, most people have two or three names. They have a first name and a last name (or family name). Sometimes they also have a middle name (Berish & Thibaudeau, 1997b, p. 3).

In presenting certain behaviors in terms of both nation and number, identified textbooks participate in a normative enterprise through which a Canadian identity is constructed. The imagined community of Canadians constructed in these texts is used to legitimate particular representations of values and behaviors that are not within the scope of legal discourses regarding citizenship.

The latest citizenship study guide emphasizes the existence of a majority population in ways that reaffirms its European heritage:

- “The great majority of Canadians identify as Christians” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 13);
- “The majority of Canadians were born in this country and this has been true since the 1800s. However, Canada is often referred to as the land of immigrants” (p. 12); and
- “The largest groups are the English, French, Scottish, Irish, German, Italian, Chinese, Aboriginal, Ukrainian, Dutch, South Asian and Scandinavian” (p. 12).

At times, the behavior of “the majority of Canadians” or “most people” legitimizes claims as to the expected behavior of “you,” the reader: “An important custom in a sit-down restaurant is leaving a tip for the server. A tip is generally 10 to 15 percent of the cost of the meal before taxes. You should leave the tip on the table as you leave” (Berish & Thibaudeau, 1997c, p. 39).

The positive behavior of newcomers is modalized: “you should leave,” and, elsewhere (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006) “you should always ask [people’s] permission to smoke” (p. 37) and “you should always arrive on time” (p. 34) The “newcomer” in these texts is made the “patient” (van Dijk 1995, p. 258) or “goal” (Halliday, 1994, p. 110) of the clause. Such positioning corresponds to van Dijk’s (1995) observation that “ingroup actors will typically be selected as responsible Agents of positive acts, and non-responsible Patients of negative acts of Others, and vice versa for outgroup actors” (p. 258). These texts are ideological in that they construct a positive self-presentation of “Canadians,” in light of which “you” are expected to adapt “your” behavior.

Racism and Its Denial

These texts also legitimize Canada by downplaying or denying the existence of racism, particularly in their discussions of Canadian history. Drawing on van Dijk (1992, 2004), Gulliver (2018) and Gulliver and Thurrell (2017) examined denials of racism found in Canadian ESL textbooks and citizenship guides and organize them into these rough groupings:

- *localization*, through which racism is seen as belonging to part of the country, but not the whole; one text (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012) blames “public opinion in B.C.” (p. 23) for the internment of Japanese Canadians;
- *racism as a property of others*, through which Canada is presented as less racist than other countries: “While Americans tend to fly their flag at the drop of the patriotic hat, Canadians don’t have quite the same knee-jerk reaction to the Maple Leaf” (Gaetz, 2006, p. 5);
- *denials of racist intent*, through which some details of a historical event are acknowledged but racist intentions are denied or not mentioned;
- *euphemistic reframing*, through which racism is called by a less specific term such as “discrimination,” “stereotyping” but not “racism” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 23);
- *individualization*, through which racism is presented as prejudices held by individuals but the group itself is represented as non-racist: “there are some people who have a stereotyped idea about Native people” (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 22);
- *historicization*, through which racism, euphemistically described, is presented as something that occurred in the past, a past which is contrasted with a less racist present: “Canada has come a long way in the last few decades” (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 56);
- *mitigating circumstances*, racist events are attributed to other world events: “Regrettably, the state of war and public opinion in B.C. led to the forcible relocation of Canadians of Japanese origin by the federal government” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 23).

Such denials allow these textbooks to reproduce the dominant narrative of Canadian history, imagining colonization as a benign process and downplaying the intention behind over a century of immigration policies that supported white racial supremacy in Canada.

Stories about racist events in Canadian history follow a certain narrative pattern. Fairclough (2003) explained how some genres of texts can be characterized in terms of their “generic structures,” that is their “organization into well-defined stages” (p. 86), with some of the stages potentially being optional or able to be moved, while others seem required within the genre. These stories begin by introducing a racist policy or event while using euphemisms for racism and mitigating circumstances to downplay the racism in that policy. Then, they engage in distancing strategies and forms of denial such as those discussed above. The texts mention official apologies or attempts at redress that have occurred (Rarely do such texts appear in these books unless the event is one for which the government has already apologized). The paragraphs often end with mentions of successful individual members of the group most negatively affected by the policy or with positive statistics and statements implying the existence of a less racist contemporary Canada. Policies specifically intended to limit immigration by non-whites in the past become represented as evidence of an anti-racist present even while downplaying the racism in the policies.

As examples of both the generic structure and the forms of denials, consider the two passages below. The first is from an ESL textbook used with adult newcomers called *Being Canadian*:

When Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan in the Second World War, the Canadian government sent Japanese Canadians to work camps in the interior of British Columbia and in Alberta. The government also sold all their property and possessions. After the war, many Japanese Canadians were deported to Japan. Others were relocated east of the Rockies. Some people spoke out against the government’s policies and by 1949 Japanese Canadians’ rights were restored. For several years, the Japanese Canadian community tried to get the federal government to apologize for the discrimination during the war. In 1988, the federal government apologized and gave some money to those people who were discriminated against. (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 57)

The second one is from the latest version of the Canadian citizenship study guides, currently called *Discover Canada*:

In the Pacific war, Japan invaded the Aleutian Islands, attacked a lighthouse on Vancouver Island, launched fire balloons over B.C. and the Prairies, and grossly maltreated Canadian prisoners of war captured at Hong Kong. Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945—the end of four years of war in the Pacific. Regrettably, the state of war and public opinion in B.C. led to the forcible relocation of Canadians of Japanese origin by the federal government and the sale of their property without compensation. This occurred even though the military and the RCMP told Ottawa that they posed little danger to Canada. The Government of Canada apologized in 1988 for wartime wrongs and compensated the victims. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 23)

These stories both begin by introducing a racist policy or event without identifying it as racist, but instead calling it “discrimination” or “wartime wrongs.” The passages engage in distancing strategies by placing Canada’s treatment of civilian families in the context of Japan’s treatment of soldiers and other wartime actions by Japan. The texts mention that the government of Canada apologized and gave compensation to the victims. The texts do not end with mentions of successful individual members of the group most affected by the racist policies; these often, but do not always, appear at the end of such passages.

Discussions of the head tax in the same publications also follow the generic structure. They introduce the head tax without identifying it as racist, calling it only “discrimination” (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, pp. 56–57) or “a race-based entry fee” and a “discriminatory policy” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 23). Despite never identifying the policies as racist, the texts then present evidence that the present is less discriminatory by mentioning apologies or social changes:

Canada has come a long way in the last few decades. There is now less discrimination. In 1988, David See-Chi Lam, a Vancouver businessman born in Hong Kong, was appointed to the position of Lieutenant Governor (the Queen’s representative) in the province of British Columbia. Adrienne Clarkson, who came to Canada as a refugee from

Hong Kong during World War II, became the Governor General of Canada in 1999. As well, in 2006, the Government of Canada apologized for their actions. (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, pp. 56–57)

The Chinese were subject to discrimination, including the Head Tax, a race-based entry fee. The Government of Canada apologized in 2006 for this discriminatory policy. After many years of heroic work, the CPR's "ribbons of steel" fulfilled a national dream. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 23)

This generic structure downplays racism in Canada's past while, at the same time, positioning the discrimination that it does acknowledge in terms of a better present. Racism in Canada's present is rarely acknowledged in citizenship texts or ESL textbooks. An exception, as will be discussed below, occurs when immigrant voices are quoted at length, for example, in Kingwell, Bonkowski, Stephenson, and Holmes (2005, pp. 13–14).

Great Canadians: Gendered and Racialized Greatness

Canadian ESL textbooks and citizenship guides also engage in banal nationalism through the claiming of famous individuals to represent us. The stories of specific individuals become nationalized as our stories, claiming of "their" accomplishments as "our" accomplishments. Analyzing the social actors selected to be national heroes, how they are named, and the qualities attributed to them suggest particular ways in which the nation is being imagined.

I searched the ESL textbooks and citizenship guides for articles or passages that referenced or described individual Canadians; mentions were only selected if the individual (a) was named, (b) was represented as significant or accomplished, and (c) was described as Canadian or their significance was nationalized as Canadian. In total, there were 242 references to 197 different individuals (several were named in more than one of the textbooks). Less than a third of the representations of famous people were representations of women. In this section, I refer to these individuals as 'great Canadians,' as the texts often do.

These texts select specific social actors to nationalize and then imbue them with attributes which are transferred, sometimes quite explicitly, to all Canadians. Texts nationalize some individuals, describing them as Canadian or belonging to Canada: Alexandre Despatie is a “*Canadian* diving star” (Zuern, 2005, pp. 13–14, emphasis added) and Sir Sandford Fleming is “*Canada’s* inventor of standard time” (Zuern, 2007, pp. 81–82, emphasis added). The personality characteristics of these nationalized actors are described so that readers may infer those characteristics as Canadian characteristics: “Canadians are inventive people. Here are some of Canada’s most famous inventions and inventors” (Zuern, 2003, pp. 75–76). By representing universal characteristics such as inventiveness, generosity, determination, courage, and compassion as Canadian characteristics, readers are invited to see these traits in themselves when they imagine themselves as part of this larger imagined community.

The selection of actors from Canadian history to represent Canada reproduces a country that was imagined as white and male. At 71% (172 out of 242), the majority of the “great Canadians” identified in these ESL textbooks and citizenship guides were men.

Certain fields were more widely represented amongst “great Canadian” men than “great Canadian” women. Authors and artists were prevalent amongst the 70 (29%) mentions of female “great Canadians.” Of these, 19 were mentions of musicians, singers, or dancers: Alannah Myles, Alanis Morissette, Anne Murray, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Celine Dion, Diana Krall, Joni Mitchell, Karen Kain, k.d. lang, Mary Pickford, Melissa Etheridge, Nelly Furtado, Shania Twain, and Susan Aglukark (some were mentioned twice); seven mentions were of authors: Alice Munro, Ann-Marie MacDonald, Lucy Maud Montgomery, Margaret Atwood, Margaret Laurence, Pauline Johnson (“a popular Métis author”, Cameron & Derwing, 2010, pp. 123–124) and Susanna Moodie; there were five references to two artists (Emily Carr and Kenojuak); and five references to athletes (Chantal Petitclerc, Cassie Campbell, Silken Laumann, Perdita Felicien, and Sharon Wood). Cartoonist Lynn Johnston is recognized, as is supermodel Linda Evangelista (Berish & Thibaudeau, 1998b, p. 16). The five Dionne Quintuplets appear, described as “Canadian media darlings,” but the text says little about their character or accomplishments and much more about the public

fascination with them and their family life (Zuern, 2005, pp. 37–38). In these cultural fields, women are almost as prevalent as men or more so.

In other arenas, women numbered far fewer than men. Female politicians and social activists were less common than male politicians. Textbooks mentioned women's rights advocates Nellie McClung (Zuern, 2003, pp. 19–20), Emily Murphy (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 123), Dr. Emily Stowe, Therese Casgrain (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012, p. 21), and Mary Ann Shadd Carey (p. 16), who join Laura Secord and Susanna Moodie (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 31) as some of the few women noted as "famous historical figures" in these textbooks.

Although these differences in representations could be seen as reflecting historical exclusions, the texts do not elaborate on these exclusions, nor do they identify racism or sexism as significant aspects of Canada's history. The texts leave the causes underexplored. Even in a short biography of Nellie McClung, which gives some information about ways in which women were excluded, there is no discussion of who enacted these exclusions and who benefitted from them:

"Women had to fight for equality and the right to vote" (Zuern, 2003, p. 19);

"Women had few rights" (Zuern, 2003, p. 19);

"As a young girl, she questioned why women weren't allowed to do the same things as men". (Zuern, 2003, p. 19)

The texts do not mention why women had to fight for equality, who they had to fight, and who disallowed women from doing the same things as men, as if carefully policed gender lines had emerged accidentally until a few brave women pointed them out. In the selected textbooks and study guides, passages discussing women's rights adopt what Fairclough (2003) called a "logic of appearances," answering questions about the subject such as "where," "when," and "what" but lacking an "explanatory logic" that would address more pedagogically critical questions such as "for who," "from whom," and "why."

Another way in which the contributions of "great Canadians" have been gendered is in the selection of a social agent that these figures are

said to represent or be appreciated by. In Zuern (2007), Steve Nash “Canada’s basketball MVP” is described as a “famous Canadian” and “the most famous Canadian ever to play professional basketball” (p. 3). Hockey player Cassie Campbell, on the other hand, is “one of Canada’s most popular *female* athletes” and “a hero and a role model *to thousands of young Canadian girls* who love to play hockey” (pp. 5–6, emphasis added). While Nash is “Canadian,” Campbell is a *female athlete*. While Nash is a hero to all “Canadians,” Campbell is a role model to *Canadian girls*.

Articles described Paralympian Rick Hansen as a “Canadian hero” (Bates, 1991, p. 146) and Terry Fox as “a hero to all Canadians for his courage and strength” (Cameron & Derwing, 2010, p. 122). The fame and popularity of male athletes is nationalized, while Campbell’s popularity is also gendered. Through such selective markings, masculinity becomes the unmarked category and becomes more closely linked with nationality. Men become “Canadian” and get to represent Canada. Women also represent Canada, but as women or as representatives of part of the nation, not the nation as a whole.

When examining the arguments made for the significance of certain Canadians, one finds other gendered assumptions. Namely, in their representations of women heroes, the texts more frequently stress the relevance of familial responsibilities. The family responsibilities of great Canadian men are rarely discussed, while the family responsibilities of great Canadian women are more often considered relevant. For example, a story about Tommy Douglas, politician and social reformer, being voted ‘greatest Canadian’ appears in Zuern (2005, p. 47), but no mention is made whether Douglas was married or had children (he was and did). Readers of a story about Nellie McClung in Zuern (2003) are told that “marriage and five children did not stop McClung” (p. 19). While she is described as a wife and mother, Douglas is described as the “father of Canadian medicare” (Zuern, 2005, p. 47). The difference is even more striking in “Family Firm,” an article describing “one of Canada’s great entrepreneurs” Frank Stronach and his daughter businesswoman and politician Belinda Stronach (Zuern, 2003, pp. 25–26). The portion of the article describing Frank Stronach mentions his ambition, his emigration from Austria, his early struggle to establish himself,

his personal characteristics, and his eventual success. Belinda Stronach is likewise characterized as independent and successful; she is, however, also described as “a mother of two young children. Her husband is Johann Olav Koss, an Olympic speed-skating champion from Norway” (p. 25).

Gendering of women, both in public discourses and in many of these texts, frequently represents them as having familial responsibilities and their success as being naturally constrained or limited by these responsibilities. Men, on the other hand, are not held textually responsible for these familial commitments, normalizing in language a gendered reality. Men become “fathers of the nation,” not fathers of actual children. At the same time, they become more closely tied to national identity—more Canadian.

In these ways, masculinity becomes the unmarked norm in the texts. Female “great Canadians,” when they are represented, have their contributions gendered. Similarly, most of the “great Canadians” are not racialized, but some are. Stories about those who would be racialized as white tend not to discuss their places of origin, ethnicity, or religion; stories about non-white great Canadians note ethnic, racial, or religious identities and include discussions of the non-white communities to whom they are heroes. While Jordin Tootoo is noted as having “played for Canada in the World Junior Championships” (Zuern, 2005, p. 29), he is described as “a hero in Nunavut” (p. 29), not in Canada, and the “first Inuit hockey player in the National Hockey League” (p. 29).

Representations of non-white Canadians often include observations of how they were the first person of their racialized group to hold a particular position, but the texts never discuss why. Governor General Michaëlle Jean is described as “a Haitian-born immigrant who came to Canada as a refugee” and “the first black person to hold this influential position” but not as a Canadian. White (1997) characterizes Louis Riel as “a famous Métis who lived in Manitoba and fought for the rights of his people” (p. 23) and Kenjuak as “one of the first Native Canadians to receive the Order of Canada” (p. 53). Cameron and Derwing (2010) describes Pauline Johnson as “a popular Métis author” and John Kim Bell as “a famous Native composer” (p. 123). Thus, while some Canadians have their racial identities marked, whiteness becomes unmarked and invisible. The dominant pattern is to consider the ancestry of people

of color to be relevant enough to mention in the texts, while not mentioning the same in biographies or references to people of European ancestry.

The presence of hyphenated identities is nuanced for several reasons. Mahtani (2002) writes “these hyphens of multiculturalism in effect operate to produce spaces of distance, in which ethnicity is positioned outside Canadianness” (p. 78), particularly when they are required only of some Canadians and not others (see also Bannerji, 2000). In some cases, these multicultural identities and accomplishments may be those selected by the “great Canadians” to whom they refer.

It may be challenging to produce a narrative of Canadian history that does not repeat the racism and sexism that has led to a nation dominated by white males. However, these texts seem to position these individuals and their achievements as evidence of Canada’s openness, but too often without a frank acknowledgment of the racism and sexism that still exists.

Stories About “You”

The stories being told about Canada and Canadians—stories that deny or downplay racism and legitimize nationhood—are positive self-presentations of Canada. The overarching principle of group construction in ideological discourse is one of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. Van Dijk (2000) represented this principle as an “ideological square,” observing that, given the usual binary US-THEM pairs of ingroups and outgroups common to discourse on immigration and ethnic relations, discursive representations tend towards four possibilities: (1) emphasize positive things about “us,” (2) de-emphasize negative things about “us,” (3) de-emphasize positive things about “them,” (4) emphasize negative things about “them” (p. 44).

The stories told in these texts, however, are not addressed to an ingroup, but to those who would become part of that group. They explicitly assume the pedagogical function of teaching the imagined community of Canada to a group that is positioned as potentially Canadian. Readers of these texts are expected to acquire both citizenship

and the appropriate discourses. The ideological square in these texts replaces “them” with “you,” about whom stories are also told. These stories provide possibilities for inclusion in the imagined community of Canada.

Immigrant Success Stories

Stories in these textbooks imagine Canada as a place in which hard work and good character are rewarded with eventual financial or emotional success. Gulliver (2010) discussed the immigrant success stories in textbooks and showed how the stories of newcomers told in these books were presented in a generic narrative pattern. In my analysis of immigrant success stories, I identified five elements that reoccur in the majority of ESL textbooks, often in this order:

- *Departures and Arrivals* in which texts discussed reasons immigrants chose to come to Canada, emphasizing the positive things about Canada or negative things about the country of origin;
- *Period of struggle* in which immigrants are portrayed as experiencing a period of economic difficulty and in which challenges of immigration are acknowledged, with hard work, volunteerism, and remaining positive portrayed as solutions;
- *Eventual success* in which the success, usually financial, of the subjects of these stories is described;
- *Reasons for success* in which the personal characteristics of the successful immigrants are discussed;
- *Affirmations of success* in which the immigrant subjects’ own voices are used to express gratitude to Canada.

These texts tell stories of immigrants and refugees who came to Canada with very little and, through hard work and good character, went on to become successful real estate entrepreneurs (Zuern, 2005, p. 23) or industrialists (p. 25). These success stories are, no doubt, intended to be encouraging and supportive to struggling newcomers; they also imagine Canada as a redeemer of immigrants and leave Canada uncritiqued and

blameless for the social and economic challenges these immigrants face. Where the failure of immigrants to integrate into Canada is mentioned, it is attributed to their lack of positive qualities or their possession of certain negative qualities. Finally, they position newcomers as marginal members of the nation, people who may become full members only through their hard work and through the nation's redemptive qualities.

Immigrant Voices

Stories of immigrant experiences, largely drawn from newspapers and reproduced in language textbooks for adult newcomers, often used a handful of short direct quotes or indirect reports of speech from the newcomer to provide factual information and to support the overall narrative. Considering the stories were about newcomers to Canada, the stories often included very little of the newcomers' own voices.

Fairclough (2003) described the range of options available for introducing the voices of others into a text, presenting them from more dialogical (direct quotation, concrete summaries) to less dialogical forms of inclusion (indirect reporting, inclusion only of others' voice to support the main contentions in the text) to the least dialogical (exclusion or framing of those voices in ways that distances or disclaims them) (pp. 41–42). He also described a number of “orientations to difference” that a text could take, such as:

- a. an openness to, acceptance of, recognition of difference; an exploration of difference, as in “dialogue” in the richest sense of the term;
- b. an accentuation of difference, conflict, or polemic, a struggle over meaning, norms, or power;
- c. an attempt to resolve or overcome difference;
- d. a bracketing of difference, a focus on commonality, solidarity; and
- e. consensus, a normalization and acceptance of differences of power which brackets or suppresses differences of meaning and norms (pp. 41–42).

When texts employed the most dialogical forms of introducing voices (extensive direct quotes), they also displayed the greatest “orientation to difference” in terms of critiques of Canada. Only when immigrant newcomers were allowed to speak, did frank discussions about racism in Canada and the experiences of immigrant newcomers appear.

Of the 40 immigrant experience stories I identified in textbooks, the majority represented immigrants as successful and praised Canada and hard work for their success; a few mentioned regrets and mixed feelings. Short direct quotes of immigrant voices served different purposes in these texts: they provided factual information throughout the text; they expressed praise for or express gratitude to Canada; and they critiqued other immigrant newcomers for not having the qualities required for success, providing the only direct critiques of immigrants in the texts.

Explicit critiques of Canada were rare in these immigrant experience stories. The few narratives of immigrant experience that broke from this pattern—stories that express regret or ambivalence in regards to immigration to Canada, or discuss experiences of racism in Canada, or question the fairness of Canadian immigration policies—tended to be those written by the immigrant whose experience was being represented or who were more extensively quoted (Kingwell et al., 2005, pp. 13–14). The more a text demonstrated an openness to immigrant voices at the surface level, the more likely it was to introduce competing discourses about Canada. The greatest orientation to difference only appeared in these immigrant experience stories with sustained use of the more dialogic options for inclusion of voices: extensive direct quotation.

Conclusion

This chapter summarized a decade of analysis into the subtle threads of racism and sexism woven into discourses on Canada. I have shown how banal and seemingly benign representations of Canada used in texts intended for ESL classrooms have reproduced these discourses. The goal of this research has been to challenge myself and readers to critically examine common discourses regarding Canada and Canadian-ness,

discourses that we might be tempted to reproduce in the classrooms in which we teach.

At the beginning of the 2020s, the racism and sexism is increasingly less subtle, and the nationalism is both less benign and less banal. With the world autocratizing and adopting more openly racist, sexist, and classist discourses, one does not need critical discourse analysis to draw the racism and sexism to the surface. I predict that discourses denying racism in Canada's past and downplaying racism in Canada's present will increasingly conflict with the experiences of adult newcomer students. Textbooks and classrooms that make room for the voices of refugee and immigrant newcomers will increasingly resonate.

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11

Remix Nationalism and Critical Language Education

Joel Windle and Brian Morgan

This chapter is concerned with the implications for critical language education of the rise of right-wing populist and ethno-chauvinist movements that comprise neo-nationalism (Eger & Valdez, 2015). Neo-nationalism draws upon and resignifies older nationalist moments in ways that expose how “tradition is the creation of the future out of the past” (Glassie, 1995). There is a now classic literature on the invention of traditions in the formation of the nation-state (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012) and its development into an “imagined community” (Anderson, 1983). Here, we seek to draw attention to some of the semiotic dimensions of this imagination by introducing the notion of remix nationalism. Remix nationalism, we argue, can provide a focus for critical examination of the semiotic strategies used by neo-nationalist movements to target minoritized groups, students, schools and progressive educators.

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Novel communication strategies play important organizational roles in neo-nationalism through forms of appropriation and assemblage that share common elements across national settings, including those in which we work: Canada and Brazil. The term “remix” originates in the way that DJs mix together rhythms and existing music, combining elements from different sources and musical traditions to create something new. By extension, it has been applied to semiotic mixes whose online production and circulation have become widely available. Maia (2015) defined this type of remix as follows:

The way in which users put different languages into play [...] by mixing them together to produce new and different meanings. More specifically, remix is characterized by its work with multimodality, as it represents the combination of different media—and thus of different languages—in a new type of expression, a hybrid product generated by multiple semiosis. (pp. 86–87)

Drawing on this semiotic foundation and our observations of recent Canadian and Brazilian political experiences, we identify the following elements of remix nationalism that are relevant to language education:

1. Intensive efforts to discredit traditional communication channels and institutions;
2. A rescaling and resignification of semiotic repertoires and exchanges between historic and contemporary nationalist movements;
3. Complex modes of textual circulation, involving multiple actors and algorithms, and high volume and frequency of output;
4. Integration of online and offline worlds.

Neo-nationalist politicians have sought to undermine traditional democratic forms of public deliberation while promoting alternative communication channels. This current of post-truth anti-intellectualism can be characterized as systematic in its approach and transnational in its reach, as Stanley (2018) detailed:

Student protests are misrepresented in the press as riots by undisciplined mobs, threats to the civil order. [...] [U]niversities are debased

in public discourse, and academics are undermined as legitimate sources of knowledge and expertise, represented as radical “Marxist” or “feminists” spreading a leftist ideological agenda under the guise of research. By debasing institutions of higher learning and impoverishing our joint vocabulary to discuss policy, fascist politics reduces debate to ideological conflict. Via such strategies, fascist politics degrades information spaces, occluding reality. (pp. 55–56)

Such degradation of information spaces takes place not only in universities but also in public sites (real and virtual) where “new” deliberative modalities increasingly supplant older forms of persuasion, utilizing digital resources and social media in ways that inflame emotion and smother debate.

The rhetorical effectiveness of remix nationalism lies in its creative combination of local and trans-national semiotic resources—performed, embodied and mobilized in contextually relevant ways. Such strategies reflect Rutherford’s (2000) key observation that we have moved from a “marketplace of ideas” to a “marketplace of signs” in our political practises, especially in education, where hegemonic ideals of the nation are vigorously promoted. Arguably, a marketplace of signs acts on us (i.e., incites or interpellates our engagement) in ways qualitatively different from how ideas are exchanged. There is an inherent polysemic and affective potential to the circulation of signs that much traditional language education fails to address, focusing instead on communicative efficacy and surface grammar.

The preeminent narratives of neo-nationalism are generated through heavy reliance on online and mobile communicative affordances. This reliance has produced terms such as “digital populism” (Cesarino, 2019) and “algorithmic populism” (Maly, 2018) that are focused on new types of interaction with electoral texts and messages. Online messages are, as Blommaert (2019) has observed, increasingly integrated into offline social structures:

[...] we live our social, cultural, political and economic lives in an online-offline nexus, in which both ‘zones’ –the online and the offline –can no longer be separated and must be seen as fused into a bewildering range

of new online-offline practices of social interaction, knowledge exchange, learning, community formation and identity work. (p. 1)

Remix nationalism appropriates online strategies developed primarily in subversive and marginalized communities as part of a new, hegemonic online-offline semiotic nexus. Historically, offline dissemination of citizenship discourses was controlled through the concentration of mainstream media ownership (cf. Noam Chomsky's propaganda model), through which superficial political differences and choices disguised a "manufacturing of consent" (Herman & Chomsky, 1988) in support of a more fundamental, elite consensus underpinning capitalism and its related forms of neo-colonial, class, gender and racial exploitation. Excluded from mainstream media, anti-capitalist and anarchist groups flourished in nascent online environments, where they explored and refined digital, multimodal techniques based on new, online affordances. These affordances were also critical for organizational purposes—in the creation of virtual communities capable of coordinating and publicizing opposition.

The term *culture jamming*, first introduced to the mainstream by Mark Dery in a 1990 *New York Times* article (DeLaure & Fink, 2017), defines a broad range of online-offline oppositional activities, notably characterized by strategies of appropriation, parody, and varied forms of public disobedience (i.e., graffiti, "fake" rallies and satirical news-casts; cf. carnivalesque humour, Bakhtin, 1981). Citing Umberto Eco, Dery (2017) aptly described culture jamming as a form of "semiological guerrilla warfare" (p. 46). Kalle Lasn (1999), one of the founders of the Adbusters organization, applied the term "meme warfare" to highlight the confrontational semiotic objective behind the culture jamming movement. Online, culture jammers have utilized digital tools to produce anti-capitalist and anti-consumerist images with the goal of disrupting our cognitive acquiescence. Organizations such as Adbusters have designed inventive spoof ads or "subvertisements" that appropriate and imitate corporate originals. Indeed, as in the case of musical harmony and the intensified dissonance generated by tonal frequencies in close contact, it is often the close stylistic and content imitation of

familiar symbols in advertising that makes a particular subvertisement so culturally disorienting and hence effective.

Perhaps Adbusters' most infamous example is its corporate U.S. flag, designed by Shi-Zhe Yung, in which the stars were replaced with the logos of major American corporations (Adbusters, 2020b). It is a provocative image that exemplifies the politics and rhetoric of remix nationalism (i.e., multimodal play and semiotic "disobedience"): the nation-state depicted as a failed democracy beholden to its billionaires. This oppositional message is further enhanced by the materiality of public ritual and obligation conventionally aligned with flag display (i.e., its hybrid multimodality; Maia, 2015), but also by the collective emotion invested in the flag as a symbol of nation-state identity and its professed exceptionalism instilled over generations. This latter point invokes the relatable concept of *postmemory* (Hirsch, 2008; Mattos & Amâncio, 2018), the intergenerational transfer of collective memories associated with genocide, nation-state oppression and its resulting and enduring trauma. In regard to remix nationalism, postmemory is always implicated in the marketplace of signs—in culture jamming strategies and in the varied receptions of heterogenous audiences engaged with polysemic and transemiotic texts (Blommaert, 2019).

As Macauley (2019) recently noted, right-wing populist movements have "embrace[d] the anti-establishment and anti-elite rhetoric of the old left" (p. 190). Key to this embrace, we believe, is a co-optation of culture jamming attitudes and strategies in the service of remix nationalism. While the United States is perhaps the paradigmatic example of the semiotics of remix nationalism, and Europe has a long history of far-right politics that have evolved into neo-nationalist movements, here we focus on Canada and Brazil, our own personal and professional locations. Below we outline some of the specificities of each context, between turning to examples of critical educational work that can provide a response to open up space for critical student reflection. We come to this task as scholars who have collaborated through a transnational project centered on critical literacy and second language teacher education that involves the two countries, and draw on our own classroom experiences to offer suggestions for how criticality can be developed with language students in the contexts of remix nationalism.

Militarist Remix Nationalism

Remix-nationalism has gained center stage in Brazil through the surprise election of far-right presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro in 2018. A former military officer running for a previously tiny political party, the PSL (the Social Liberal Party), Bolsonaro participated in none of the presidential debates and had virtually no broadcast advertising time. Instead, his election campaign was run primarily through social media, including Twitter, Facebook and Whatsapp groups. Cesarino (2019) observed of these Whatsapp groups:

The less-than-spontaneous character of the digital content circulating in these bubbles was evident in the consistency of its underlying discursive patterns. Although during the campaign, messages would arrive by the hundreds on a daily basis, virtually all such content could be classified in terms of five basic functions: to draw a friend-enemy frontier; to bolster the leader's charisma and trace continuities between himself and his followers; to keep the public mobilized through alarmistic or conspiratory messages; to cannibalize and turn the opponents' accusations around; and to displace mainstream sources of authoritative knowledge such as the press and academics. (para. 3)

The prominence of these coordinated communication channels, and particularly conservative Whatsapp groups, has been maintained into the Bolsonaro government. Much of their combative semiotic content involves mobilisation of memory and post-memory of the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964–1985), of which Bolsonaro is an avowed supporter. Militarism is indexed gesturally through Bolsonaro's imitation of firing a machine gun during political rallies (which is repeated by his supporters), and materially in the launch of his new political party with artwork made entirely of bullet casings (see <https://rb.gy/6dpujz>). The name of this party, Alliance for Brazil, echoes that of the official dictatorship-era party, Arena, while the number chosen for its registration in the electoral system, 38, indexes a .38 caliber firearm. Rather than merely reproducing dictatorship-era rhetoric, Bolsonaro and his party also appropriate other nationalisms and neoliberal economics. The Alliance for Brazil platform paraphrases sections of the U.S. Declaration

of Independence and attaches the concept of freedom prominently to protection of business and private property.

The centrality of neoliberal economics to the Brazilian remix nationalist imaginary is not only a signal of commitment to local economic elites, but also of the dependent and subordinate status of Brazil in global capitalism, wherein the US exerts hegemonic influence over Latin America. The United States as an aspirational economic model and, under President Donald Trump, as a political inspiration, is hence worked into Brazilian remix nationalism in refracted and direct forms. Members of Bolsonaro's inner circle, including his sons, are regularly photographed posing in Trump campaign baseball caps, and words of praise and encouragement from Trump are circulated amongst Bolsonaro supporters online.

A more dramatic refraction of U.S. nationalism is evident in a video of Bolsonaro supporters saluting in front of a replica of the Statue of Liberty <https://rb.gy/irn8bj>. The video comes from a rally held at the front of department store Havan, owned by a Bolsonaro campaigner and known for façades that resemble the White House and for Statue of Liberty replicas (Fig. 11.1). Marching on the spot to the anthem of the Brazilian army and wearing the green and yellow colors of the Brazilian football team, the protesters raised their arms in a military salute.

This embodied and symbolic remix mobilizes U.S. patriotic symbols, Brazilian militarist symbols, and symbols of mass commodification. The Brazilian national football team colors have gained particular significance for neo-nationalists as a mark of opposition to the red of left-wing groups. The remix is made available through the kitsch aesthetic of the Havan department store, whose owner has faced charges for coercing his employees to vote for Bolsonaro in the 2018 election.

The links to Trump and U.S. neo-nationalism extend beyond this symbolism to include the exchange of communication tactics through transnational political meetings. In 2019, Eduardo Bolsonaro, the son of President Jair Bolsonaro, "imported" the U.S.-based Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), which provided a platform for the sharing of strategies. White House communications strategist Mercedes Schlapp, Fox News commentator Mathew Schlapp and Republican Senator Mike Lee were keynote speakers at the Brazilian event. The



Fig. 11.1 A replica of the Statue of Liberty in front of the Havan department store, Brazil

opening presentation by Eduardo Bolsonaro focused on communication strategies involving viral YouTube videos and Twitter arguments. Appropriating culture-jamming techniques, he argued that the right should focus their rhetorical strategy on the use of memes to counter political enemies, showing a Twitter thread, in which he humiliated an opponent (Bolsonaro, 2019a, October 15, min. 22–27).

Perhaps the most prominent proponent of culture-jamming communication strategies is Abraham Weintraub, Minister for Education in the Bolsonaro Government, who has argued that the right can beat the left in arguments by being funnier. His own forays into this strategy include an official press conference that he ended by donning a pair of “pixe-lated” cardboard sunglasses in the style of a popular animated reaction meme known as “deal with it”. Variations of these memes, usually a GIF that involves falling sunglasses, were popularized and circulated on sites

such as Tumblr from the mid 2000s onwards. Weintraub's final gesture was a "mike drop" and a phrase spoken in English: "Abe is out."

The mike drop, like the "deal with it" meme, is a provocative and self-congratulatory move. Dropping a microphone at the end of a performance emerged in rap battles and at the end of comedy sets as a dramatic closing, triumphal gesture. Weintraub's performance mixes online and offline elements in a carefully orchestrated mash-up whose force is in its capacity to be recognized as, and shared as, a meme. Weintraub subsequently offered his own explanation of his departure from ministerial protocol, claiming that his phrase "Abe is out" was in the spirit of *sextei* (similar to the online tag TGIF, or "Thank God it's Friday"), and inspired by Elvis Presley. The metapragmatic reflection further points to the reframing of a press conference as eminently shareable (online and in conversations) and as entertainment rather than merely information. Weintraub himself posted a video of the press conference on Twitter with a triumphant caption taunting his critics to "admit they were wrong" and making use of a sunglasses emoji to index his own performance.

The careful attention to such hybrid communication strategies is evident not merely in conservative performances but also in an almost obsessive concern with what is perceived to be left-wing control over cultural institutions, education, and even language. Eduardo Bolsonaro, in his final speech of 2019 to the National Congress, observed that:

We must pay attention to the cultural agenda, which is closest to the left's heart. The proof of this is the recent wave created by the media to try and bring down Minister Abraham Weintraub. He spent a month under intense fire because he was the one who holds back gender ideology, who puts into place military colleges, which are where students study and that parents most want because they bring discipline. He is the minister who was able to guarantee a quality ENEM [national high school examination] without ideologization (sic). Remember in the past the ENEM citing feminism, and another year citing the transvestite dictionary. And for the first time you have a test that is, let us say, normal. (Bolsonaro, 2019b, December 18)

This statement, like many others from the Bolsonaro government, indexes the educational model of the military dictatorship (mobilizing

postmemory) and sets up an irreconcilable moral conflict between neo-nationalists on one hand and leftist agitators on the other. The need to repress those who are different (in terms of gender and sexuality, for example) is signaled by the exclusion of these themes from school examinations.

Teaching the Sociolinguistics of Struggle

The attempted erasure of difference in neo-nationalism provides an opening for critical language education to engage with counter-hegemonic semiotic hybridity and community building. The topic of sociolinguistic variation within an undergraduate class on English phonetics and phonology offered space for students to reflect on the connections between power and language in the context of political struggles, including the very same ones referenced by remix nationalism: the (post)memory of the military dictatorship and control over gender and sexual norms in education.

In the final task for the class, as it was taught by Joel in the first year of the Bolsonaro government, students were asked to write a 500-word essay on the following topic: “How can learning about sociolinguistic variation contribute to increased respect for diversity and to intercultural understanding and communication that promotes social inclusion?” This topic built on classes that had discussed how phonological features of speech index social identities (e.g., culture, “race,” gender, sexuality, regionality, social class, ethnicity, nationality, and “native-speaker” status). Discussions included examples of sociolinguistic variation in English, as well as comparisons with how variation is treated in other languages (such as Brazilian Portuguese). Classes further examined how sociolinguistic variation and the way it is viewed (i.e., language ideologies) contribute to phenomena such as nationalism, pride, resistance, self-expression, capitalist exploitation, and oppression.

Joel introduced examples from African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and its cinematic treatment in the film *Sorry to Bother You*, Multicultural London English and its treatment in the English series *Chewing Gum*, New York Latin-American English through the film

Raising Victor Vargas, camp stylistics through the documentary *Paris is Burning*, Aboriginal English through the documentary *In my Blood it Runs*, and Received Pronunciation through shifts in the pronunciation of Queen Elizabeth. These sources were used to identify some of the ways in which boundaries are set-up between sociolinguistic varieties and semiotic repertoires, as well as challenged or resisted. For example, the 2018 film *Sorry to Bother You* takes place in a call center where the mostly black workers must adopt what they term “white voice” in order to win over customers, addressing connections between race, capitalism and language. Such examples further showed some of the ways in which sociolinguistic varieties and semiotic repertoires come into contact or mix (within languages, between languages, locally or transnationally, online or offline), and how individuals move between codes (and why), or how codes themselves can change.

The task prompted a number of students to reflect on the national high school examination cited above by Eduardo Bolsonaro as including a question on a “transvestite dictionary.” The intensified culture-wars debate over this examination, paradoxically, drew media attention to this question, which in fact related to a linguistic formation known as *Pajubá*. The following excerpt from the student essay written by Bianca gives a sense of the debate and *Pajubá*:

Brazilian people went crazy when on ENEM test they found a question asking about the *Pajubá* dialect, no one was expecting that. The language seemed strange and not a reality in Brazil, but nowadays, people use it in everyday life. *Pajubá* is a dialect that was spoke only by the LGBTQ+ community, it is a mix of informal language, *Nagô* and *Iorubá* language (ethnic groups that were brought to Brazil from Africa during the slavery).

Nowadays, we see on the internet and informal conversations words like “Mona”, “lacre”, “uó”, “babado” and so on. These words came from *Pajubá* and before becoming widely used, *Pajubá* was a survival tool. Back in the 80’s the LGBTQ+ community was largely persecuted by the police and the government. In São Paulo 1987 there was an operation called “Operação tarântula”, the aim was to persecute the LGBTQ+ people with the excuse of a hunt against HIV, the way that the community found to survive throughout this operation was communicating with each other using *Pajubá*, so they could warn each other about the police.

Besides that, Pajubá tries to break the heteronormativity of language, the community usually change the male end in words and put an “ã” (that would be a female form). Pajubá also attacks the moralistic ideals about drugs and sex, using a big variety of words to describe sex in all its forms and not only heterosexual sex, for example. More than a LGBTQ+ dialect, Pajubá is an instrument to challenge the rules of gender and sexuality, a way of make fun or “gongar” the rules that oppress the minority. It is an attempt to create an identity to a historically oppressed community.

This is a specific phenomenon in Brazil with the LGBTQ+ community that shows how language can be used as a tool to resist, as a way to create an identity, to embrace the community and to create a sense of pride for people that has been so much oppressed. Also, this is not only about LGBTQ+ community in Brazil, but about all the oppressed communities that along history fought and found a way to stand up and speak their own languages, to be proud of themselves and to resist the straight white male society.

In this account, Bianca notes the online/offline nexus in which Pajubá functions as an important counter-hegemonic remix that has been part of historical struggles against oppressive forms of nationalism, including repression during the years of Brazil’s dictatorship and aftermath and during moral panics about the AIDs crisis. Bianca’s work also shows evidence of her affective and intellectual engagement with social movements that challenge neo-nationalism, through the use of concepts such as heteronormativity. Identifying lexical, morphological and pragmatic elements of Pajubá, Bianca ties these to transgressive practices that resist “the straight white male society”. This is a potentially risky position to adopt in the current political climate, but it is one that clearly positions the author (a trainee teacher) on the side of the students she will encounter in Brazilian public schools, a majority of whom are from groups marginalized by Brazilian neo-nationalism, and demonstrates the analytical tools she possesses for assisting them to question the moralistic, chauvinistic and racist discourses that surround them.

A second student, Isadora, demonstrates how anti-nationalist linguistic remixes also have a transnational and plurilingual dimension, drawing links to English-based usages:

LGBTQIA communities, both in the US and in Brazil, are proud to have a distinct set of vocabulary (here known as **pajubá**). This particular vocabulary can be very opaque to those who are not part of the community and help build a strong sense of identity, belonging and self-expression among those who share it. Nevertheless, in a contrary and slow movement, some pieces of vocabulary are added to the English shared by most people: it is the case of the word “shade” which refers to talking to or about someone in a sarcastic way. Other features, such as the nazalization of the word honey (rewritten as **henny**) are also widespread.

It is also possible to note that most of the speakers previously cited (Latinx, African Americans and LGBTQIA Americans, as well as Afro-Brazilians, LGBTQIA Brazilians and citizens who live in favela) can use partly or entirely the formal code of their languages (English or Portuguese). This generates a switch between codes, in which speakers change their codes when within their own communities or formal settings (such as jobs and academia). Famous writers also incorporate this feature in their literary works. For instance, Geovani Martins, Brazilian author of *O Sol na Cabeça* is known for having built a short story called *Rolezin* - which is a slang term commonly used among teenagers from lower classes that stands for going out with your friends.

Here, Pajubá is positioned as part of a diasporic remix, with the lexical and phonemic features identified in paragraph one in the U.S. context, also evident as part of Brazilian Portuguese, primarily in online interactions (Windle & Ferreira, 2019). The use of AAVE in Brazil’s urban peripheries, as Isadora suggests, is a part of complex modes of circulation and incorporation of indexical orders across boundaries. Although many Brazilians consider that variations in Brazilian Portuguese have little connection to racial identity, both Isadora and Bianca make these links explicit. Isadora notes a further subversive linguistic phenomenon that can be thought of in terms of anti-nationalist remix as the distinctive language of the urban periphery—a space that is heavily stigmatized—is incorporated into a high cultural literary form and a specific social experience. The *Rolezin* is not merely an outing with friends but also a foray into the restricted social spaces of the city, such as the shopping center, which provokes moral panic and sometimes repression from police and security guards. The linguistic, geographical and racial intrusion of the

Rolezin is not only deeply disturbing to neo-nationalists, but its literary presence is a further threat to the established cultural order.

These remixes involve a particular kind of affective investment and resistance/survival strategies relate to the distinct social experiences of Brazilian university students and their openness to critical language education even in a context of increasing repression. The positive post-memory of the dictatorship evoked by remix nationalism is countered by the postmemory of the oppressed in the example of Pajubá. Ironically, Pajubá would never have become known to some of the students participating in the class, including Bianca, were it not for the examination question polemic provoked by neo-nationalist culture warriors. The following reflection, in an email sent by Bianca after the end of the semester, points to ways in which the tight-control over communication sought by neo-nationalists can back-fire through divergent interpretations, and how critical language education can play a role in developing such critique:

I found out about Pajubá from the ENEM polemic, and until then for me it was a dialect of the transgender community that I didn't know or have contact with. Trying to find out more about it, I found that there were numerous words that had been spread online and in the daily life of young people. And so I started thinking about how dialects are not isolated things or exclusive to a group, as prejudiced people tend to think and use as an argument to attack dialects such as Pajubá. I noticed that dialects can emerge from struggle, but that they end up coming into contact with others and connecting so that it gets to the point where you don't know the dialect as such, but use expressions, words and linguistic games that originated in it. Through your subject [phonetics and phonology] I was able to see this question of struggle through language beyond my social bubble and understand that this phenomenon of resistance through language is global. (personal communication, December 12, 2019)

“Soft” Nationalisms and Regional Remix Strategies

The Brazilian context, as well as Eger and Valdez’s (2015) description of neo-nationalist political movements in Western Europe, have important points of contrast and comparison with current Canadian developments. In the October 2019 federal election, the People’s Party of Canada (PPC), a neophyte right-wing party whose platform included cuts to immigration, climate change denial, and strong neoliberal reforms (Patriquin, 2019), received only 1.6% of the national vote and failed to win an electoral seat anywhere in the country. Thus, the defining criteria of neo-nationalism as manifest in “xenophobic anti-immigration policy preferences” (Eger & Valdez, 2015, p. 126) would not seem to apply to Canadian sensibilities at this time. Still, PPC’s electoral failures should be considered in a different interpretive framework; that is, not so much as a wholesale rejection of anti-immigrant populism but instead as a majoritarian discomfort or guilt by association with the intolerance openly expressed by such positions, particularly in a country whose national imaginary over the past century has evolved from white settler colonialism to a now-prevalent ideology of liberal multiculturalism and its concomitant politics of recognition (see Kymlicka, 1998; Taylor, 1994; also Gulliver, this volume) reflected in policies of official French-English bilingualism and in support of multiculturalism.

Thus, Canadians have grown accustomed to official apologies for past racist blunders (e.g., a Chinese Head tax for worker-migrants in the early twentieth century) as well as indigenous land acknowledgements at official gatherings. Yet these public expressions of recognition have not been matched by substantive government action, reflecting a “hierarchy of belonging” and assimilationist underpinnings in the Canadian state despite pronounced openness to ethno-linguistic diversity and indigenous rights (see, for example, Haque & Patrick, 2015). In short, neo-nationalism in Canada might be characterized as a more “polite” and virtue-claiming variety shaped by its history and regional attitudes and conditions.

Two recent examples deserve mention: The first occurred in the province of Québec, where the governing Coalition Avenir Québec

(CAQ) introduced a law requiring prospective immigrants to first pass a “Quebec values” test.¹ The values test follows up on Quebec’s controversial “secularism” law, Bill C-21, which bans prospective public employees from wearing religious symbols such as hijabs, turbans, kippahs and crucifixes in the workplace. Both pieces of legislation allow the state to self-righteously portray itself as safe-guarding cherished values of secularism and gender equality, while absolving itself from more forceful action against minority ethnoreligious discrimination, particularly Islamophobia in Quebec society.

Both pieces of legislation reflect what political sociologist Fredrik Dufour (2019) described as a strategic “nationalizing nationalism” by the conservative CAQ, in which public policies are used to affirm or strengthen social group boundaries and majoritarian interests, “adopt[ing] a style of governance that has concerns about diversity and feeds on polarizing identity politics to mobilize its base” (n. p.). What Dufour saw as contradictory in Quebec is a co-existing “state-building nationalism,” a corporatist model of state intervention in the service of more effective national and global economic competition. Such apparent “contradictions” in fact are consistent with Eger and Valdez’s (2015) description of neo-nationalism in Europe, where many right-wing populist parties have rejected neoliberal reforms in favor of welfare state policies supporting the dominant cultural status quo.

The other recent Canadian example comes from Western Canada and the explosion of regional alienation following the re-election of the federal Liberal Party in spite of its complete electoral decimation in Alberta and Saskatchewan, where the Conservative Party achieved overwhelming support. Taking cues from the Brexit movement in Great Britain, a populist Wexit (i.e., Western Canada separatist) political party has also arisen, hoping to gain an electoral foothold (Anderson, 2019). A key grievance voiced by a majority of Albertans is a perceived lack of federal support for the regionally vital oil and gas industries and the failure to legislate the building of pipelines to expand transportation of

¹Bill 9, an Act to increase Quebec’s socio-economic prosperity and adequately meet labour market needs through successful immigrant integration (National Assembly of Quebec, 2019) requires a 75% minimum passing grade on topics including secularism, same-sex marriage, gender rights, Quebec values, and language laws.

energy resources to markets. Such a decision would be contested by other provinces and stakeholders (e.g., indigenous communities) who are concerned about the environmental risks posed by pipeline expansion, as well as the broader implications for climate change exacerbated by increased carbon extraction. Acting to silence its critics, the United Conservative Party government of Alberta has created the Canadian Energy Centre or “energy war room” to research and dispel what it claims are “myths about the province’s energy sector spread by alleged foreign-funded activists” (Leavitt, 2020, n. p.). This last initiative, the use of public funds to discredit environmentalists and label them as “foreign/other” represents a new form of claimed nationalistic victimhood: “us,” the “oppressed” nation of oil, now unified and mobilized against “them,” deceitful “foreigners” with illegitimate and immoral agendas.

Both Canadian examples suggest unique forms of right-wing populism. Unlike the anti-immigrant neo-nationalism described by Eger and Valdez (2015) in Europe, however, the Canadian cases briefly cited here offer glimpses of the incorporation of “multi-pluri” (Kubota, 2016) discourses and practices into conservative political projects that place tight boundaries around what is construed as “acceptable” or congruent forms of ethnolinguistic diversity. In Québec, the onus on the “establishment of harmonious intercultural relations, [for] the cultural enrichment of Québec society” (National Assembly of Québec, 2019, point 3, item 8) firmly resides with the newcomer—an asymmetrical interculturality at best, and at worst, a potential risk for religious minorities now officially stigmatized and hence made more vulnerable for their public expressions of religiosity irrespective of employment. In Alberta, other contingencies of congruent diversity come into play, in which the “good citizen” can be a bi/multilingual immigrant as long as s/he comes to recognize and resist the threat to the reconfigured nation posed by the “foreign” environmentalist. Both examples, as well, illustrate a fluidity and performativity in right-wing populist discourses (see Macauley, 2019), in which the emotional intensities of historic grievances are rhetorically mobilized for new agendas. This process of reinvention or re-traditionalization reflects Laclau’s (2005) notion of populism as an “empty signifier [...] with only weak links to particular signifieds” (cited in Macauley, 2019, pp. 169–170) and realities outside of their discursual construction.

As in the Brazil examples described above, digital remix tools/affordances figure prominently in the mobilization of emotions. In support of Western Canadian neo-nationalism/separatism, the Wexit Canada Facebook page offers a Trumpian-inspired photograph of a public billboard exclaiming “Lock Him Up!” beside an image of Prime Minister Trudeau. The cover image for the site is a provocative photograph of an adult bison protecting a young bison calf by attacking a predatory wolf and hurling it into the air. Superimposed on the photograph are titles: the calf on the left side of the image is labelled “The West”; the adult bison is prominently centered and labelled “WEXIT” in full caps; image-right, the wolf in painful flight is labelled “Trudeau” (the current Prime Minister) in red font, also the official color of the Liberal Party of Canada. There is a lot going on with this polysemic image/meme and the heterogenous audiences it hails (see, for example, Blommaert, 2019). At one level of contiguous indexicality, the text designers metaphorically and rhetorically position the Wexit Party as the current defenders of Western neo-nationalist interests against a predatory Eastern Canada. But within a longer indexical time scale, the symbolism of the bison and their near extinction from over-hunting during white settler migration west in the late nineteenth century, invokes post-memories of regional historical grievances that seem timeless and hence irreconcilable—a powerful tool/image fueling Western alienation and separatist political agendas.²

Building Critical Affective Literacies: Exploring Remix in an EAP Course

Brian has taught a three-credit, content-based English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course titled “Dealing with Viewpoint” (ENSL 3800 3.0) at Glendon College, York University since 2008. The course seeks

²As Daschuk (2013) meticulously details, the destruction of the bison herds was encouraged by the Canadian government of the time: a politics of starvation and subjugation forcing plains indigenous peoples off the land and into government-controlled reserves. Common cause, as implied by the Wexit image, is indeed an empty signifier (cf. Laclau), whitewashing 150 years of continuing racism and marginalization of First Nations populations.

to develop advanced academic language skills with a particular focus on argumentation in essay writing and oral presentations. As Brian discussed elsewhere (Morgan, 2013; Morgan & Vandrick, 2009), the course examines media literacy, critical citizenship, and related forms of persuasion found in commercial advertising and mainstream media coverage of current events (e.g., politics, popular culture, environment). A key challenge of the course has always been the provision of readings and videos—a critical-analytic tool kit for theoretically informed analyses of texts and their ideological underpinnings.

The course has three main assignments: (1) Comparing two print ads (500–750 words; 1st essay) (2) Small assignment: Analysis of a spoof ad (i.e., culture jamming) (3) Major research essay on a social issue or recent current event (1200–1500 words) (prior small assignments: annotated bibliography of two sources, outline, oral presentation). Regarding the first assignment, one of the initial additions Brian brought to the course was Corbett's (2003) condensed chapter of the first edition of *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996). For assignment 1, Corbett's chapter extends grammatically informed (i.e., Hallidayan social semiotics) analyses to all interacting components of an advertisement and not just its conventional language-based elements. Assignment 2 inadvertently came out of Assignment 1 many years ago, when a student's comparison of two ads—clothing detergents—accidentally included an Adbusters spoof ad about Prozac (Morgan, 2013, 2016), which initiated research and new course readings on culture jamming, its rhetorical tactics (parody, carnivalesque laughter; digital mashups/remixing, trans-semiotic/multimodal texts) as they related to course themes of media literacy and critical citizenship (Dery, 2017; Lasn, 1999).

While introducing culture jamming to his students or presenting the topic at academic conferences, Brian became especially interested in how audiences responded (or didn't) to culture jamming texts—how audiences seemed to be hailed or interpellated in multiple, uneven ways.³ The

³The punk-rock styled, digitally altered photo of Jack Ruby's murder of Lee Harvey Oswald, President Kennedy's assassin, is an interesting example ("In-a-Gadda-da-Oswald," by George Mahlberg; <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/links/cached/introduction/link0.20.in-a-gadda-da-oswald.html>). As presented in class and academic conferences, especially in the USA,

effects on readers/viewers were neither causally direct nor could they be described as indeterminate, open to infinite semiotic play (cf. Derrida's notion of *différance*, 1982). Something in-between, a notion of "distributed causality" (Bennett, cited in Buchanan, 2015), which "attributes causality to the whole network of interacting elements" (p. 385) would be more appropriate. Elements of interaction would be linguistic, in the conventional sense, but also emotional, embodied, material, aesthetic, and engaged with individual and collective (post) memory arising from contact with significant objects in the world. More recently, researchers in critical literacies and ELT have explored the Deleuzo-Guattarian concept of an *assemblage* as a unit of analysis to encompass this complex and dynamic framework (see Bangou, Fleming, & Waterhouse, 2020; Pennycook, 2017) within a broader turn towards emotion and critical affective literacies (CAL) in ELT settings (Anwaruddin, 2016; Benesch, 2012).

As part of the culture jamming assignment, Brian has attempted to integrate more of a CAL orientation, often bringing in examples of images/texts from Toronto's diverse ethnolinguistic landscape that exemplify the notion of distributed causality for heterogeneous audiences/text-users. In class, Brian uses the term "emo-fishing" to draw attention to the polysemic or trans-semiotic "hailing" strategies involved. The photo (Fig. 11.2) of the Toronto restaurant Bagel World, for example, stylistically integrates Hebrew orthography in its English sign (e.g., the Hebrew letter װ, for initial /ʃ/ in shin or /s / in sin, substitutes for the 'W' in World; the Hebrew ם or mem, representing a voiced bilabial nasal /m/, approximates the 'D'). Beyond denotation, the digraphia and indexicality of the restaurant sign may indicate "authenticity" (i.e., "real" Jewish bagels!), and for those who know or who have studied Hebrew, the sign affordances potentially invoke feelings and post-memories of belonging to a diasporic community (i.e., a Jewish Canadian identity).

responses vary from shocked gasps to quizzical blank faces. This emotional range, of course, would be linked to prior exposure to the original photograph, but also with issues of post-memory (Hirsch, 2008), the collective trauma resulting from Kennedy's assassination in 1963, and the degree to which this intensity of feeling has been intergenerationally communicated in schools and families.



Fig. 11.2 Bagel World

These type of trans-semiotic advertising strategies—integrating not only orthographic elements but also aesthetic/stylistic features of international scripts and typographies—are common in Toronto and a characteristic of metrolinguistics (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2011) and superdiversity (Blommaert, 2013) in major urban settings. They also feature

prominently in subvertising and for more overtly political purposes befitting a “marketplace of signs” (cf. Rutherford, 2000) and the semiotics of remix.⁴

The culture jamming assignment in *Dealing with Viewpoint* has the following guidelines: “Select a spoof ad or culture jamming image for analysis. How does it work as a parody or copy of the original ad or image? In your opinion, how effective is it in terms of “meme warfare” (Lasn, 1999). How does it use image and texts to “jam” our consumer culture?” Given the EAP context, the assignment also served to reinforce prior L2 writing tasks developing direct quote and paraphrase integration, using in-text signal phrases and reporting verbs. In this regard, the assignment promotes the dual purposes and aspirations of critical EAP (see Benesch, 2001; Chun, 2015): i.e., development of L2 academic language proficiencies alongside an awareness of language (and all forms of meaning making) as socially embedded practices always implicated in power relations and contested futures.

Since the adoption of the culture jamming assignment, students have submitted many memorable papers with spoof ad selections that have been, in part or combination, provocative, disturbing, and humorous. Of the latter, one student chose one of the “Also Shot on iPhone” parody ads, which playfully mimic the artistic earnestness of Apple’s promotion of the new camera’s capacities (O’Neil, 2015). Apple was also the target of one student’s essay based on the disturbing “Thinner than ever” Adbusters spoof ad, in which an iPad 2 is offered to a malnourished African child positioned on the lower right side of the image. As

⁴In December 2008, three federal opposition parties agreed to form a coalition to defeat the minority Conservative government of Stephen Harper. At a subsequent “anti-coalition” rally in Toronto, one of the most provocative posters exemplified the notion of assemblage in the service of remix nationalism (see Morgan, 2016). The top three-quarters of the poster portrayed Joseph Stalin, on the left, shaking hands with “Uncle Jack” Layton (then leader of the New Democratic Party) on the right, both men dressed in Soviet-era military jackets against the backdrop of a Canadian flag with the communist hammer and sickle inserted in the maple leaf. Under the image, utilizing digraphia, the text states, CANADA’S NEW ДЕМФЦЯАТС: WHAT СФULD GФ WЯФNG? (e.g., the Cyrillic vowel Я /ya/ or /ja/ replacing an ‘R’; the Cyrillic Ф /f/ in place of an ‘O’). Toronto is home to one of Canada’s largest diasporic Ukrainian communities. For Ukrainian-Canadians in attendance, the traumatic postmemory of the man-made famine in Ukraine under Stalin’s rule (the Holodomor) would be, for some, indexed by this multimodal poster and associated with the late Canadian parliamentarian, no doubt provoking strong feelings of opposition.

this student noted (following Corbett's discussion of "left-right/given-new" visual composition), neocolonial discourses of race, benevolence and (under)development are invoked and amplified by the spoof ad's left-framing of a white, adult hand offering the device to the child.

One last example is based on a provocative Adbusters spoof ad, in which digraphia and parody are key elements of anti-consumerist messaging. The spoof ad titled "L'ORÉALITY" (with a French *agui* accent above the *e*) imitates both the original product name, L'ORÉAL, as well as its design aesthetics. This hybridized "reality" is visually reinforced by a disturbing image of cosmetic animal testing on a rabbit, which is superimposed over the face of a model. In small letters, bottom right of the subvertisement, we see "from abuse to a beauty" (Adbusters, 2020a). Based on her reading of Lasn, the student, Nathaly, describes L'ORÉALITY as a "true cost metameme" (Lasn, 1999, p. 124) in her essay, "because it makes women realize the ecological price behind beauty products." Her concluding assessment is that the spoof ad "is an effective way to fight against cosmetic testing on animals. It makes consumers become conscious of the damage that is done to animals. Through this way, customers might avoid buying makeup products made by companies that use animal testing practices."

Over the years, the syllabus for *Dealing with Viewpoint* has been augmented by more visual, emotional and digital resources with which to analyze and produce persuasive texts with participatory relevance beyond the university. The culture jamming component of the course raises awareness of anti-capitalist, anti-consumerist literacies now increasingly coopted by remix nationalism and right-wing populists in Canada and Brazil.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed two contrasting national settings and forms of neo-nationalism that nevertheless have in common a growing reliance on what we have termed remix nationalism. Working from quite traditional academic disciplines—phonics and academic writing—we have shown how it is possible for critical language educators to engage

with the semiotics of remix nationalism. In Brazil, remix nationalism gravitates towards memory and postmemory of the military dictatorship in ways that leave it exposed to challenges from engagement with semiotic histories of struggle that also index that era, such as *Pajubá*. Transnational and transidiomatic comparisons and examples contribute in important ways to this task, just as comparisons between culture-jamming texts provide terrain for critical engagement with Canadian remix-nationalism, forged in the context of official multiculturalism and tensions around its hidden xenophobic margins. As with Brazil, previous eras and contexts are evoked and resignified in ways that students are able to unpack through semiotic analysis.

Remix, we believe, provides one of the defining characteristics of contemporary right-wing politics; more so than specific political or economic platforms. As language educators concerned about social justice, remix requires us to expand our literacy repertoires in ways that support both academic success and effective citizenship practices beyond the classroom. To this end it is important to sharpen our theoretical and pedagogical vocabulary, as we have sought to do using examples of a sociolinguistics of struggle and critical affective literacies.

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12

Afterword: Towards a Nation-Conscious Applied Linguistics Practice

Suhanthie Motha

The wide-ranging and illuminating chapters in this volume tell a variety of stories about the interconnectedness of language and nationalism or neo-nationalism, about the sweeping ways our understandings of nation actualize themselves through language, and about the consequences of our language practices and policies for our ideas about nation, and consequently for our social, political, and economic systems. One conclusion is clear: exciting and promising possibilities exist for language professionals to be agentic and, in fact, powerful in affecting vital change through nation-conscious practice, as becomes evident through the accounts shared in these chapters. Another message shines through even more urgently, if less perceptibly: lasting change, including a reversal of damage done through recent swings towards populist and racist movements globally, will not happen incidentally and in the accidental wake of everyday language education. Rather, such change will necessitate explicit

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critical pedagogical engagement with nationalism and the concept of nation, an engagement I will refer to here as *nation-conscious applied linguistics practice*, including what Kasztalska and Swatek (Chapter 8) term “anti-nationalist language pedagogies” (p. 192). In addition, the chapters in this volume point to a need for a nation-conscious applied linguistics practice to equally explicitly take on the linkages between nation and race, empire, monolingualism, White settler colonialism, and related concepts. In doing so, they herald a promising and transformative future for applied linguistics.

This collection also offers a clear and expansive understanding of nationalism as an integral and inevitable, if sometimes invisible, part of language teaching, learning, and use. Together, the authors reveal a great deal about the work that we as language scholars and practitioners are doing unconsciously, about the work we might take up, and about how we might re-conceive of our responsibilities as applied linguists in light of armed conflict, the ongoing erasure of land theft in the name of nation, government suppression of speech, and such reactionary trends as travel bans, trade wars, media censorship, tariffs, and declining global cooperation. One needs only to look at the experience of Bernard Ndzi Ngala, the author of Chapter 3, to understand the stakes for language professionals. A university professor, Ngala was kidnapped from his campus in Cameroon by three armed men and berated for teaching French, which they condemned as the language of the oppressor (“Crise anglophone,” 2018).

In other instances, the connections between national identity and language may be less obvious. For instance, Meadows (Chapter 2) demonstrates how arguments in favor of structured English immersion programs can be presented as based in pedagogical necessity, with their connections to nationalist ideologies often obscured. As Gulliver (Chapter 10) points out, not all nationalism is blatantly patriotic or jingoistic. Certainly, the images that spring to my mind when I think of the word “nationalism” are of, for instance, vicious Nazis and White supremacists marching two years ago in Charlottesville, Virginia, or of violent attacks by rioting Sri Lankan nationalists on the minority Tamil ethnic group in Colombo, which includes my family. However, as we consider how we position ourselves towards nationalism, it is helpful to

consider the distinction between what Billig (1995, as cited in Gulliver, this volume) terms “hot” fervent nationalism and cooler or “banal,” everyday, and largely uncontested nationalism, a delineation that is not glibly cut-and-dry.

A further question that becomes important concerns what neo-nationalism looks like in the context of superdiverse communities and in nations in which citizens are such a minority that their language rights and national identity are threatened. Esseilli (Chapter 4) offers one such example with the United Arab Emirates, where Emirati citizens make up only about 11% of the population and live surrounded by negative stereotypes about the group’s labor practices, suitability as workers, language affinity, and skill levels. In this context, the United Arab Emirates government has employed nationalism in a program specifically designed to preserve national identity, develop and promote representations of Emirati nationalism as plurilingual and tolerant, and create a sense of citizenship and belonging. In some instances, nationalism is designed to support antiracism and social justice rather than wearing its more customary attire of intolerance and bigotry. Nationalism can therefore be implicated simultaneously in the tension between a global rise of Islamophobia and in an affirmation of Emirati religious identity. Similarly, Bao and Phan (Chapter 6) noted instances of nationalism on the social platform *Quora Digest* being put into the service of Vietnamese national unity, harmony and solidarity, which leads to the question: How might a nation-conscious applied linguistics practice support practitioners who are seeking to make sense of seemingly conflicting goals and outcomes of nationalism?

We are finalizing this project on a planet that has completely changed since this book was first conceptualized. At the time of this writing, COVID-19 is spreading around the globe, one of the first U.S. deaths having occurred at a retirement community a few blocks from my home, which, like my nearby university campus, sits on unceded ancestral lands of the Dx^wdəwʔabš (Duwamish) people. The relevance of the construct of nation has been pushed into the foreground throughout this pandemic. Since the international community first became aware of the virus, emotions, desires, and allegiances in relation to national identities have been surging and subsiding around the planet in response

to media discourses, communications with each other, and the actions of our leaders. While the emergence of this virus has underscored the degree to which we are all deeply interconnected, with our lives and well-being tied up in those of our neighbors near and far, the response of many around the globe has been to blame, whether directly or in more subtle terms, migratory practices, borders that are too open, and globalization in general. In one example, Italy's far-right former interior minister abruptly argued against allowing 276 African asylum seekers on the rescue ship *Ocean Viking* to dock in Sicily after a two-week quarantine, although only one case had been diagnosed on the entire continent of Africa at the time, in Egypt (Tondo, 2020). Nationalism and xenophobia have undergirded much of the response of White House officials, with the U.S. president fueling racism by referring insistently to a "foreign virus" and a "Chinese virus," and rebuking the European Union for the openness of its own borders (Marquardt & Hansler, 2020). In March 2020, members of the G7 were unable to issue a joint statement on COVID-19 because the U.S. State Department refused to sign onto any draft that didn't label the illness the "Wuhan virus," languaging that constructs the sense of an imported, racialized threat and the very integrity of borders at risk.

These and similar discourses around the globe have fueled an increase in violence and discrimination against Asians and those perceived to be Asian. *Le Courrier Picard*, a French newspaper, referred to COVID-19 with the headlines "Alerte jaune" (Yellow alert) and "Le peril jaune?" (Yellow peril?) ("À Propos de Notre," 2020), and reports are surfacing of businesses around the world, including in Phuket and Rome (Gostanian, Ciechalski, & Abdelkader, 2020), publicly refusing to serve visitors from China. The Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council reported 1600 hate crimes in the United States in the four weeks since March 19th (Park Hong, 2020). The spread of COVID-19 has further exposed deep racial and gender inequalities, magnifying long-standing racial inequalities in healthcare, housing (including access to handwashing facilities), employment, and income and relatedly between nations, making clear connections between nation and race on a planet still struggling to come to terms with the persistent legacy of European colonialism, the Atlantic slave trade, and settler colonialism. Disputes, bidding wars, and even

piracy between nations, including China, France, Brazil, Germany and the United States, over scarce protective personal equipment (PPE) and medical supplies (Toosi, 2020) draw our attention and humanitarian concern to how a sense of inter-lateral competitiveness is manufactured at a time when global cooperation could instead support, for instance, the sharing of medical resources, the coordination of travel advisories, and the mitigation of trade and financial instability through multilateral response to swings on financial markets.

As we think about the stakes of nationalism, a generative starting point is to consider what purposes the concepts of nation and territoriality are serving. When we live on a planet upon which so many of us, myself included, live on stolen land, and do so largely unconsciously, part of the work of our everyday practices becomes preserving not only the falsehood that we live on land that we have a right to, but also the fiction that humans can even have a right to land ownership. In order to maintain this narrative over centuries, our everyday practices continually renew both the legitimacy of land ownership for capital accumulation and the erasure of indigeneity (McCoy, Tuck, & McKenzie, 2016), with language serving as an important vehicle in this repeated renewal. Language plays a crucial role in determining which lives are included and excluded from the formation of nations in question. Under all of these questions about who belongs and who does not needs to remain a critique of the very notion of nation and the work that it does to preserve the narrative of territoriality and land ownership. At the root of a nation-conscious applied linguistics practice are questions about how identities of place have been constructed, how people come to be identified with a place, and the politics of renaming lands and maintaining the displacement of indigenous peoples (Calderon, 2014).

An important further line of questioning relates to empire. Particularly for applied linguists educated through practices of the Global North, whose understanding of applied linguistics is therefore complicit with White supremacy, capitalism and colonialism (Motha, 2020), what would a nation-conscious applied linguistics practice look like that was informed by Southern theory, drawing on the knowledge of “people, places, and ideas that have been left out of the grand metanarrative of modernity” (Pennycook & Makoni, 2020, p. 1). How could such a

practice further our understandings of nation, and therefore about race, community, and belonging?

Nationalism and Race

The chapters in the book emphasize the degree to which language is never about only language. Layers of capital, class, gender, race, religion, and ability intertwine, whether obviously or less perceptibly so, throughout the discussions of nationalism. In particular, while not always explicitly obvious, race and racial identity are always active in shaping the way language functions to create nation, and so a nation-conscious applied linguistics practice is a pressing part of working against White supremacy and racism (Motha, 2014, 2020). Ena Lee (2015) warned us about how a reliance on fixed nation-state identities inevitably produces static cultural and racial borders. In her discussion of nation, Eve Haque (2012) similarly explained just how imperative it is that we understand the crucial role being played by language, cultural, and racial lines: “[D]ivisions in language are about the distinctive differences between races and civilizations, and they set boundaries between human beings; thus they become justification for colonization and genocide” (p. 18).

Gulliver (Chapter 10) describes the transmission through textbooks for newcomers of numerous narratives of commonsense “Canadianness,” necessarily an idealized set of narratives. One of these in particular provides a helpful and accessible example: the textbooks most frequently downplayed the Canadianness of Canadians of color, using words other than “Canadian” to describe them, while referring to White-identified Canadians as “Canadians.” In preserving a sense of non-Whiteness as external to Canada, these textbooks reinforce the notion of Canada as White. The language specialists who developed the textbooks unwittingly agreed to work uncritically with limited systems of race- and language-based affiliation, concealing not only Canada’s multiracial composition but also its history of White settler appropriation. One form of nation-conscious applied linguistics practice that interrupts the racism, nationalism, and White settler colonialism inherent in these Language

Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) materials is the type of interrogation, modelled by Gulliver, of the ways that our language practices, including textbook development, become a part of a White supremacist and White settler project.

Similarly, a nation-conscious applied linguistics practice can help to counter the detrimental racist stereotypes about Emiratis' competence, efficiency, commitment, and skill (Esseilli, Chapter 4). It can shine a light on connections among race, language, and nationalism playing themselves out when language professionals observe students mocking certain racialized forms of English (Kasztalska & Swatak, Chapter 8), as students encounter questions about whether atrocities within a racial or national group are more shocking than across groups (McPherron & McIntosh, Chapter 9), or social media users blaming terrorist attacks on refugee policies (Kreis, Chapter 7). It supports applied linguists' understandings that Official English laws, English Only movements, monolingual English instructional models, and monolingual ideologies are efforts that are all molded from the same clay and all move us in the direction of less permeable national border walls and more homogenous, assimilated populations. With these connections more visible, language professionals are better equipped to resist nationalism and assimilatory influences, to tear down walls. When it is revealed that arguments that seem grounded in commonsense, for instance arguments about unifying or honoring a common thread among people, are actually specifically about nation, then xenophobia sheds its invisibility and applied linguists are better prepared to work against it. Nation-conscious applied linguistics practice equips applied linguists to recognize instances of language identity standing in for national identity, for instance when the term "American" is used only to describe monolingual English speakers, as Meadows described for us (Chapter 2).

Nationalism and English

The English language in particular carries a great deal of global power, and the chapters in this volume highlight the need for language specialists to pay special attention to the role that English plays in shaping

formations of all nations, including those whose official or dominant languages do not include English. Across several chapters, questions arose about the possibility of English being deployed for particular purposes without interloping into constructions of national identities or threatening to supplant local languages. English has come to carry commonsense associations with a range of qualities. Around the world, English is associated with cultural capital, and in Colombia it has become an important tool in deploying national images of “self-motivated entrepreneurship” (Valencia & Tejada Sánchez, Chapter 8, p. 105). The material consequences of these representations are important on not only an individual but also a national level, with individuals being encouraged to devote themselves to English proficiency in order to contribute not only to their individual livelihood but also to the ability of a nation to attract investment from foreign and especially transnational companies as part of a global ideology that English proficiency is necessary for participation on a globalized economy (Holborow, 2015). Many of the discourses surrounding representations of English are offered as power-neutral, with an assumption that anyone working hard at learning English can be successful. These discourses have a way of erasing how differential access to English instruction underscores and exacerbates inequalities already present, and also disregard the consequences of English dominance, including the loss or depreciation of local languages and related epistemologies. In a nation with a population that is as internationally composed as the UAE, for instance, English is widely used, and carries with it suggestions of economic opportunity, Judeo Christian values, Westernness, and Whiteness. As Esseilli (Chapter 4) discussed, Emiratis are concerned about Arabic being nudged out not only in use but also in status.

In China, English has been viewed as a means of connecting China to international commerce and promoting China on the world stage. Again, through McPherron and McIntosh’s (Chapter 9) analysis, we see questions about the possibility of appropriating English for its economic value while resisting threats to Chinese national identity, the possibility of finding, as McPherron and McIntosh explained, a balance between *ti* (body or essence) and *yong* (utility or function) in learners’ positioning

of themselves towards the language. Similarly, ontologies inhabit pedagogical positionings, and English teaching has come to be associated with critical thinking, communicative language teaching, and learner autonomy, which transmit ideas about individualism, extroversion, and relational familiarity as idealized ways of being. As we think about how these language teaching efforts shape performances of national identity, McPherron and McIntosh's (Chapter 9) pursuit of possibilities for "pedagogical interventions that may help to balance the country's nationalist and internationalist desires" (p. 218) open up an important line of questioning for applied linguists in China and around the world.

In homogenous Poland, too, where less than 1% of the population are foreign residents with work permits, Kasztalska and Swatak (Chapter 8) relayed how English users ask questions about the feasibility of accessing English for instrumental purposes without also taking on associated epistemologies, ideas, and images that are understood to stand in conflict with Polish nationalism, for instance cultural celebrations or values which are perceived to be incompatible with Catholicism such as Halloween celebrations or LGBT rights. Paradoxically, even intercultural communicative methods might be understood to be contrary to Polish patriotism and therefore interests. A nation-conscious applied linguistics practice offers language specialists and users a space in which to question the practicality and desirability of using English for instrumental purposes while attempting to reject some of the values associated with it.

Throughout all of these critiques of nationalism in English language teaching, a nation-conscious applied linguistics practice needs to consider the degree to which those of us who are educated in English-dominant nations are misusing our disproportionate global power and taking an imperialistic stance when we dismiss the nationalistic commitments of others and promote plurilingualism, openness to diversity, communicative pedagogies, learner autonomy, and other ideologies associated with the Global North. The privilege of being able to use English professionally makes, for instance, openness to diversity less threatening. We can afford to be open to diversity when our language is not in danger of being swallowed alive, when what we perceive to be "our culture" is desired by many and propagated through the most widespread and powerful of media.

Teacher Education and Other Higher Education

For those of us whose practice is steeped in teacher education, several of the chapters, including those by Valencia and Tejada Sánchez (Chapter 5) and Windle and Morgan (Chapter 11), highlight the crucial role that nation-conscious applied-linguistics practice and thoughtful teacher education can play, offering glimpses into how teacher educators can support students in unpacking and questioning the taken-for-granted assumptions embedded in images and discourses about nation and language. Some government programs, for instance, present the learning of English as furthering the interests of a nation, so that English fluency becomes somehow paired with good citizenship, as we saw in Valencia and Tejada Sánchez (Chapter 5) or as part of a national modernization and internationalization project (McPherron & McIntosh, Chapter 9). Language teacher education can play an important role in ensuring critical questioning of how languages operate in relation to each other and how desires for English are manipulated to intensify the commodification of English and amplify the economic power of the English language teaching industry (Motha & Lin, 2014), and furthermore in supporting questioning about whether English is actually delivering on its promises.

The chapters in this volume suggest that the conception of “language teaching” that we have employed historically may be too narrow for the type of work that applied linguists are carrying out in their contemporary higher education classrooms. Critical analysis of language teaching spaces can stand in opposition to censorship practices, so part of language teacher education needs to be nation-conscious support of how teacher candidates make effectual and prudent decisions about how to position themselves in relation to silencing or censorship by school systems, governments, or other forces (see Ngala, Chapter 3; Kasztalska & Swatek, Chapter 8; McPherron & McIntosh, Chapter 9).

Some of the chapters, including Bao and Phan (Chapter 6), Kreis (Chapter 7), and Windle and Morgan (Chapter 11) are reminders of how important it is for the preparation of students of applied linguistics

and language teacher education to include critical analysis of discursive spaces, especially new media spaces, in which nationalism and neo-nationalism are engendered and propagated, to develop an understanding of how language ideologies become deployed and naturalized in social media, strategies for deciding whether resistance is called for, and support in deciding how to trouble discourses encountered. In their chapter, Bao and Phan drew our attention to the power of “social collaborative means” (p. 156), in this case in the shape of the social platform *Quora Digest* to preserve language, reinforce authenticity of use, and support language awareness. Through Windle and Morgan’s (Chapter 11) analysis, it becomes clear that the literacy repertoires that teachers have conventionally thought of as comprising English language teaching need to be expanded. Language teacher education takes on a much broader lens when it encompasses the type of nation-conscious applied linguistics practice implemented by Joel Windle, using popular media to make explicit connections among sociolinguistic variation, nation, social inclusion, and other related concepts, or that of Brian Morgan as he supported his students in using analysis of visual design to connect mainstream media, such as spoof ads, to critical citizenship. As was similarly evident in Gulliver’s chapter, democracy and citizenship are an inevitable part of English language teaching, whether visibly or less obviously, and ELT classrooms can play a powerful role in mediating students’ interactions with the media and semiotic spaces they encounter in their everyday lives. These chapters underscore the importance of applied linguistics students being prepared to analyze the relationships between nation and language and to judiciously examine the veracity of claims they read, to analyze power dynamics, and to understand the important work that the concept of nation does in relation to colonialism and race.

Ideologies and Models of Language Education

A pressing set of questions that surfaced repeatedly concerned the elusive nature of multilingualism, translanguaging, and hybridity woven

throughout social and especially educational institutional spaces: as legitimate conceptual possibilities within language classrooms; as specifically underpinning models of language education around the globe; and in tension with neoliberal multiculturalism. Ngala (Chapter 3) described language practices in Cameroon, the site of almost 300 languages in use, including the two most widely spoken (pidgin English and Camfranglais), which are hybridized languages weaving together multiple others. This rich linguistic terrain, in which multilingualism seems to be a comfortable norm, might be considered a surprising backdrop for the push for sole allegiance to either English or French that has brought parts of the country to the point of crisis. Language specialists might be forgiven for wondering what underpins the need to commit to either English or French in this context. Thinking about the linguistic and sociopolitical conflict in terms of nation, from the perspective of a nation-conscious applied linguistics practice, helps us to understand that fidelity to language in this instance is shaped by much more than language and extends to cultural and ethnic identity, colonial history, economic inequities across regions, and concern about assimilatory influences.

Schools broadly and models of language education more specifically play an important role in positioning individuals and communities towards nationalism. Schools are fundamental sites of formations of nation. As governments make decisions about schooling curricula, they are deciding how to teach local languages and the stories to tell about the foundation, history, current state, and philosophy of a nation. For language educators and applied linguists specifically, because language is often used to stand in for “culture” or “nation” or even “race,” language educators and language policy experts are using language teaching to shape public perceptions of nation. Because they involve bridge building between language communities, language classes by their very definition represent the narrowing of distances between peoples and often nations. This is accomplished differentially depending on education policies at national and local levels, definitions of bilingualism subscribed to (Valencia & Tejada Sánchez, Chapter 5), models of education implemented, and goals, some of which may appear to contradict goals of

bridge-building. Must pluralism and diversity necessarily stand in opposition to the formation and maintenance of a national identity? For instance, in Poland, must language learners choose between a pluralistic stance and commitment to Polish identity? The UAE has tackled this conflict with a creative solution, by embracing “tolerance” as a symbol of their nation.

As applied linguists shine a flashlight on nationalism and through our practice resist the often-chauvinistic effects of border maintenance, it is important to also avoid commodifying the hybridity and class privilege that can characterize multilingualism, translanguaging, and transnationalism. Translanguaging and transnationalism were historically theorized as part of an agenda of social justice and equity, but because of their routine use in the pursuit of capital production and in performing class status, they are now frequently associated with a “neoliberal multiculturalism that celebrates individual cosmopolitanism and plurilingualism for socioeconomic mobility” (Kubota, 2016, p. 475).

Conclusion

In the days following the 2016 United States general election, supporters of the newly elected president planned a “Build A Wall” rally on the University of Washington campus. My then-11-year-old daughter listened to me brainstorming a response to the rally with other faculty, then offered: “You could rearrange the bricks to build a bridge.” At its heart, this volume responds to the question: “How can applied linguists rearrange bricks that form a wall to instead build a bridge?” The work of language specialists is fundamentally to take spaces of jingoism, impasse, broken-down communication, and language barriers—walls—and to build bridges by opening up and clarifying interaction and increasing mutual understanding, cooperation, and collaboration, ultimately bringing humans closer to each other. As individuals, we can work against the metaphorical national borders and thwart the thrust of xenophobic nationalism, and we can reshape our national leadership through voting, organizing, and participating in democratic processes. As applied linguists, however, we wield a particular type of largely untapped

power, with our practice providing fertile ground for bridge-building. Language is one of the most important ways of not only signaling but actually organizing national identity. According to Haque (2012), “language is a significant and constitutive aspect of nation-building” (p. 9), and yet for many language specialists, this work is performed under the radar. Purposefully foregrounding nation and embracing a nation-focused applied linguistics practice compels us to ask what unseen work the concept of nation is doing, allowing us to make that work visible and available to critique. Focusing specifically on nation in our applied linguistics and language teaching practice is therefore an important step in illuminating the role that we as language specialists can play in rearranging the bricks into a bridge.

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