2023

Immersion as a lifeway: the cultural sustainment and humanization of Mandarin dual language immersion teachers

Helen Chan Hill

Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

IMMERSION AS A LIFEWAY: THE CULTURAL SUSTAINMENT AND HUMANIZATION OF MANDARIN DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION TEACHERS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Helen Chan Hill

August, 2023

Kevin Wong, Ph.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Helen Chan Hill

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Doctoral Committee:

Kevin Wong, Ph.D., Dissertation Chairperson

Jennifer Miyake-Trapp, Ed.D., Committee

Betina Hsieh, Ph.D., Committee

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

DEDICATION

When Shakespeare's Helena stated, "Though she be but little, she is fierce," I thought of my incomparable, mighty mother. Momma, you told me and showed me how to be strong and think for myself. You crossed three continents to give us the right to belong, wherever in the world we choose to be. And you kept us connected to our past, so we would aim for the brightest future. In honor of dad's memory, thank you both for inspiring me to become Dr. Chan too.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with boundless gratitude that I thank my friends, family, and colleagues who have walked with and guided me along this journey. I must start with my incredible committee, each of whom brought precisely the words and wisdom that I needed, in the exact moment that I needed it.

To Dr. Kevin Wong: I am in constant wonder at how fortunate I have been; more than a dissertation chair, you have been a trusted partner, and now friend. I never felt alone in the process, and moreover, I now understand the uplifting power of academia through your guidance. Thank you for thinking together with me, challenging me to consider more, and caring as deeply about elevating teachers and students as I do! It has been an honor to work with you.

To Dr. Betina Hsieh: You have been a voice and guide for me as an Asian American educator for years before I had the honor of meeting you. Thank you for your painstaking, loving critique, which allowed this study to become the embodiment of humanization!

To Dr. Jennifer Miyake-Trapp: This is a special thank you. I would not be here without your bold, brave encouragement. You opened this door for me, and warmly demanded that I walk through it! Thank you for pouring into me, with your gift of building others up into the leaders they are meant to be.

To Pepperdine GSEP: Thank you to the supportive faculty, in particular Dr. Kay Davis, Dr. Eric Hamilton, and Dr. Laura Hyatt, who fostered my learning and growth throughout the doctoral program. It was also here that I found my core cohort, each of whom I now have the honor of calling “doctor.” Dr. Liz Hollerman, Dr. Julie Robinson, and Dr. Shannon Mumolo (with special thanks for bringing me along with you): from D.C. to Dubai, and every on-ground

in between, your messages and camaraderie have made this experience even more meaningful. You are my *habibi* for life.

To my PUSD family: My amazing Academics, Ed Services, and CIPD family, thank you for the generosity of time, belief, and support as I took this on in the midst of a global pandemic that rocked our educational world! With so much to juggle, you allowed me to prioritize this "act of self-care." I am forever indebted, and ready to keep up the good work alongside you! A special thank you to Dr. Blanco, Dr. McDonald, and Dr. Reynoso, who protected my space to learn, even when demands were high at work; to Nadirah, my MFS8+ who modeled the way and held it down; to Shannon (Malone), who always lifts me up, and in this case, up to the finish line; and to Robert, who walked both sides of the Pepp-PUSD journey with Shannon and me.

To my village: Harmony, Janet, Brenda, Leo, Marisa, the incredible mom community I gained at Field, who keep me connected to laughter and love, and were inspirations in this study. I have special gratitude to the Canos and Chias, our pod family who was here on day one of this doctoral journey, and has helped me stay afloat between family, work, and school, caring for my kids like your own! Mellie, Katie, Chaniga, and Kari, my dearest friends from grade school, Cal, through life as we know it. Thank you for the constant check-ins, cards, and calls that remind me that it is the quality of our time together, even when we do not have the quantity!

To my teachers: The 13 powerful and brilliant educators who made this study possible, thank you for your willingness to share your stories and yourselves with me. Your voices provided truth and light. I hope I have done justice to your words, and I commit to building lifeways in our educational system through leadership and love, alongside you.

To my family: Thank you to my momma, my brothers Patrick, Philip and Arthur; my sisters Vivian, Autumn, and Kisha; my nieces, Treasure, Avalynne, and Amelia; and my

nephews Javere, Giovanni, John, and Nathaniel, all of whom I love so deeply, and who have believed in me and prayed for me. Finally, to the collective joys of my life - Jerell, Evan, and Anya, you are God's greatest gift to me. We are fashioned in His image to be excellent and to bring love and hope to others, which you do daily for me. You are my light and motivation. Thank you for going back to school with me, and for loving me beyond measure all the while.

VITA

EDUCATION

Master of Arts, Education, *Loyola Marymount University,* Los Angeles, CA, 2002

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, *University of California, Berkeley,* Berkeley, CA, 1999

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, *Pasadena Unified School District,* Pasadena, CA, 2020 - 2023

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development, *Pasadena Unified School District,* Pasadena, CA, 2014 - 2020

Professional Development Coordinator, *Pasadena Unified School District,* Pasadena, CA, 2010 - 2014

Teacher on Special Assignment for Mathematics, *Pasadena Unified School District,* Pasadena, CA, 2007 - 2010

Teacher, *Pasadena Unified School District,* Pasadena, CA, 2000 - 2007

Substitute Teacher, *Saddleback Valley Unified School District*, Mission Viejo, CA, 1999-2000

AWARDS

Administrator of the Year, *Association of California School Administrators,* Region XV, 2018

Central Office Administrator of the Year, *Association of Pasadena School Administrators*, 2012, 2016, 2017, and 2022

PUBLICATIONS

Wong, K. M., Hill, H. C., & Najera, E. (2023). Humanizing online language teaching through instructional and affective moves: Reflections from an ELD teacher. *CATESOL Journal*.

ABSTRACT

The U.S. is growing in its recognition of the value of multilingualism, and is rapidly expanding educational programs, such as dual language immersion (DLI), to that end (Singleton et al., 2018). However, the historical socio-political, regulatory, and cultural contexts have led to a current climate that may not demonstrate equivalent value of its multilingual teachers (Flores & Rosa, 2015). With a concerning teacher shortage that is exacerbated for teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (MacIntyre et al., 2019), it is critical to understand factors that impact the wellbeing and satisfaction of such teachers in the U.S. educational system. In particular, with the complexities of globalization (Schaeffer, 2009) and a growing anti-Asian backlash (Chen et al., 2020), this study is concerned with the possible impact on teachers in programs such as Mandarin DLI, coveted for its language as a resource (M. Heller, 2003), as there is great potential for their workplace experience to be driven by transactional exchanges, rather than the desired transformative interaction in such a commodified climate. Therefore, using a qualitative phenomenological approach, this study focuses on the professional lived experiences of Mandarin language teachers within the ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) of their uniquely dual language immersion environment. Using the lenses of humanization (Freire, 1970; Todres et al., 2009) and cultural sustainment (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2017), this study examines the connection between such interactions and the resulting value expressed by the teachers. Thirteen Mandarin dual language immersion teachers participated in semi-structured interviews that contributed to rich and thick descriptive findings. The teachers' insight led to implications regarding the systemic features in schools that can create culturally sustaining lifeways, develop humanizing leadership, and cultivate school communities as places of love that can collectively support the wellbeing and retention of diverse teachers.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Nearly 15 years ago, the Hudson Unified School District (HUSD) in southern California launched its initial dual language immersion (DLI) program, the first HUSD language model designed to provide instruction in two languages to children upon entry into its PreK-12 school district. Established for Spanish/English and Mandarin Chinese/English at the time, the intent was to support students in developing simultaneous native-level fluency in both program languages (Howard et al., 2018; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Serafini et al., 2022). This would include students coming from linguistic backgrounds in either English only, the partner "target" language only, as well as those already using both languages. The DLI model focuses on the non-dominant target language in ratios that favor time in the target language, and incrementally increase the use of English in each subsequent grade level (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016). HUSD's DLI programs have since flourished as the most populous programs in the district, with nearly 20% of its current student body enrolled and program options offered at every grade level from PreK-12. DLI programs in general have gained momentum in recent years. While their popularity has given rise to positive outcomes for language learning, this has also been accompanied by concerning considerations, such as program intent, impact, and sustainability.

The appeal of multilingualism and DLI programs in the U.S. is connected to the global ideals of a 21st century graduate (Voogt & Roblin, 2010); namely, a student who possesses nuanced skills in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity who is able to engage across an increasingly interconnected, worldwide society (Demirkol-Orak & İnözü, 2021; Jacobson-Lundeberg, 2016; Yanniris, 2021). The quest involves twofold outcomes for the student - the ability to become competitive in a global economy; and the ability to contribute productively to a global society. While the two are not mutually exclusive, the approach to

gaining such skills can guide one or the other outcome more emphatically. It is with much care that educators nowadays must hone such outcomes thoughtfully, or risk producing graduates who engage incomplete perspectives on intercultural interaction (Leung et al., 2014). In other words, language education and programs must be careful to not position language acquisition as the singular outcome, but to be considerate of the full scope of the language itself, associated culture, and humanity that will be required for authentic and respectful global citizenship. It must mutually respect both speakers of non-English languages desiring to acquire English proficiency, as well as English fluent speakers desiring to learn other languages (Flores & García, 2017). As the increasing demands and opportunities of an interconnected world have repositioned multilingualism as increasingly desirable in the U.S., there is significant responsibility for ensuring the approach is transformational and not merely transactional.

In alignment with this interest, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson issued the Global California 2030 Initiative, a call to action for schools to increase the availability and quality of language courses (Singleton et al., 2018). The report established the goal for at least half of California's K-12 student population to participate in programs that lead to proficiency in two or more languages by 2030. Programs encouraged under this initiative include DLI, affirming that HUSD has been moving in the right direction with respect to language education. DLI has been shown to be an effective model for generating authentic fluency in two languages simultaneously, with the potential to maintain or create bilingualism or multilingualism for speakers of both languages alike (Genesee et al., 2006; Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Like many other school districts, HUSD accordingly responded to the Global California 2030 Initiative with a multi-year plan to expand its DLI programs, specifically by increasing

available seats in already existing Spanish and Mandarin DLI classes and by offering additional languages, such as French and Armenian in a DLI structure over time.

With such encouraged and anticipated growth in DLI, a predominant concern has been the recruitment and support of teachers who can provide this type of intricate and specialized instruction (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). According to Hattie's (2009) meta-analyses, teachers and their collective efficacy are the single most influential factor to student achievement in a school setting, so it is a key priority to not only recruit multilingual teachers for these roles, but to support them in their capacity to effectively teach in uniquely DLI settings. Yet, there is already a known difficulty in doing so, given the rarity of multilingual individuals in the U.S., in particular for Mandarin relative to Spanish (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022), the shortage of minority teachers overall (Ingersoll & May, 2011) and the additional demands on multilingual teachers (MacIntyre et al., 2019) which collectively complicate this call to action. In HUSD, these factors are manifesting with consistent teacher turnover or shortage, most predominantly in its MDLI programs. Therefore, this dissertation aims to address this discrepancy by examining the experience of current and former Mandarin DLI (MDLI) teachers of HUSD in order to guide the development of appropriate supports and structures to enable MDLI teachers to thrive as MDLI programs grow. A review of the socio-political, regulatory, and cultural environments for multilingual education in California provides additional context for the problem at hand.

Context of the Problem

Socio-Political Context

Despite its diverse population and access to language development resources, multilingualism is not a common attribute in the majority of the population of the United States of America. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2019 a full 78% of Americans spoke

only English (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022). While this is a broad picture nationwide, a focus on HUSD's regulatory state of California provides insight into the waves of change via policy that have contributed to such conditions. Prior to 1967, the state's public schools operated under an English-only mandate, which was overturned by then-Governor Ronald Reagan in that year to allow bilingual education to occur in classrooms (Guillixson, 1999). For thirty years, students identified as non-English speakers or English language learners could acquire the dominant language of the U.S. simultaneously with another heritage language, using one to reinforce the other. However, in 1998, California shifted course on this methodology and passed Proposition 227: *English Language in Public Schools*, colloquially referred to as "English for the Children." This effectively eliminated bilingual classroom settings in favor of English-only immersion programs (Guillixson, 1999). This was driven by incomplete understanding around language acquisition; namely, that the addition of one language would supplant or overtake another (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016). Years later, a longitudinal study published in 2006 by WestEd, a non-profit, non-partisan education research organization, would reveal no improvement in English performance for students in English-only instructional settings (Parrish et al., 2006). In 2016, Proposition 227 was repealed by Proposition 58: *California Education for a Global Economy*, but damage to the value and skill of multilingualism had already been done. With the positioning of English-first and English-only policies, a prioritization had been designated for the language, and a diminished value was placed on multilingualism arising from immigrant or foreign language speakers (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016; García & Curry-Rodríguez, 2000).

More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic brought seismic shifts to the socio-political perception and reality of Asians in the U.S. (Tessler et al., 2020). A rising tide of polarization accompanied the healthcare crisis, with anti-globalization sentiment stymying efforts and

progress toward multilingual and multicultural valuation (Wang & Yu, 2021). Even more concerning, a rise in horrific anti-Asian hate crimes and racial discrimination aimed at Chinese people, but affecting all individuals of Asian descent regardless of ethnicity, nationality or citizenship, has been evidenced across multiple sectors of U.S. industry and society (Chen et al., 2020; Hsieh et al., 2022; Ruiz et al, 2020). Much like the injustice of fear-driven, race-based policies historically enacted against Asians in the U.S., such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and Japanese Incarceration (Sabharwal et al., 2022), xenophobia escalated once again, resulting in policy restrictions on movement and access in the U.S, whether by travel or immigration (O'Brien & Eger, 2021), targeting Asians and further dehumanizing the racial group as a whole. Given such policies that have defined a certain perception of being "American," and prioritized the English language over others, multilingual individuals may find themselves discouraged from authentically engaging in their home and heritage language and culture.

Regulatory Context

In order for multilingualism to be acquired, one must have exposure to the language (Grohmann & Kambanaros, 2016). This can occur in familial or cultural environments that provide organic opportunities to gain fluency in a non-dominant language, whether in the home or other informal settings (Wu, 2020). Students and families seeking desirable multilingual skills must turn to programs and formal education options, which are accompanied by their own limitations. While digital or virtual programs are more readily available in this current time, stronger language acquisition outcomes are associated with interactive and relational instruction from a teacher (Moeller & Koubek, 2015), yet, the demand for qualified teachers outpaces their availability. Conflating this concern, the number of years desired for students to engage in language learning has simultaneously increased; for the past century, the majority of American

students in the PreK-12 school system did not encounter a language other than English until high school, but there is now a growing recognition to offer language instruction earlier (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016). Researched practices indicate that language learning is more fluid and transferable than previously understood, and as multi-year studies demonstrate positive academic results and linguistic acquisition in elementary grades, the embrace for multilingual education and DLI programming has come for younger ages (Howard et al., 2004; Malarz, 2015). This results in multilingual teacher volume that expands beyond the high school years, thus multiplying the number of needed teachers by additional grade levels and classes served.

Laws regulating public school systems have been slow to support this increasing demand. Regulations are issued by both state and federal agencies, which require frequent monitoring to maintain compliance (Feinman, 2018), often with rigidity despite shifting priorities in instructional needs or teacher demand (Rogers-Ard, 2012). In the state of California, teachers employed by public school districts are certified by their Commission on Teacher Credentialing, which regulates the criteria and issuance of credentials that qualify a teacher to teach students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grades (CCTC, 2022). There is a strict governance structure for general teacher certification, including assessment and coursework that indicate the readiness of an individual to teach or substitute teach in its public schools. In the case of language instruction, there exist additional credentialing requirements, such as certification and coursework for Bilingual Authorizations, making the role more difficult to achieve (Arroyo-Romano, 2016). As instructional demands shift toward 21st century globalization and language development, schools increasingly rely on recruitment of teachers from out-of-state and abroad to supplement demand in multilingual learning (Cardenas, 1993), yet further verification requirements are applied should a teacher from another state or country desire to transfer their credential into California.

Cultural Context

As mentioned within the previous contexts, cultural shifts follow policy and regulatory intervention. Multilingualism is not equivalently positioned for all learners in this era; as Flores and García (2017) indicate, a cultural re-norming around language learning has occurred, moving multilingual education out of segregated obscurity and into highly touted signature programs. Yet, this re-norming has created its own chasm of respectability in language ability, favoring elective multilingualism for fluent English speakers over multilingualism in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) people, who come from non-dominant, non-English linguistic backgrounds (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016). Often, MDLI teachers fall into this latter category. Some are primary fluent English speakers themselves, but those who are not may not receive the same esteem or compensation for their abilities as a primary English speaker who has fluency in the same multiple languages (Flores & García, 2017; Gándara, 2015; G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021).

In HUSD, this discrepancy in language valuation is consistent with the establishment of a culture of English-first and English-only education priorities, wherein privileges are assigned to multilingual students who have mastered English regardless of the impact on their home or additional language. For example, elective courses, such as arts and music, are not available for students who indicate a non-English primary home language because they are automatically enrolled in “English Language Development" coursework. Only when English is mastered at a level eligible for reclassification as “English Proficient” will students be permitted to engage in elective courses. Another example is the state of California’s dispensation of its capstone designation for language learning, the Seal of Biliteracy. The criteria for eligibility require higher standards for speaking, listening, reading and writing in English than for languages other than English (Singleton et al., 2018). This is reinforced by the consistency or exclusivity of

assessment for English proficiency in multilingual education programs, without consistent assessment or expectations for proficiency of the non-English languages across multilingual programs in the U.S. (Wong & Benson, 2019). Such structures set the cultural climate for privileging multilingual individuals with stronger English fluency than fluency in the additional language. Further, prior study on interactions with multilingual individuals reveals that fluency in a non-English language and physical racial indicators produce an "otherness" that can be met with unconscious bias (Tajrobehkar, 2021), occurring when the multilingual individual's dominant background is from a language or culture other than English, despite having language and literacy skills in English as well. This is pronounced in experiences noted by teachers identifying as Asian or Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI), wherein multiple studies cite racialization as foreigners or outsiders as consistent challenges to their credibility as educators, and even more so when their speech in English is accompanied by an accent (Endo, 2015; Hsieh & Nguyen, 2021; Iftikar & Museus, 2018; G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021; J. Kim & Hsieh, 2021).

Statement of the Problem

Along with an increasing number of schools nationwide, the HUSD desires to increase multilingualism and multiculturalism through educational programs. While this is a promising endeavor to serve its students and community, its rapid expansion has given rise to a conflict in sustainability as demand for the DLI programs outpaces the availability of qualified teachers. Moreover, within the current socio-political, regulatory and cultural contexts of HUSD, this demand potentially commodifies CLD teachers by isolating their linguistic skill set and endangers the intended goals of the learning model with respect to fostering intercultural respect and communication (Flores & Garcia, 2017; M. Heller, 2003). Support of CLD teachers must incorporate humanizing interaction (Todres et al., 2009) that acknowledges and empowers their

multicultural capital to foster ideal teaching and learning conditions (Achinstein et al., 2010; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012). In situations where this does not occur, teacher turnover is more likely (Achinstein et al., 2010).

The rising demand for DLI programs, coupled with the limited availability of qualified teachers brings to bear concerns about the rate of MDLI teacher turnover, and in particular, questions as to why HUSD's MDLI teacher workforce have not been able to be consistently retained, given that its DLI programs are in high demand. As a comparison, in the 14 years since its inception, HUSD's Spanish DLI program has expanded to six campuses, and by the 2022-23 school year is serving 1,417 students across PreK-12 grade levels. Meanwhile, in this same timeframe, HUSD's Mandarin DLI program has struggled to staff only three campuses, one each at elementary, middle, and high school grades, with frequent teacher turnover. Despite yearly enrollment waitlists, HUSD's MDLI program has grown to less than half this size, only able to serve 668 students across TK-12 in 2022-23, with several teacher vacancies filled by substitute teachers on each campus. Student and family interest is ever present, but teacher hiring, support and retention is problematic. While staffing concerns exist in most DLI programs, the pervasiveness of teacher need and turnover in HUSD's MDLI program is particularly pronounced.

With a relatively high number of Mandarin speaking households in the region, HUSD's DLI programs provide opportunities to maintain or develop heritage language and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2022). With the growing value of global interaction, they also serve to introduce multilingualism and multiculturalism into otherwise English-only speaking homes, contributing to increased cultural intelligence and communication in the region (Ngai, 2002). It is also notable that performance outcomes for both English and target language development are positively

affected by enrollment in a DLI program (Shen et al., 2022). For such reasons and more, the HUSD's DLI programs have flourished and find themselves repeatedly filled to capacity, with a waitlist for enrollment year after year. Yet, the expansion of these DLI programs is limited by the availability of teachers of the target language. This can be particularly exacerbated for teachers of highly sought-after languages that are less prevalent in the U.S., and possibly less well-supported due to racialized bias and misconception (Aguilar, 2021; Flores & Rosa, 2015), such as Mandarin. Therefore, it is critical to address gaps in the humanistic and culturally sustaining features of the MDLI teacher experience, as their wellbeing is core to their professional efficacy (Aguilar, 2021) and ultimately, the success of DLI programs and their students. This problem area spans a broad swath of considerations that may impact their experience, which are detailed further in this section. These include: the stated and enacted values for language and culture education (Howard et al., 2018); the engagement of culturally sustaining practices toward DLI educators (Paris & Alim, 2017); and the impact of policies and implementation for DLI teacher preparation, hiring, support, and retention (Brown, 2014; Ingersoll & May, 2011).

Language and Culture Valuation

DLI program goals typically address both language acquisition and the connection to broader aims for increased multicultural understanding (Howard et al., 2018; Lindholm-Leary, 2001). HUSD's own DLI program goals include the statement that "students develop into bi-cognitive, reflective, culturally sensitive citizens" (HUSD, 2017, p. 3). This resonates with ideals for not only linguistic flexibility, but also the cross-cultural interaction that can be gained when embracing multiple languages. While there is a stated value for developing respect for diversity and inclusion through language and culture, the statements are centered around student learning and not necessarily applied to the identity of the teachers and staff of DLI programs. The

statements may assume application to educators; however, given the state of DLI teacher recruitment and retention, it is critical to explicitly consider the experience of MDLI teachers with respect to the actualization of goals for school-wide cultural sensitivity and understanding, or risk hypocrisy of intent versus impact to the educational community as a whole.

Presence of Culturally Sustaining Practices

There is a tendency of human behavior to preference individuals who come from similar cultural backgrounds as oneself, or exhibit behaviors culturally similar to one's own (Cronk, 2017). Thus, in considering the support of teachers from diverse backgrounds, it is important to understand the potential impact of dominant culture upon the perception and support of MDLI teachers in the school system. Just as expectations for the application of culturally sustaining pedagogies for students are interwoven into the goals of DLI education, the concept would be relevant in application to the interactions experienced by teachers of multicultural programs. Culturally sustaining pedagogy counters dominant narratives that cultural difference is a deficit to be remediated or assimilated, and instead seeks to actively value and incorporate the rich knowledge from cultural differences as assets for teaching and learning, ultimately sustaining the ways of being for CLD communities (Paris, 2012). Thus, it is important to consider the experience of MDLI teachers through a lens of cultural sustainment, as such interactions may reveal insight into the humanizing or dehumanizing conditions (Freire, 1970) contributing to or detracting from their professional health and wellbeing (Achinstein et al., 2010).

Policies and Structures for Teacher Hiring, Support, and Retention

The professional lives of MDLI teachers rests within an ecological system that is made up of interactions between multiple systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) that impact the overall experience they have within their school setting (Paat, 2013). Impacts and influences include

policies at federal, state, and local levels, in areas as broad as credentialing and immigration, as well as bureaucratic features of the school district and its protocols for hiring, support, and retention. The interplay between microsystems within one's individual control, and macro-, meso-, or exosystems that affect an individual is important to understand (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), as the burden of a MDLI teacher's wellbeing and job satisfaction does not rest on an individual alone.

Purpose of the Study

This dissertation serves to examine the impact of situational factors on MDLI teachers in HUSD, which may well contribute to their professional satisfaction, health and wellbeing, through the lenses of humanization (Todres et al., 2009), culture sustainment (Paris, 2012), and ecological interaction (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). This study will consider the expressed values, practices, and policies of the school system that may or may not contribute to humanizing and culturally sustaining interaction and support for MDLI teachers. The humanizing values framework (Todres et al., 2009) considers eight dimensions of humanization that denote care and reciprocal relationship: insiderness, agency, uniqueness, togetherness, sense-making, personal journey, sense of place, and embodiment (Hemingway, 2012). In parallel, this study will investigate the extent by which the MDLI teacher experience is impacted by the engagement or lack of engagement of culturally sustaining practices from people and policies in their ecological system, as culturally sustaining practices are the actionable application of culturally relevant and responsive understanding (Paris, 2012) that multicultural and multilingual programs seek to manifest.

It is evident that the wellbeing of teachers is paramount to their success with students in the classroom (Roffey, 2012), as teachers are not only the direct conduit of instruction in the

classroom, but they are the human connector who engage students in relationship, community and growth (Roorda et al., 2011). How critical then, should a humanized experience be for these valued teachers? While the emotional and professional wellbeing of Chinese language teachers has been the focus of several studies (Bao et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2021; Wang, 2022) the DLI setting brings unique demands that impact the experience (Zhou & Li, 2017), which have not been as well researched. MDLI teachers additionally face particular challenges that are distinct in comparison to non-MDLI teachers, such as cross-cultural integration or stressors associated with immigration (Jin et al., 2021), which draw upon intellectual, emotional, and sometimes physical resources, and thus impact their wellbeing and self-efficacy in the classroom. Thus, this study seeks to specifically examine the lived experience of Mandarin language teachers in the uniquely DLI setting.

Research Questions

The following research questions (RQ) will be addressed in this study:

- RQ1– How do humanizing practices impact Mandarin dual language immersion (MDLI) teachers' professional experiences?
- RQ2– How do culturally sustaining practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences?
- RQ3– Where do MDLI teachers experience humanizing and culturally sustaining impact in their workplace ecosystem?

Significance of the Study

The U.S. is experiencing a convergence of two contextual features with the rise in 21st century learning priorities and global mindset values coinciding with a rapidly increasing teacher shortage (Bryner, 2021; Jacobson-Lundeberg, 2016). This means that in a time when diverse

skill sets, such as multilingualism are sought for student learning and classroom instruction, the country finds itself at a deficit in teachers qualified for and interested in such specialized roles. The current socio-political, cultural, and regulatory contexts for Mandarin language learning in the United States are potentially in conflict with the intended experience of students and teachers within MDLI programs. While the growing demand for MDLI programs would initially seem to offer a favorable rise in employment demand and opportunity, it can devolve into a marketplace commodification of supply and demand if not thoughtfully approached, as the current framing and socio-political support for multilingual education positions language as a resource, rather than an embrace of cultural integration (Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017). While in some regions, MDLI teachers will be potentially able to consider multiple employment options, and school districts will potentially be competing to employ desirable prospective new hires, it is paramount that the experience of MDLI teachers does not become one of impersonal or culturally disconnected transactions, as this runs contrary to the values inherent in a DLI program.

More importantly, school systems must engage humanizing, intercultural sensitivity at an organizational level to authentically and respectfully include such highly-sought CLD teachers into their schools, and establish culturally sustaining interactions as a pathway to longevity in the profession and the community as a whole. Given how pronounced this deficit is for Mandarin language teachers, inspecting the barriers or reasons as to why teacher turnover and shortage persists can provide insight into its resolution (Jin et al., 2021; G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021; I. Wang, 2022). This study has the potential to impact the approach that individuals within the ecological system of a school district take toward future and existing Mandarin language teachers, so that the embodiment of their experience reflects the values schools have toward

cultural and linguistic diversity. It further has the potential to impact the policies and processes by which school districts recruit, hire, support, and retain Mandarin language teachers.

Assumptions of the Study

This study is conducted under several assumptions. Firstly, the study assumes that an individual's natural and authentic self is influenced by and sometimes imposed upon by external factors in their ecology that can change its way of being. This is why the study aims to inspect the full ecosystem of the MDLI teachers' professional experience, as the influences and impositions found therein have a likelihood of impacting their sense of self. Secondly, this study assumes that while those experiencing oppressive circumstances have the fortitude to push against it (Freire, 1970), the onus for change does not lie with those who are marginalized by dominant and mainstream culture, but rather with those upholding or imposing the marginalization. This study intends to discern where or who in the system can produce needed change, and considers the framework of humanization as a lens for that discernment so that further stressors are not imposed on those already marginalized. Thirdly, this study assumes that systems of oppression and marginalization exist, and the U.S. educational system is one such system that is normed for White-centric superiority (Chen, 2017). Therefore, the data will be reviewed through the framework of cultural sustainment, to inspect if the marginalization is related to racial, cultural, or linguistic features of the MDLI teachers' full selves, and if so, how might this be overcome. Finally, this study assumes that it is possible for multiple perspectives and ways of being to successfully coexist and strengthen one another. This is also connected to the use of the framework of cultural sustainment, as this study seeks to inspect the actualization of multiple ways of being through multiculturalism and multilingualism.

Limitations of the Study

The study is bounded by geographic location, taking place in a coastal, urban, metropolitan region that has additional benefits beyond the workplace to teachers of diverse or international backgrounds, thus the findings may not apply as a generalization to other regions of the country that may not have such features. While focused on one urban school district, this district is surrounded by multiple proximal districts with Mandarin DLI programs, thus allowing for higher volume of local competition or employment opportunities that may impact teacher decision-making.

As stated, this study focuses on one school district's cohort of Mandarin language teachers, and some policies under study may be localized and not applicable in other school systems. The cohort includes teachers currently teaching in the school district, those who have left it for other school systems, and those who have left it for other professional endeavors. While the unifying context is the school district under study, the movement of participants may include features influenced by settings beyond the school district.

The DLI format used in this school district is a two-way immersion that reserves enrollment seats for fluent speakers of Mandarin language at a rate of 50%/50% fluent speaker /non-speaker, with additional seats for non-speakers open once all fluent speaker seats have been filled. The actual enrollment is heavily non-speaker due to lack of fluent speaker enrollment, and is approximately 30%/70% fluent speaker /non-speaker. Findings may not be generalizable to districts with significantly different fluent speaker /non-speaker ratios.

This school district conducts Mandarin language immersion in a 90:10 model, with instruction occurring in Mandarin for 90% of the school day's instructional minutes and in English for 10% of the school day, beginning in kindergarten. Each subsequent grade level

decreases in Mandarin instructional minutes and increases in English instructional minutes by 10% until a 50%/50% balance is conducted in the fourth and fifth grades. Expectations for teachers in different grade levels will vary depending on the amount of Mandarin instructional minutes, thus findings may not be generalizable to districts with 50:50 or different models.

Definition of Terms

The use of racial, ethnic, and cultural terms or phrases as identifiers and/or descriptors is frequently tied to specific periods in history, and may evolve in accordance with shifting social and political norms. Often, terms carry nuance, limitation, and varying interpretation from different members of society, so it is important to articulate the use of key terms relevant to the study, as they are used in current social and educational contexts. In the event that another term has been used by an author to describe individuals or populations in this study, the researcher honors the authors' term when citing.

- *Asian* - A racial, ethnic, and / or cultural identifier for individuals descended from or a part of the diasporic heritage of Asia. The term does not express the detailed diversity of individuals within its scope, who encompass a broad spectrum of national, cultural, and linguistic origins and experiences, and may opt for other identifiers (Budiman et al., 2021). A non-exhaustive list most predominantly seen in this study's research includes: Asian, Asian American, Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI), Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA), Chinese, Taiwanese, Mandarin.
- *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) People* - An identifier for communities that encompass individuals from non-dominant cultures that include ethnic, religious, or non-English linguistic backgrounds in the U.S. (Jordan, 2010).

- *Culturally Relevant* - Practices that accept and affirm an individual's cultural identity, and serve to cultivate cultural intelligence (CQ) and critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995b).
- *Culturally Responsive* - Practices that appreciate, build upon, and utilize an individual's personal knowledge and culture (Gay, 2000).
- *Culturally Sustaining* - Practices that maintain an individual's heritage, language, and culture, with the long-term intent to develop cultural pluralism rather than assimilation (Paris, 2012).
- *Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program* - TK-12 education programs in the U.S. that engage students in the acquisition of spoken and written language that includes English and another target language (Howard et al., 2018). The immersion model will allot 50% or more of the instructional time to the target language.
- *Ecological Systems Theory* - A framework for understanding the relationships and interactions an individual engages in within their immediate community, along with the influences of a broader society; these are noted as the micro or immediate system, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Paat, 2013).
- *Humanization* - Interaction with individuals that results in a prioritization of their value as a whole entity and authentic being (Freire, 1970; Todres et al., 2009).
- *Mandarin Dual Language Immersion (MDLI) Teachers* - Teachers who are employed to teach Mandarin language instruction in the U.S., though they may be of diverse national, cultural, and linguistic origins.

- *Multiculturalism* - The presence of and engagement with more than one culture or cultural identity, which can encompass diversity across heritage and language, leading to cultural pluralism and inclusiveness.
- *Multilingualism* - The use of more than one language for expression and communication, enabling the user to engage in cross-cultural empathy, understanding and interaction.
- *Western* - A term used to delineate Western Euro-centric cultural characteristics, encompassing the social norms, ethical values, customs, and traditions associated with people of Western European origin and its countries. This term also includes non-European countries whose cultural histories are connected by colonization, immigration, or other significant forms of influence.
- *White* - A term used for people who identify as and/or are perceived to have European origin (Fuller Jr., 2010). Associated with a phenotype, this term has been expanded to convey the normalized culture associated with those of or perceived to be of European origin.

Chapter 1 Summary

As the demand for 21st century global learning for students increases, so too must the responsiveness that school systems have for establishing and nurturing a quality teacher workforce who holds the coveted skill sets and competencies that are in demand. This era of education calls for a growth in multilingualism, but given the socio-political and regulatory restrictions of the past, language teachers find themselves in a shifting cultural context that is relatively recent in its reawakening to the value of multilingual education and the myriad individuals who can deliver it authentically and holistically. With the rise of multilingual education models such as dual language immersion, the learning goals move beyond language

acquisition to multiculturalism, conveying an importance in valuing not just language, but the fullness of the culture from which it is generated. Therefore, it is paramount that the experience of the CLD teachers engaged in multilingual education not be isolated for language instructional skill alone, but rather that the interactions in their profession encompass humanizing and culturally sustaining experiences that honor the entirety of who they are and what they bring to their role. This concern is particularly pronounced for teachers traditionally "othered" by linguistic or racial features in the English-dominant contexts of education in the U.S. Thus, this dissertation serves to explore the experience of Mandarin dual language immersion teachers in a Southern California public school district to consider the impact of humanizing and culturally sustaining features on the teachers' experience.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

While there is a considerable amount of research on CLD student wellbeing and engagement through culturally sustaining pedagogies (de Oliveira, 2021; Grant & Hill, 2020; Laster et al., 2020; Noguera, 2008; Paris & Alim, 2014; Smith, 2020) and humanizing pedagogies (Osorio, 2018; Peercy et al., 2022; Zisselsberger, 2016), and an increasing amount of research on CLD teacher wellbeing and retention (Aguilar, 2021; Kohli, 2009; Tyler et al., 2004), little research has been conducted on the application of these culturally sustaining and humanizing practices toward CLD teachers themselves within the ecology of their school systems (Andrews et al., 2019) as a means of contributing to workforce stability and retention. Further, attending to the specific raciolinguistic context (Flores & Rosa, 2015) that MDLI teachers encounter as CLD individuals is critical to understanding the impact that such factors may have on their wellbeing and retention in the field of language instruction (Jia, 2014). Therefore, this literature review is conducted in two parts, contextual and theoretical, to gain an understanding of contributing aspects to the professional lived experience of MDLI teachers in the United States. These are explored contextually through multilingual education and multilingual teacher wellbeing, and theoretically through the lens of cultural sustainment, humanization, and ecological systems.

Multilingual Education

MDLI teachers as multilingual educators in the U.S. are engaged in a context that is broader than a program model, and whose current experience is potentially impacted by the myriad views toward multilingualism in this country over time. Just as there are multiple instructional methodologies with demonstrated success for learners across content areas,

multilingual education is not defined by one singular approach, and has evolved through policy and advocacy over time (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016). Therefore, exploring the fluctuating *purpose* for multilingualism, in conjunction with models of retention education, provides insight into the evolving cultural context in the U.S. Three main purposes commonly appear in the literature (Baker & Jones, 1998; Baker & Wright, 2021; Y.K. Kim et al., 2015; Wiley, 2007):

- multilingual education as a means of gaining English proficiency for CLD individuals / speakers of languages other than English;
- multilingual education as a means of gaining proficiency in non-English languages for fluent English speakers; and
- multilingual education as a means of promoting multilingualism and multiculturalism in culturally affirming ways.

Multilingual Education as a Means of Gaining English Proficiency

In the U.S., and in particular states like California with high populations of immigrant and/or CLD communities, multilingual education has often been viewed from the lens of providing English fluency to speakers of other languages, promoting an English-first lens that positions the language as both a priority and a prestige (Wright, 2004). A commonly used model in the years prior to the passage of the 1968 Bilingual Education Act was submersion or structured immersion, wherein students were placed into English mainstream classes with little to no language support, and expected to acquire English by necessity and frequency of academic use (Y.K. Kim et al., 2015; Wang, D., 2015). Studies demonstrated that this approach not only resulted in loss of the home language, but also resulted in gaps in English academic proficiency for the students, with no narrowing of the growth rate in comparison to peers who were fluent English speakers (Cheung & Slavin, 2012; Crawford, 1999).

The submersion instructional model eventually shifted to acknowledge the need for intentional supports and scaffolds for speakers of other languages who were acquiring English, in a structure commonly known as English as a second language (ESL) or English language development (ELD; Gándara & Escamilla, 2016; Genesee et al., 2006). This model brought awareness to the idea that students studying language would need systematic support and strategies, yet maintained an English-only stance in instruction. This means ESL / ELD does not include any instruction in the student's home language, with the intent to accelerate the acquisition of English. However, longitudinal research by Thomas and Collier (2000) revealed that with the ESL / ELD method, students would need on average four to nine years to adequately acquire English, which represents a large proportion of their general education years. A more recent study of the application of such a bilingual education model in the Maldives relatedly noted a loss in the home or first language while English-only education occurred, along with a loss in esteem for the home or first language due to the positioning of greater economic mobility potential with English (Mohamed, 2020).

Multilingual education approaches whose purpose is to increase English proficiency without regard to the home language of the student have been shown to result in loss or replacement of the home language and less than ideal gains in English proficiency (Baker & Jones, 1998). While speakers of non-English languages are centered as the target learners in such designs, they are centered with a deficit perspective toward their home language, and are instead educated for assimilation into English (Ngai, 2002; Portes & Hao, 2002; Rumbaut et al., 2006). Further detaching its intent from encouraging mutual multilingualism in English and other languages, this approach does not necessitate multilingually capable teachers. While knowledge

of language development strategies is needed, multilingual skill is not, as instruction is carried out primarily or solely in English (Genesee et al., 2006).

Multilingual Education as a Means of Gaining Proficiency in a Language Other Than English

As a cautionary tale for this era's increasing focus on globalization, it is important to note that in the U.S., benefits of multilingualism have previously been more connected to capitalistic than socio-cultural pursuits, such as gaining economic or professional advantage (Chiswick & Miller, 2016). This may explain why interest in multilingualism had been previously limited. With English dominantly in use domestically, and also the lingua franca in many international platforms, there has traditionally been a diminished need for English speakers to learn any additional language as their English proficiency already provides access to mainstream professions and privileges (Reimann, 2018). Accordingly, globalization connects this perspective to multilingual education pursuit in the U.S. for the purpose of additive education for those already proficient in English, often in world language or one-way immersion models. A common goal in such cases is to gain proficiency in globally marketable languages to position oneself for additional advantage (Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017; Valdez et al., 2016).

Yet, there is inclusive potential to holding such a purpose, as Ngai (2002) points out that promoting multilingual education in heavily English monolingual areas of the country, such as rural America, will contribute positively to the overall goals of increasing multilingualism in the U.S. As much of the population of the U.S. resides beyond urban cities or metropolitan centers where organic multilingualism may be clustered, Ngai (2002) maintains that if the intent is to provide exposure and increased interaction with the modernizing world, then increased multilingualism from previously English monolingual individuals will serve to broaden

acceptance and inclusivity for all. This approach centers fluent English speakers, and so schools must be cautious to ensure that when multilingual education is delivered with the intent to provide proficiency in another language to English speakers, the value and respect for both languages and their associated cultures be explicitly maintained (Flores, 2019; Fránquiz et al., 2019a; Valdes, 2011; Zelin, 2017). Otherwise, multilingual education dispensed through this priority purpose has the potential to commodify minoritized multilingual teachers for service and skill, rather than the full embodiment of their professional and cultural identities (Fitts & Weisman, 2009; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017).

Multilingual Education as a Means of Promoting Multilingualism and Multiculturalism in Culturally Affirming Ways

A culturally sustaining purpose for multilingual education in the U.S. addresses the ability for speakers of non-English languages or CLD individuals to maintain their home language fluency in partnership with English fluency (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). This particular stance serves to expand upon the earlier purposes which either center the speaker of other languages via deficits in English, or center the fluent English speaker with advantages in additional language acquisition. The purpose here is to bring parity to the imbalance in language influence and esteem by positioning the value of the non-English language alongside English development (Flores & García, 2017; Fránquiz et al., 2019a; Nordstrom, 2022). Further, balanced multilinguals who maintain command of their home or heritage language alongside proficiency in English tend to experience greater academic and economic rewards than those who replace their heritage language with English alone (Agirdag, 2014). With the dominance of the English language in the U.S., more explicit and intentional structures are needed for home languages to coexist in an authentic multilingual setting (Chen et al., 2021). In an evolutionary

study of multilingualism, Wu (2020) lays out evidence that while language competition for economic prominence and social intervention through policy can impact the continuity of multilingualism, with appropriate intervention, languages can indeed be simultaneously maintained.

A demographic of individuals who may be drawn to multilingual education for the purpose of gaining and maintaining target language proficiency are heritage learners from CLD backgrounds, either as immigrants themselves or as subsequent generations of children from indigenous or immigrant families who have over time lost language ability in their heritage tongue (Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2014; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Reiterating the need for explicit structures to maintain heritage languages, Chen et al. (2021) found that parents simply valuing heritage language development and providing casual exposure via media is not as predictive of heritage language proficiency as when language is modeled and intentionally used at home and in classes. One model serving this need is the community language school, sometimes referred to as indigenous or heritage schools, set up and run by the heritage community itself. Unlike world language or one-way immersion settings mentioned earlier, this model has an additional aim to nurture a sense of ethnic pride and belonging linked to the heritage culture, alongside language development (Nordstrom, 2022). This model centers the heritage student in its design, yet frequently occurs outside the mainstream U.S. schooling structure in after school or Saturday school settings.

Perhaps the fastest growing model in this era that can serve the purpose of heritage and home language maintenance is two-way DLI. Considerable research has demonstrated its benefits in generating fluency in two languages simultaneously, while also theoretically providing access to shared multilingualism for all students regardless of their dominant language

(Flores, 2019; Genesee et al., 2006; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Murphy, 2014; Serafini et al., 2022). The intent is to develop multilingual, multiliterate, and multicultural learners who achieve academically and participate in socio-culturally productive ways (Howard et al., 2018; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2014). While the design of two-way DLI programs allows for this intent to occur within the mainstream schooling structure, such ideals do not always manifest due to implementation factors or policies in school systems (Alanís & Rodríguez, 2008; Avni & Menken, 2019; Bernstein et al., 2021; Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Wong & Benson, 2019). In fact, Morita-Mullaney and Chesnut (2022) call this the "elusive trap" (p. 50), allowing for the altruism of the program goals to stand without inspection of true outcomes. A recently emerging movement to include critical consciousness as an additional pillar of DLI addresses this specifically, with consideration of centering the learning of speakers of the target language, to create both linguistic priority and reset socio-cultural norms around language privilege (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Freire, 1987; Valdes, 2011), and establish culturally sustaining pedagogies during instruction (Paris, 2012). A promising shift in practice includes translanguaging, harnessing the entirety of a multilingual individual's language repertoire to establish a more accurate demonstration of multilingual action and engagement (Espinet & Chapman, 2022; García & Kleifgen, 2020; García & Otheguy, 2020; Wei & García, 2022). Multilingual education as a means of creating mutual fluency in two languages for both speakers of other languages and fluent English speakers is an ideal that is both desirable and attainable, but only with careful intention and attention to the minoritized language and its speakers in the classroom (Flores & García, 2017; Fránquiz et al., 2019a; Palmer et al., 2019; Wong 黃 & Tian 田 2022).

Multilingual Teacher Wellbeing

As the U.S. evolves in its intent and purpose for multilingual education in this country, the experiences of multilingual educators in the school system often reflects the evolution. Simultaneously, they remain intimately involved in the impact of such learning goals and models on their students. At the core, teachers are stewards of their students' experience, as positive student outcomes are strongly linked to a teacher's capacity to perform well in their professional environment (Roffey, 2012), making teacher wellbeing and resilience an important factor in student success. These concepts have been the subject of several studies (Garbett, 2018; Hascher et al., 2021), and both terms reveal concerns around the emotional health needed to carry out the duties of teaching (Gu & Day, 2007). It is a profession that depends upon relational and empathetic factors (Roffey, 2012), which in the absence of protective factors can lead to stress and burnout (Ainsworth & Oldfield, 2019). Teachers in multilingual education programs may be even more at risk of such burnout, as studies indicate that those who predominantly serve CLD students carry additional burdens of concern for the marginalization their students experience in the educational setting (Aguilar, 2021; Howard, 2003; Noguera, 2008). Further, multilingual teachers who are CLD individuals themselves experience higher incidence of professional barrier, marginalization and alienation due to their racialized identities (Bettini et al., 2022; Kohli & Pizarro, 2016), often leading to higher rates of demoralization and turnover (Achinstein et al., 2010; Kohli, 2019). In fact, studies on language teachers specifically note that stressors and attacks on their identity have a significant impact on their wellbeing (Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017; MacIntyre et al., 2019), with Hiver and Dörnyei (2017) proactively proposing the concept of "language teacher immunity" (p. 407) to consider self-protective factors to help develop the necessary resilience of multilingual teachers in their professional roles. With respect to the

MDLI multilingual teacher experience, an exploration of the literature resonates that such factors absolutely affect their overall wellbeing, with aspects of marginalization experienced broadly as CLD teachers and more specifically through a raciolinguistic perspective as Asian and Mandarin language teachers as well.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Teachers

With the rise in advocacy for a more diverse teacher workforce in the U.S., concerns have been raised about the lack of structures and supports to ensure the success of CLD individuals in their trajectory to becoming teachers (Gauna et al., 2022; Goldhaber, 2019), along with the lack of attention to organizational conditions and the racialized hierarchy of existing systems that impact their experience once they are placed in schools (Brown, 2014; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Kohli, 2018). The experience of CLD teachers is distinct from their non-CLD peers in the U.S. K-12 system in both pre-service and in-service settings (Achinstein et al., 2010). Rogers-Ard et al. (2012), note three notable barriers for CLD individuals in their pursuit and maintenance of a teaching career: standardized testing, economic burden, and racial bias in defining quality instruction.

Credibility Defined Through Standardization. A hallmark of the pre-service journey is the acquisition of appropriate credentialing to be deemed eligible to teach. A study by Goldhaber et al. (2015) indicates that licensure tests and credentialing requirements disproportionately screen out CLD teachers, resonating with O'Sullivan and Jiang's (2002) findings that California's teacher credential requirement for passage of the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) exam jeopardizes potential teachers with qualified or unqualified designations that do not correlate with actual quality of instruction. Exams like the RICA are especially problematic for CLD teachers for whom English is not the dominant language

(O'Sullivan & Jiang, 2002), a characteristic of many MDLI and multilingual teachers. For teachers of CLD background, standardized exams such as these have long been known to be prohibitive barriers to the classrooms in which their instructional skill can be utilized, establishing "a so-called achievement gap" (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012, p. 457) among teachers as well as students (Au, 2009; Williams III, 2019). These exams create an inequitable measure of knowledge and capability that do not take into account cultural markers of intelligence, resulting in a racially biased filter (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012), wherein expectations for knowledge and capability are defined around a White normative lens (Kohli, 2019). For MDLI and other CLD multilingual teacher candidates with stronger backgrounds in a language other than English, the expectations for speaking and writing proficiency in academic English further inhibits their potential to accurately demonstrate their acumen (Arroyo-Romano, 2016; Gauna et al., 2022).

Ability Defined by Economic Capacity. Like many other states, in California multilingual teacher candidates encounter additional assessments and criteria to obtain a Bilingual Authorization, on top of what is required of candidates seeking a general credential (CCTC, 2022). The cognitive effort to prepare for these exams and their financial costs are taken on by the teacher candidate; yet with a higher likelihood of failure in comparison to non-CLD peers, necessitating retakes of exams, CLD individuals spend more in fees and preparation support, compounding the economic bias in the pre-service teacher pathway (Rogers-Ard et al., 2012). Beyond licensure exams and credentialing fees, the economic burden expected of pre-service teachers presumes access to funds for a lengthy duration, given the common structure of tuition-based coursework, coupled with student teaching for months to a full school year without compensation (Bettini et al., 2022). This becomes prohibitive for individuals who carry

obligations for family support, whether financial or time-based, which is more common in CLD communities with less access to generational wealth resources (Bettini et al., 2022; Rogers-Ard, 2012). Moreover, MDLI and CLD teachers from international locations may have additional economic burdens arising from lack of financial aid and immigration requirements, including visa and government regulations (Dunn, 2015), carrying with them a host of additional stressors and potential disruptions to the typical process of becoming and remaining a teacher.

Quality Defined by Dominant Culture. Ironically, the barriers faced by CLD individuals also contribute to biases they face as new and continuing teachers. Delpit (1995) indicates that incorrect attributions result from a lack of acknowledgement of such barriers facing CLD teachers, as the success or non-success of CLD teachers is viewed through the lens of deviation from White normative expectations for the profession. For example, the lower success rates experienced by CLD teachers in licensure assessments and with credentialing requirements lead to inaccurate notions of their ability to teach (Rogers-Ard et al., 2019). Regretfully, this leads to a misinterpretation of not only their readiness, but also their overall competence, intelligence, and quality in general (Delpit, 1995). Further, the White norms commonly accepted in education mean that CLD teachers encounter “othering” (Bettini et al., 2022) behaviors that categorize them into stances or roles not expected of White peers, such as translators, disciplinarians, and cultural brokers (Achinstein et al., 2010). Yet, when these additional roles accumulate in their tactical and emotional labor, the CLD teacher may not find themselves rewarded for the additional effort or workload, and rather they are judged should they fall short in other areas of contributing to the educational community, such as social interaction or extracurricular engagement (Bettini et al., 2022; Milner & Hoy, 2003). Despite the empathy, relational trust, and motivational success CLD teachers may frequently have with CLD students,

the norms against which they are judged do not take into account the cultural assets they employ (Kohli & Pizarro, 2016), and for multilingual teachers in particular, the additional racialization of their linguistic assets can create a deficit atmosphere rather than celebration of their unique contribution to the educational space (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Nguyen, 2012). Aguilar (2021) notes that without intentional support, the environment CLD teachers encounter in the U.S. school system continues to convey a racialized hierarchy and bias that leaves them feeling isolated, marginalized, and ultimately drained of the energy or enthusiasm to continue in the field.

Teachers of Asian Heritage

While there are shared connections among CLD teachers in the educational system, the experience is not homogenous across or within all cultural or racial communities, and it is important to examine further influences. MDLI teachers in the U.S. most frequently identify as individuals of Asian cultural and racial diasporic heritage, and an examination of the literature with respect to this specificity reveals some key distinctions beyond the broader identity as a CLD teacher. As the diversity of the Asian diaspora itself encompasses a broad swath of cultural, linguistic and dialectic origins, this researcher acknowledges the insufficiency of any one term or description in honoring the full diversity within this categorization. In the U.S. itself, the Asian diaspora includes at least 21 origin groups, the largest being Chinese-origin at 24% of total Asian identifying individuals, with the smallest origin groups such as Okinawan or Bhutanese representing less than 1% each (Budiman et al., 2021). Accordingly, Venkatraman (2023) notes that the commonly applied term “Asian American” in the U.S. potentially overlooks such culturally and linguistically distinct groups in ways that mask significant economic or social discrepancies between Asian origin groups. The work of deeper disaggregation of ethnic data is an evolving practice, and this researcher recognizes the paradoxical vastness of narrowing the

review of existing literature to inspect teachers of the Asian diaspora. For the purposes of this study on MDLI teachers in the U.S., terms including AAPI, Chinese, Taiwanese, and Mandarin were used to search the existing literature. The researcher applies the term "Asian" to encompass all aforementioned terms when referring to the general research, but applies the preferred identity indicated by MDLI teacher participants themselves when referring to this study's participants.

Rising from the literature regarding the experience of teachers in the U.S. of Asian heritage are prominent themes noting Asian "foreignness" from the White normative culture, regardless of birthplace in the U.S. or not, the inhibiting effects of stereotype, and the lack of credibility and visibility as educators in U.S. schools (Hsieh & J. Kim, 2021; G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021; Maddamsetti et al., 2018), each of which can contribute to a diminishing self-efficacy, sense of belonging (Bettini et al., 2022), and add to the toll on overall wellbeing (Gu & Day, 2007).

Cultural, Racial, and Linguistic Variance. G.M. Kim and Cooc (2021) note that Asian teachers experience tensions unique to the extent of the variance in their appearance, cultural practices, and language structure from dominant American or Western patterns. The greater the difference from Western alignment in practices, beliefs, and language, the more they are stigmatized as foreigners and outsiders, regardless of citizenship or nationality status (Chow, 2018). A critical point in this tension pertains to the prevalence and recency of Asian immigration, and its resultant assimilation or acculturation, as the Pew Research Center notes that at the time of their data collection, nearly 60% of the Asian population and 73% of Asian adults in the U.S. were born in another country (Lopez et al., 2017). In their study of familial influence on Chinese heritage language maintenance, Gonzalez et al. (2022) noted that acculturation was commonly bidimensional among the many first and second generation

immigrants encountered, meaning that aspects of both heritage and Western cultural characteristics can exist independently. Thus, heritage traditions are still often evidenced among the Chinese population in the U.S., even when the individual is American-born, raised, or highly acculturated to the U.S. dominant culture (Gonzalez et al., 2022). In addition to the "othering" (Bettini et al., 2022) experienced as CLD teachers, this culture-based designation of foreignness serves to further separate or tokenize Asian teachers as outsiders, and again establishes Western culture as the norm (Chow, 2018; Subedi, 2008). This stereotype is identified by Takaki (1998) as cited by Hsieh and J. Kim (2020) as the "forever foreigner," whereby Asians in the U.S. are never seen as fully American, regardless of nationality or acculturation. In alignment with such descriptions, Steketee et al. (2021) found that the three most common categories of bias and microaggression found in the school setting are based on racial, nativist, and immigrant-origin perceptions, resonant with the experiences and identifiers ascribed to Asian teachers.

Due to the inextricable link between language and race, where language contributes to the construction of race, and perceptions of race influence language and its use (Alim & Reyes, 2011), language variance becomes another distinct marker of foreignness encountered by Asian teachers (G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021). This raciolinguistic intersection is further impacted by linguicism, the attribution of superiority or inferiority based on use of language (Nguyen, 2012; Tajrobehkar, 2021). Nguyen (2012) recounted the admonishment of a White, male principal toward a Vietnamese, female pre-service teacher who had been speaking Vietnamese to the parents of her student, "Never let me catch you use *that* language again at *my* school… you were hired as a long-term sub to teach in *English*" (p. 653). The teacher's use of Vietnamese was to support the immigrant, Vietnamese-speaking family in understanding the content of the school newsletter; however, rather than embracing the linguistic capital of the teacher, this reprimand

directly conveyed that the language was not welcome, and indirectly conveyed that neither was this aspect of the teacher's identity nor that of her student and parents. Using a language other than English or speaking English with a non-dominant accent contributes to the perception of a deviation from the standard language ideology, which Nguyen (2012) notes is a bias toward the language of privilege, and further, a social hierarchy that positions English as the ideal. Maddamsetti et al. (2018) followed the experiences of Ling, a Chinese, international, pre-service teacher in the U.S., who expressed anxiety in being unable to speak English with an American accent, and accordingly placed self-imposed pressure on herself to prepare early and with great detail to guard against linguistic errors during instruction that she knew would be humiliating. With racial, cultural, and linguistic features that are discernable and categorized as different and / or inferior, Asian teachers experience marginalization in ways that can be both direct and clear (Subedi, 2008), and indirect and microaggressive (Maddamsetti et al., 2018), ultimately increasing tactical and emotional labor, while eroding wellbeing.

Legitimacy and Invisibility. The impact of such biases results in barriers of legitimacy and invisibility for Asian teachers within the education system (Hsieh & J. Kim, 2021; G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021). With the othering of Asian practices and knowledge, Asian teachers struggle to be seen as credible authorities in the education of American and Western children (G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021). In a recent Canadian study, Marom (2018) distinguished methodologies as Western and Eastern, finding that Western schools and leaders viewed the concept of a "good teacher" (p. 173) differently than how teachers from Asian school systems defined this concept. For example, school leaders would attribute weaknesses in instruction or classroom management to an Asian teacher's Eastern methodologies, and despite a complementary potential in the constructs, Western school leaders and peers negated the

credibility of the Asian teacher's construct, and did not create space for their perspective to be acknowledged or respected (Marom, 2018). Similarly, Maddamsetti et al. (2018) found that Ling, the pre-service teacher described earlier, expressed that she needed to separate herself from her cultural knowledge in order to meet the expectations of a "good teacher" in the U.S. school system, knowing that her perspective would be deemed unintelligent and inappropriate. Some of this, as noted earlier, stems from Ling's struggle with acceptance due to her non-American accented English. Flores and Rosa (2015) indicate that this is a problematic feature of the deficit frame on "appropriateness" (p. 150) in language, reducing credibility for speakers who cannot meet mainstream, normative expectations of the language. Subedi's (2008) study likewise found that an Asian teacher participant experienced erasure of her authentic self, having concluded that she would need to "assimilate to be taken seriously" (p. 65), as the cultural capital she could bring to her work was not respected in her American setting.

In fact, assimilation (Zhou, 1997) is somewhat associated with Asians in the U.S., as the image of a small, compliant and docile foreigner is another stereotype broadly and inaccurately applied to the group. Referred to as the "model minority," the term dangerously overlooks the impact of systemic barriers on Asian individuals, and leverages comparison and competition between marginalized groups (G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021). The model minority is defined as a success story within White norms, often attached to academics and work ethic, which indirectly encourage assimilation to mainstream culture and values (Lee, 2008; Osajima, 1988). The myth positions Asians in contrast with fellow CLD individuals through a deficit ideology, when actually both are subjected to marginalization within the existing White-centric structure of the U.S. education system (Hsieh & J. Kim, 2020; Kohli, 2009). C.J. Kim's (1999) seminal work in racial triangulation identified the emerging positioning of Asians within the historically bipolar

racial framework of Black and White; uncomfortably associated with privileges in contrast to Blackness and proximity to Whiteness, while still separate and outside of White acceptability. This triangulation reinforces White racial dominance, as such myths and racial positions serve to deny the existence of structural racism, and instead re-burdens CLD individuals with the ownership of the barriers they encounter (Poon et al., 2016; Wang & Yu, 2021), and unjustly re-directs the perspective on marginalization as a comparison between CLD communities (C.J. Kim, 1999). For Asian teachers, this results in an invisibility to struggles and needs they may have, and places undue pressure on them to meet imposed expectations independently. For example, Ling, the pre-service teacher described earlier, noted that her teaching background and instructional insights were ignored when she attempted to contribute to discussion, and that to gain visibility she determined she would need to act as the "model minority" that the school expected from her, even though she knew it was not her true identity (Maddamsetti et al., 2018). The disregard for Ling's voice and dismissal of her authentic self are experiences that can impose on her sense of belonging in her school, and perhaps the U.S. educational system overall. Zhou and Li (2017) similarly noted widespread invisibility due to cultural norms in their study of Chinese immersion teachers; participants described that their upbringing emphasized humility, yet, they discovered this quality to be a disadvantage when interacting with American colleagues, as their respectful, listening stance was misinterpreted as "either we don't have our own ideas or our ideas are not worth considering" (p. 172).

Mandarin Language Teachers

Asian individuals are linguistically and ethnically diverse, with varying histories of immigration to the U.S. (Lopez et al., 2017), and despite common experiences, they should not be viewed through a monolithic lens. Thus, the review continues to hone its focus more narrowly

on literature specific to the experience of Mandarin language teachers within the Asian teacher community in the U.S. While there have been several studies about the experiences and wellbeing of both Chinese teachers in general and, more narrowly, Mandarin language teachers (Gan et al., 2022; Jia, 2014; Maddamsetti et al., 2018; Wu & Leung, 2022), and an expanding body of research on MDLI programs and the MDLI student experience in the U.S. (Howard et al., 2004; Sung & Tsai, 2019; Wong 黃 & Tian 田 2022; Xu, 2021), there is limited study on the experiences of Mandarin language teachers in MDLI settings in particular (for exception, see Zhou & Li, 2017), which this dissertation serves to further inspect. This distinction is important, as DLI programs demand more from a teacher than a straightforward world language setting; rather than language development alone, DLI requires an integration of language within U.S. standardized, academic content (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016). This brings with it a more demanding load for socio-cultural and linguistic negotiation, or cultural brokering (Gay, 1993). Emergent themes in the existing literature circulate around a juxtaposition in the privileged positioning of the Mandarin language, with struggles for Mandarin teachers providing its instruction. These can be synthesized into three main categories that include the commodification of the Mandarin language and its speakers, diversity of background in Mandarin teachers, and ideological and pedagogical challenges in the school setting.

Linguistic Capital vs. Commodification. While the studies cited earlier focus on Mandarin language instruction in the U.S., there is an associated body of research on Mandarin language learning internationally in countries as diverse as Belarus (Bao et al., 2020), Brunei (Koh et al., 2021), Spain (Codó & Sunyol, 2019), and the United Kingdom (Jin et al., 2021; Wang, 2022), just to name a few. This plethora of study indicates the universal appeal of the Mandarin language worldwide, as countries around the globe incorporate it into their educational

offerings. An understanding of the current appeal for Mandarin learning partially begins nearly half a century ago with Bourdieu (1977), who noted the distinction between "linguistic competence" and "linguistic capital" (p. 646). The former refers to the general proficiency or capacity of an individual to engage fluently with language, whereas the latter extends this capacity to the utilization of language for value, leverageable as a resource and associated with benefit and even power. Given the widespread use of Mandarin in the global economy (Schaeffer, 2009), the appeal of the language is connected to the linguistic capital it can bring to those who elect to learn it, as Codó and Sunyol (2019) accordingly refer to Mandarin as an elite language and Koh et al. (2021) identify the "rise of China as a global economic powerhouse" as the appeal behind "Mandarin Fever" (p. 325). This notion has even been promoted by China's Hanban itself, a non-governmental organization tasked with the establishment of Volunteer Chinese Programs and Confucius Institutes worldwide, with the intent to form educational partnerships to spread Mandarin language and Chinese culture across the globe (Jia, 2014; Sung & Tsai, 2019). Despite the fact that the learning of Mandarin can embrace multiple facets of linguistic capital, including intercultural understanding and communication, its popularity is commingled with the push for learners to gain additive skills for positioning in the global economy (M. Heller, 2003), minimizing its value for cross-cultural connection in comparison to its value for economic advantage. While this privileging of Mandarin allows the language, and therefore, its speakers, to be in high demand, M. Heller's (2003; 2010) work raises caution that such demand unchecked can commodify the language and its fluent speakers in ways that diminish authenticity. Further risks include cultural appropriation or tokenization when the language is seen as a commodity in the pursuit of linguistic capital for economic gain or power (M. Heller, 2010). This underscores the careful balance that must be tread by schools and

teachers as Mandarin language courses and MDLI programs grow, since commodification of language can contribute to commodification of the individuals providing its instruction. This act would diverge from the intended purpose of DLI programs to provide culturally and linguistically sustaining environments for heritage language learners (Flores & García, 2017).

It is important to note that in this era of globalization, Chinese, and thus Mandarin, teachers specifically may be facing a unique backlash of anti-globalization sentiment due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its resultant economic and social impacts. Wang and Yu (2021) noted that the U.S. has recently experienced a surge of nationalist ideology in the wake of the stressors arising from the global emergency, with policy and attitudes shifting to a more restrictive perspective on immigration and cross-cultural exchange. Given the "forever foreigner" bias (Hsieh & J. Kim, 2020) and immigration patterns for many Asians in the U.S. (Lopez et al., 2017), this nationalist sentiment will likely impact the community. A rise in anti-Asian hate, racial discrimination, and attacks directed at Chinese people, unfortunately affects all individuals of Asian descent in the U.S., regardless of nationality or citizenship (Chen et al., 2020; Hsieh et al., 2022). The sentiment driving such actions is demeaning and dangerous to both the individual and the Asian community as a whole, further contributing to a perspective that language is a commodity and not a culture nor a humanity. This demonstrates a heavy burden on the U.S. school system, as it navigates a demand for MDLI education within the context of racially divisive behaviors for Asians in this country. Wang and Yu (2021) call for the promotion of critical humanity and multiculturalism in both teachers and students to counteract this threat. Hsieh et al. (2022) bring the importance of protective humanity even further into focus through their study of Asian American women holding dually vital roles in academia and in motherhood, calling for the use of radical love as resistance to the dehumanization and oppression of Asian

American women engaged in “care work” (p. 175) that would otherwise leave them invisible and without agency in their institutions amid such pressures.

Diversity in MDLI Teachers. With the growing demand for Mandarin learning, the recruitment of Mandarin teachers has expanded beyond the U.S., leading to a diversity of background even within the MDLI teacher workforce. Sung and Tsai (2019) indicate four teacher identities commonly found in their study of MDLI programs in the state of Utah: fluent Mandarin speakers who immigrated to study and earned university degrees in the U.S. before teaching; fluent Mandarin speakers who married U.S. citizens or who had immigrated to the U.S. before teaching; fluent Mandarin speakers who immigrated specifically to teach in the U.S. via an educational recruitment process; and fluent English speakers who gained Mandarin fluency as an additional language. Using a narrative inquiry method, Sung and Tsai (2019) collected stories from teachers, finding that their personal backgrounds heavily influenced their identities as teachers. For example, Tony, an American-born, fluent English speaker who came from a family of educators in the U.S., had observed and perceived the role of teachers as conveying passionate and dynamic personas in class, whereas the international Mandarin teachers were shaped by tenets of academic pursuit and respect for teachers as authority figures. Thus, the latter group found themselves needing to shift their teaching styles and modify their identities as teachers to account for the student interaction and inquiry they would encounter in the U.S. classroom (Xu, 2021). This reshaping of identity can lead to diminishing confidence and self-efficacy as a teacher (G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021), contributing to the misconception that international Mandarin teachers are not as capable as American-born Mandarin teachers or American teachers in general. Zhou and Li (2017) found that in Chinese DLI settings, American parents tended to speak more to the American teacher during parent-teacher conferences, resulting in a disregard

of the Chinese teacher as an equal partner or professional. Cultural differences in what is expected in a teacher and how instruction should be delivered are rife with micro-aggressions faced by international Mandarin teachers in U.S. classrooms, leading some to internalize the idea that they are not a "good teacher" (Maddamsetti et al., 2018; Marom, 2018). Meanwhile, fluent English-speaking teachers in MDLI settings, like Tony, may find themselves navigating a "cultural broker" role among peers instead of between students when witnessing interactions or supporting colleagues (Chang, 2020; Gay, 1993). This can add emotional labor from critical but unofficial duties, as well as emotional burden from secondary exposure to the micro-aggressions witnessed. Regardless of the cultural identity of the Mandarin teacher, their emotional health can be impacted by the environment and expectations of an MDLI program in the U.S. (Sung & Tsai, 2019).

Sung and Tsai's (2019) study further reveals that a significant population of MDLI teachers in the U.S. are immigrants and international citizens. McCann et al. (2012) found that for many of these teachers, their own schooling practices were more collectivist than the individualistic culture in the U.S., arising in cultural shock and conflict if not addressed. In a study of Chinese teachers placed in the U.S. by China's Hanban, Jia (2014) found that independence and intercultural adaptability were the most critical attributes needed in an international teacher, and that further, failure to adapt to U.S. culture impacted not only the effectiveness of Mandarin teaching, but also the psyche of the Mandarin teacher. Jia's (2014) study noted that while adaptation was positively correlated to length of time in the U.S., revealing encouraging data about improvements over time, it did not preclude psychological pressures from affecting the teachers' wellbeing in the meantime as they sought to overcome isolation and marginalization. While MDLI teachers hail from multiple countries and

backgrounds, several studies consistently noted that robust cultural training, mentorship, and scaffold for differences could help mitigate the negative effects of adaptation (Jia, 2014; Jin et al., 2021; McCann et al., 2012; Mercado & Trumbull, 2018), indicating that a support system is necessary for positive wellbeing.

Ideological and Pedagogical Challenges. Given the prevalence of international teachers in the MDLI setting, there is a high likelihood of pedagogical and ideological differences. Jin et al. (2021) note in their study of Chinese language teachers in the United Kingdom that one of the foundational sources of difference lies in the varying societal respect and appreciation for teachers; the role is revered at the highest level of professions in China, yet regarded with less value in the U.K. and similar countries. This study indicates that the lower social status contributes to a negative effect and stress for teachers who are not prepared to be perceived in such a manner, diminishing their sense of identity and emotional wellbeing (Jin et al., 2021). This underscores challenges that may be faced in the classroom, as expectations for interaction with students are reflective of the positionality of the teacher. In Mercado and Trumbull's (2018) study of mentorship for beginning immigrant teachers, a framework of individualism versus collectivism was utilized as a lens for examining cross-cultural differences. The U.S. emphasizes individualistic tendencies, such as student self-expression and egalitarianism, while international Chinese teachers may arrive with more collectivist expectations for respect for authority and hierarchical relationships based on cooperation with others (Mercado & Trumbull, 2018). Such ideological differences for international Chinese teachers can result in conflicts in classroom management and communication, which lead to stress and loss of self-efficacy, as well as possible misunderstandings with parents, colleagues, and school administration (Maddamsetti et al., 2018; Marom, 2018).

Within the MDLI context, Zhou and Li (2017) unearth pedagogical challenges that span not only classroom management and communication, but curriculum and instruction practices as well. In a qualitative study incorporating interviews and reflection entries from six Chinese language immersion teachers, the researchers found that the complexity of attending to U.S. subject matter content areas while concurrently addressing language and literacy development in Chinese requires significantly more preparation than traditional teacher training has provided (Zhou & Li, 2017). Unlike studies that focus on Chinese language teachers in world language settings, where lessons are conducted for approximately 30 to 40 minutes daily specifically for Chinese language instruction, Zhou and Li (2017) note that MDLI teachers maintain interaction with their students for a full day and for all subjects, necessitating a drastically different skill set. With a lack of materials in Mandarin for subject matters such as U.S. standards-based Math, Social Studies, and Science, teachers are often left to create them or translate from existing materials in English, adding significant workload. Further, language instruction is then bound to U.S. topics and themes that are not always conducive to Mandarin language application, like Thanksgiving and American history. The need to simultaneously learn U.S. content, thoughtfully adapt it to Mandarin, and plan for scaffolding abstract concepts for young learners creates amplified stressors and cognitive demand for MDLI teachers that is unique to this instructional setting. Wong and Benson (2019) succinctly explain that this is due to policymakers' tendency to conflate “teaching a language with teaching *in* a language” (p. 5). Each utilizes different pedagogies, and thus different teacher preparation strategies and training, yet, is frequently unaccounted for in time, compensation, or support (Zhou & Li, 2017). MDLI settings distinctly require integration and fluidity that demand more consideration, planning, and resourcing from

teachers, well beyond what is called for in non-DLI structures (Sung & Tsai, 2019), placing extra burden on MDLI teachers that can impact their experience in the profession.

An additional complexity encountered by MDLI teachers in the U.S. is the conflict between ideological and pedagogical approaches to language allocation, namely prevalent policy in the U.S. that prioritizes language separation by subject matter, teacher, or time (Tian, 2022). This practice requires teachers to adhere to a strict use of the target language during specific subjects or time periods, with the intention of counteracting the English language dominance that will naturally occur beyond the classroom. While initiated with protective intent toward the non-dominant language, this practice reinforces a monolingual view of multilingualism, as MDLI teachers are asked to relinquish their abilities to dynamically engage through both English and Mandarin fluidly, and instead establish a clearly demarcated boundary between the languages. In some MDLI settings, different teachers take care of instruction in each language (Zhou & Li, 2017), further reducing the ability for teachers to make use of and model their own multilingual capacity. In a promising study, Tian (2022) sought to explore an alternative to language separation in MDLI by enacting a translanguaging allocation framework, proposed by Sánchez et al. (2018) to utilize students' full linguistic repertoires in both English and Mandarin to make meaning and communicate, thus leveraging dynamic multilingualism as a skill and resource. Tian's (2022) participatory design research study with a MDLI teacher and her third grade students found that purposeful translanguaging design yielded more than linguistic proficiency alone, but further served to build cross-linguistic understanding and awareness of bilingual and bicultural identities. With a growing body of research demonstrating the positive impact of translanguaging practices in Chinese language instruction specifically (Chang, 2022; Wu & Leung, 2022), MDLI teachers may be better able to make use of their full linguistic capabilities,

and position a more authentic identity within their professional lives. However, this transition in instructional pedagogy will take time, training, and planning; a shift that, while welcome, necessitates thoughtful design, communication, and support.

Conceptual and Theoretical Underpinnings

Culturally Sustaining Practices

Given the potential barriers and burdens faced by MDLI teachers, as revealed by the literature thus far, an understanding of their experiences in U.S. schools will be viewed through the lens of culturally sustaining practices that allow for a teacher's full, authentic self to be maintained within their personal and professional identity. The concept of cultural sustainment was introduced by Django Paris (2012) as a pedagogical approach to honor students and youth of color through their heritage, language, and culture, with the intent to develop cultural pluralism rather than assimilation. It is often associated in education with culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b) and culturally responsive pedagogies (Gay, 2000), which work in tandem to accept and affirm an individual's cultural identity while cultivating a critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Freire, 1987) that appreciates and utilizes their personal knowledge and culture (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995b). These pedagogies draw from the funds of knowledge (Chang, 2020; Moll & Diaz, 1985; Nayo, 2022) that an individual brings with them from their own lived experience, and further positions such ways of knowing and ways of being as credible and respectable. In elevating these pedagogies into action through cultural sustainment, Paris (2012) identified these funds of knowledge as "resource pedagogies" (p. 94), recognizing the linguistic, literal, and cultural practices of communities of color as resources to honor and embrace. Further, through a culturally sustaining lens, these resources are viewed as assets, rather than deficits, freeing individuals from being measured solely against

Western norms, and allowing for a movement away from the linguistic and cultural hegemony therein, and ultimately fulfilling a lasting purpose of sustaining the lifeways of diverse communities (Paris & Alim, 2017).

The explicit goal of culturally sustaining pedagogies in the classroom is to support and maintain multilingualism and multiculturalism, both as a perspective and as a reality in practice. This can empower the individual to embrace their claimed identity within the context of life in the U.S. (Bettini et al., 2022) and create awareness of the power structures that surround them so they can act to correct it, producing agency for previously marginalized individuals (Chang, 2020; Palmer et al., 2019). The literature is rich with recent research on the impact on students when practices that are emotionally just and culturally sustaining are applied in language and literacy classrooms (Chávez-Moreno, 2022; de Oliveira, 2021; Gardner et al., 2021; Hernandez Garcia et al., 2021; La Serna, 2020). One such example includes a multi-year project with middle school teachers of Social Studies conducted by Hernandez Garcia et al. (2021), utilizing the practice of translanguaging in the classroom to support disciplinary literacy with a diverse and multilingual student body. Hernandez Garcia et al. (2021) acknowledged students' fully developed capacity for learning regardless of linguistic background, affirmed their home and evolving cultural identities, and recognized the students' agency in their learning; in other words, creating a culturally sustaining model of interaction and instruction for students. Gardner et al. (2021) further explored the connection between culturally sustaining literacy practices and emotional justice, uplifting the connection as an essential need beyond the limitations of White-centered social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum, which are tied to regulation to achieve standardized expectations, rather than student empowerment to transform themselves within their environment. Drawing upon the intentional use of narrative to connect emotions to cultural

history and socialized trauma in order to strengthen students' identity and equip them with agency, culturally sustaining practices can produce emotional justice that empowers the individual (Gardner et al., 2021).

With emotional health comes wellbeing, and the beneficial effects of culturally sustaining pedagogy are noted for CLD students, along with a promising incorporation of such methodology into teacher education and preparation programs (Braden & Gibson, 2021; Chang, 2020; Flint & Jaggers, 2021). The primary focus in the literature has been on student impact, and fewer studies have examined the effect of culturally sustaining practices on CLD teachers (for exception, see Neville & Johnson, 2022). In preparation and training settings, teachers who experience enactment of these practices are not only more able to employ these practices with their students, but also more able to strengthen their own professional identities with an equity stance (Fickel & Abbiss, 2019). For example, engaging in storytelling and critical conversation with others are practices that enable CLD individuals to convey and honor their heritage, and feel included in the school community (Grier-Reed & Williams-Wengerd, 2018; Strekalova-Hughes & Wang, 2019). Alim et al. (2020) note that such practices engage the use of the "inward gaze" (p. 267) and "decenter the white gaze" (p. 269), fostering cultural and linguistic plurality through a love and pride in one's own way of being, not defined by White normativity. Paris and Alim (2017) note that to practice cultural sustainment is to sustain the lives and revive the souls of CLD people and communities. Thus, as the professional satisfaction and wellbeing of MDLI teachers is considered, it is important to examine their experiences through a lens of culturally sustaining interactions within their full environment.

Humanizing Practices

Working in tandem with culturally sustaining practices, and enabling them to be actualized authentically, is the concept of humanizing practices. Freire (1970) neatly described humanization as the struggle to be seen as fully human, in constant praxis as a means to eliminate unjust and oppressive practices by overcoming situations when individuals are "reduced to things" (p. 93) or commodities within an institution or system. As an advancement of social psychological study in education and of educators, Destin et al. (2022) note that humanizing principles offer a framework to review findings and expand understanding of success and wellbeing. Too often, MDLI teachers, along with fellow CLD teachers and students bear the burden of blame or scrutiny when their ways of knowing or ways of being do not meet the standardized measure of expectations in the U.S. (Bettini et al., 2022). For example, Maddamsetti et al. (2018) detailed the anguish that Ling, a Chinese teacher candidate, experienced when attempting to become a "good teacher" (p. 148) as defined by U.S. dominant norms, realizing that her cultural knowledge and practices were not desirable in her school. Humanization challenges this deficit characterization (Fránquiz & Salazar, 2004; Fránquiz et al., 2019a), and can liberate this perspective, as the lens seeks to center the individual and their worth, and not establish value by means of the system (Freire, 1970).

Bartolomé's (1994) seminal work on humanizing pedagogy in education established early guidance for its use, indicating that the lived experiences and histories of students are valid, integral parts of themselves, and noting that it requires educators to invest beyond instructional methods and strategies that presumably improve achievement for historically oppressed students, yet overlook the imbalance of power within the system or society in which their schools operate. In a study of four teachers rated as effective in their work with Latinx students by parents and

students themselves, Huerta (2011) sought to discern their pedagogical perspectives through interviews and observations. Common characteristics that were noted included: caring and understanding of students' struggles; belief in their intellectual ability; and listening to and communicating about the child holistically. These characteristics and the resulting data demonstrated that the teachers consistently engaged in humanizing pedagogy, wherein they intentionally viewed and respected their students individually, and explicitly affirmed value in their culture and communities (Huerta, 2011). Fránquiz and del Carmen Salazar (2004) likewise found that teachers who enact humanizing pedagogy have been found to foster healthier educational orientations among students, resulting in students' resilience despite facing obstacles. More recently, Fránquiz et al. (2019b) lay out the charge that as cross-cultural, DLI programs continue to grow, for CLD learners, humanizing education can create "a restorative pathway for decolonizing their community's histories to better understand their community's cultural wealth and the role these important resources ought to play in school curricula" (p. 381). This resonates with del Carmen Salazar's (2008) call to incorporate humanizing pedagogy as a "proclamation of hope" (p. 141) for educators to recreate our schooling system as one that embraces the dignity and humanity of the individuals within it, liberating those marginalized in its structure, and strengthening its potential to see and serve every student. While teacher preparation programs are growing in their recognition of incorporating humanizing pedagogy into coursework, gaps indicated by recent studies show that programs currently focus more on mindset than application, making the actualization of humanizing practices in the classroom more difficult to achieve, and further, not directly adjusting for the experiences of the CLD teachers who are often in the position to implement such practices (Andrews et al., 2019; Peercy et al., 2022).

A conceptual framework of humanization was established by Todres et al. (2009) in their push for humanization in healthcare to become central to care systems and interactions. Therein they offer eight dimensions that are essential to humanized care, which can be considered as a standard from which care and interaction can be judged, as well as a continuum in relation to an opposite, dehumanizing counterpart. These dimensions and their counterparts are delineated in Table 1, below.

Table 1

Dimensions of Humanization

Forms of Humanization	Forms of Dehumanization
Insiderness	Objectification
Agency	Passivity
Uniqueness	Homogenization
Togetherness	Isolation
Sense-making	Loss of meaning
Personal Journey	Loss of personal journey
Sense of place	Dislocation
Embodiment	Reductionist body

Todres et al. (2009) defines these dimensions as follows:

Insiderness. the ability to carry a view of life and living from within oneself, allowing the individual to acknowledge a sense of self, feelings, mood, and more. Objectification is the counterpart to insiderness, wherein an individual is made into an object by excessive focus on a single trait or how they fit into a predetermined system.

Agency. The ability to make one's own choices and be accountable to one's actions, denoting freedom to act; it is very closely linked to dignity. Passivity is the counterpart to agency, wherein an individual is subjected to internal and external forces that render a person unable to act in their own interests.

Uniqueness. The acknowledgment that an individual is more than a list of general attributes or characteristics, and rather unlike any other regardless of the larger contexts they are in through time and place. Homogenization is the counterpart to uniqueness, wherein the individuality of a person is de-emphasized and instead seen through the lens of how they fit in with a particular group.

Togetherness. The ability for individuals to be in community with others, connecting and making sense of the interactions in personal and sometimes intimate ways. Togetherness allows for empathy to be nurtured. Isolation as the counterpart to togetherness is the feeling of separation and without a sense of belonging with others. This can manifest as loneliness and alienation.

Sense-making. The ability to care for the meaning of personal life, including things, experiences, and interactions. This includes storytelling and story-making as descriptions of the human experience. Loss of meaning reduces human beings to statistics or unidentifiable numbers that disconnect them from the emotional and meaningful aspect of life.

Personal Journey. The ability to live continuously in progression from the past to the future, and connected to a sense of continuity. This can include familiarity from the past, histories undertaken, and build hope for the unfamiliar future. Loss of personal journey can occur when there is a disregard for the history of and future potential for a person, giving an excessive emphasis on how a person is, and not *who* a person is, and denying their full identity.

Sense of Place. The notion of having a place that conveys being “at home” with belonging, security, comfort, and ease. Dislocation arises when the sense of place is obscured or replaced with a sense of strangeness, associated with non-belonging and unease.

Embodiment. This refers to the capacity of the individual body to experience its full range of functionality, from vitality to exhaustion and in between. Reductionist body is instead an overemphasis on the body as separate from these experiences, reduced to its parts like organs, hormones, etc. This rejects the idea of the soul and the psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of being in one's body.

Aspects of this humanization framework constructed for healthcare intersect with the humanization of MDLI teachers and their broader CLD colleagues in the education system. For example, Hemingway (2012) notes the dimension of embodiment speaks to the full health of an individual within their body, yet exposure to dehumanizing actions such as microaggression and discrimination can cause adverse physical effects and result in poor health, which have indeed been documented to affect MDLI teachers (Poon et al., 2016; Wang & Yu, 2021).

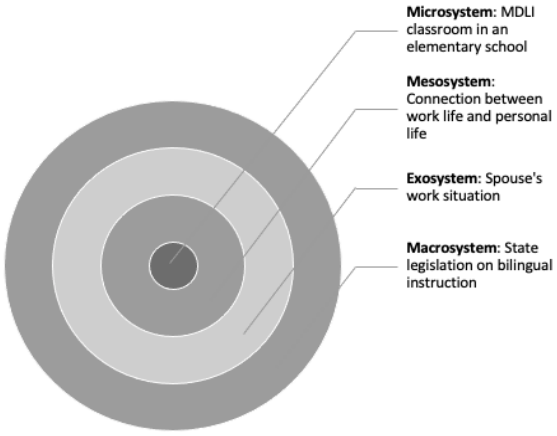
Promising to note is that the literature also points to ways that individuals can reclaim their humanity through intentional action, in a sense counteracting negative experiences and producing resilience in the face of dehumanizing interactions. Hiver and Dörnyei (2017) introduced the idea of "language teacher immunity" to describe the protective force that intrapersonal factors and a strengthened professional identity can create against the ill effects of obstacles in the role. MacIntyre et al. (2022) indicate that for language teachers, such as MDLI teachers, developing avenues of intrinsic hope maintains motivation in the face of demoralizing stressors and marginalization. Finally, and critically, Hsieh et al. (2022) move beyond individual perseverance to detail the use of relationship-bound, radical love through collective solidarity, establishing not only resilience, but resistance to dehumanizing experiences.

Ecological System Theory

While studies indicate that there are productive coping mechanisms for MDLI teachers to create reservoirs of resilience, such as enjoyment, personality awareness, hope, and the aforementioned "language teacher immunity" (Gan et al., 2022; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017; MacIntyre et al., 2019; MacIntyre et al., 2022), these actions focus on the internal ownership and resourcefulness of the individual to face the challenges in their professional setting. However, this dissertation desires to review the external inputs that force MDLI teachers to engage such coping and resilience practices, to better understand how the ecological system impacts their experience, and to consider how to unburden the individual teacher from a systems-level imposition. Thus, this study will use the lens of Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory, developed through his research on human development and which established four main environmental levels that impact an individual's development: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. These are depicted in Figure 1 as a sample ecological system for a MDLI teacher.

Figure 1

Sample Ecological System in MDLI Teacher Context



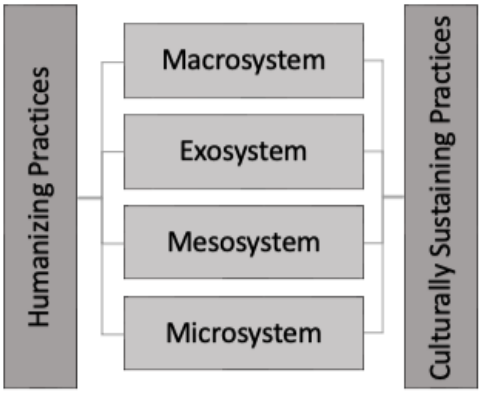
The microsystem takes into account the immediate environment within which MDLI teachers find themselves, such as their classroom or school; the mesosystem addresses the interrelationships between various microsystems, such as work and home; the exosystem reveals links between settings that the MDLI teacher is not directly active in, but can be influenced or affected by, such as stressors from a spouse's work situation; and finally, the macrosystem encompasses the larger societal context that surrounds the MDLI teacher, such as district or state policies (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2013). Later iterations of the theory came to include the chronosystem to account for the passage of time and changes that might occur as a result (Paat, 2013), such as length of stay in a role or years of experience in the teaching field.

This frame provided by Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory is foundational to this proposed study, due to the assumptions provided in Chapter 1. This study assumes that systems of oppression and marginalization exist, and that the U.S. educational system is one such system. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) framework provides the ability for this study to inspect and consider data from a systems perspective, and thus allows the experiences of individual MDLI teachers to be nested within the interconnections of the ecological system of their school and broader societal settings.

These conceptual and theoretical frameworks of cultural sustainment, humanization, and ecological systems underpin the entirety of the study's aims. Individually, they each provide an understanding of a specific aspect of the human experience and development. Together, they create a lens through which this study will review its findings in relationship to the stated research questions. The collective lens is visually displayed in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Collective Lens of this Study's Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks



While the ecological system is not itself a linear structure, but rather an interconnected and overlapping set of interactions as displayed earlier in Figure 1, the collective lens displayed in Figure 2 presents a delineated version of the ecological system, flanked by humanizing practices and culturally sustaining practices. This is to present a clearly identifiable ecological level with which to associate the presence or impact of humanizing and / or culturally sustaining interactions, so that arising patterns or distinctions in such practices can be identified and moreover, understood within their ecological level.

Chapter 2 Summary

A review of the literature reveals myriad factors that may affect the experience of MDLI teachers in the U.S. The contextual review sought to discern the evolving purpose and priorities of the U.S. educational system for multilingual education, shifting from its intent to provide English language proficiency to speakers of other languages, to an intent for fluent English speakers to gain proficiency in an additional language, to a dual purpose of simultaneously increasing proficiency in another language for English speakers while maintaining home or heritage language fluency for speakers of other languages. The review further examined the

wellbeing of multilingual educators, initially considering the experience as CLD individuals whose credibility, ability, and quality of work are defined by the dominant culture in the U.S. This shifted to an exploration of the experience of Asian teachers in particular, whose legitimacy and invisibility is a direct reflection of a raciolinguistic imposition from the dominant culture. Finally, the review narrowed its focus to better understand the experience of Mandarin language teachers within the Asian teacher population, finding a conflict between their linguistic capital and commodification, as well as a diversity in their birthplace and background, which surfaces ideological and pedagogical challenges as they assume teaching responsibilities in the U.S. The literature review closes with a description of the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings that will be used to examine the eventual findings. Practices for cultural sustainment and humanization were detailed, with a desire to view them as inputs to the MDLI teacher experience within their full ecological system. The literature review reveals a current gap in knowledge regarding the experiences and wellbeing of MDLI teachers in uniquely MDLI settings, specifically with respect to the impact of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices that may contribute to their overall wellbeing and retention in their teaching roles.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

The following chapter details the methods and procedures used to examine the workplace experiences of MDLI teachers in an urban school district in Southern California and to better understand the impact of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices in their professional lives. The chapter opens with a restatement of the research questions and context for the study, followed by a description of the qualitative methodology, phenomenological research design, and data collection procedures utilized. A discussion of the researcher's positionality and worldview for this study is included. Finally, the chapter closes with a description of the data analysis process that was employed to examine the dataset for interpretation.

Nature of the Study

This study is concerned with the lack of stability in the MDLI teacher workforce in HUSD, an urban school district in Southern California. In this setting, teacher turnover has led to a stunted expansion, as annual waitlists of students are unable to be served due to lack of teacher availability. As CLD teachers, there already exists a greater risk of MDLI teacher turnover due to untenable conditions, such as marginalization associated with their racialized identity (Bettini et al., 2022) that lead to higher rates of demoralization (Kohli, 2019). In other words, it is critical for MDLI teachers to experience humanistic commitment and have their multicultural capital positioned as aspects of their success as teachers in order to thrive in the profession (Achinstein et al., 2010). This issue brings to bear concerns about the climate for MDLI teachers in their school ecology, and the factors that may impact their ability or willingness to persist in their professional role. Therefore, this study sought to understand the current experience for MDLI teachers in Southern California, and consider if and how their wellbeing and professional

efficacy are impacted by the presence or lack of humanizing values and culturally sustaining practices in their ecological system.

Re-Statement of Research Questions

This chapter describes the research methods that will be applied to achieve the objectives of this study, which is to primarily answer these research questions:

- RQ1 - How do humanizing practices impact Mandarin dual language immersion (MDLI) teachers' professional experiences?
- RQ2 - How do culturally sustaining practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences?
- RQ3 - Where do MDLI teachers experience humanizing and culturally sustaining interactions in their workplace ecosystem?

Methodology

Within the ever-evolving field of research in the social sciences, Creswell and Creswell (2018) offer a working definition for qualitative research, noting that it applies theoretical frameworks to assumptions, in an effort to discern the meaning that individuals or groups of people assign to a social or human problem. The data collection was accordingly centered on these individuals or groups themselves, sensitive to their natural setting and attentive to the participants' voices. The data analysis was interpretive, relying on inductive and deductive reasoning to detect patterns and themes in the perspectives provided. Thus, another key aspect of qualitative research was the researcher's reflexivity, or presence in the interpretations, as they were informed by the researcher's own political, social, and cultural context (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Qualitative research can provide a more holistic account of a complex issue, as it intentionally gathers and reports on multiple perspectives and is not bound by cause-and-effect relationships. Smeyers (2008) notes this benefit specifically for the field of education, with the need for "various modes of explanation" (p. 704). Qualitative study enables researchers to describe the myriad complex interactions across and between variables or factors in a situation. As this study drew from Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory to understand the dynamic relationships between the individual teachers and their environment, such an approach positioned the researcher to interpret data in accordance with this framework. Onwuegbuzie et al. (2013) conceptualized the interconnectedness of Bronfenbrenner's four levels in parallel with the interconnectedness of research that examines phenomenon within and between these levels. The study benefited from the flexibility and interconnectedness of a qualitative approach, as the multiple perspectives and meanings relayed by the participants were gathered and described in an open-ended design that allowed for emerging understanding, rather than tightly prescribed questions or methods (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Given the social, cultural and emotional complexities inherent in the frameworks of humanizing values and culturally sustaining practices utilized in this study of MDLI teacher experiences, a qualitative study enabled multifaceted discernment into the issue by way of richly descriptive lived experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Danzig & Harris, 1996). The vitality of a qualitative approach for this study was such that a line of inquiry could be determined by the participants as well as the researcher, as the design was emergent and evolving based on the responses and observations occurring in the participants' natural settings (Ravitch & Carl, 2019). In fact, Ravitch and Carl (2019) emphasize the engagement of not only reflexivity, but criticality and collaboration in the qualitative research process, bringing forward the ability for such

research to maintain an ethical, contextual, and relational nature while engaged in the methodology.

Researcher's Worldview

Understanding the researcher's worldview further illuminated the selection of methods that were most appropriate for the desired outcomes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A worldview indicates how one sees the world and acts within it, consisting of ontological, epistemological, methodological, and axiological dimensions (Duffy & Chenail, 2009). This means that a worldview is constructed by multidimensional beliefs about the world and who people are (ontology), how knowledge is formed (epistemology), what procedures should be used to learn about the world and people in it (methodology), and what ethics and values guide this learning or research (axiology). The worldviews applied in this study were both transformative and pragmatic, as the desired outcomes of the study are to enable change in both the social justice arenas for the empowerment of MDLI teachers (transformative), and for the practical application of the change within schools and districts (pragmatic). These called for multifaceted insights into a phenomenon, which were best captured through a qualitative approach (Creswell & Poth, 2016), with the open-ended nature of the data collection able to inform both transformative and pragmatic change outcomes.

The transformative worldview builds upon a constructivism paradigm, which espouses the existence of multiple valid realities (Ponterotto et al., 2013), and pushes further to position the research inquiry as a means to specifically confront social oppression (Mertens, 2010). Those engaging a transformative worldview identify a framework that can be used to create a more just society for an underrepresented or marginalized group (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Omodan, 2020). In this study, frameworks for humanizing values and cultural sustainment were used to

better understand and potentially transform the experience of MDLI teachers, a currently under-researched group in the teacher workforce that is facing challenges to their professional efficacy. A qualitative approach allowed for a self-driven, humanizing means of data collection, capturing the "...multiple realities… using the actual words of different individuals and presenting different perspectives" (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 61). Simultaneously, the researcher's pragmatic worldview was concerned with applied practices and solutions to stated problems, and was open to drawing assumptions and knowledge from different sources that would reveal practical answers to an issue (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). While pragmatic worldviews are frequently associated with mixed methods approaches, the nature of this study called for an emphasis on the complex data of personal experiences that is illuminated in qualitative research. The patterns in the participating teachers' responses to open-ended questions allowed for possible needs and barriers to be identified, and the rich description associated with open-ended responses further allowed these needs and barriers to be adapted as ideas and actions for change in the MDLI setting or school system directly. Overall, qualitative research is a best fit for the empowerment of individuals, which can be fostered when an understanding of how participants address the problem under study within their contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Research Design

The research design was a phenomenological study, which is one of the five primary design traditions in the qualitative methods field (Creswell & Poth, 2016), and deemed most appropriate for this study. Phenomenology seeks to understand the essence of an experience, and typically investigates the lived experience of individuals. It is so named for its study of a collective phenomenon via common experiences described by individuals (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Relaying van Manen's (1990) originating iteration of phenomenology, Magrini (2012)

indicates that this research design is founded on the understanding that we care about the individuals under study, and seek to give literary form to their voices by encapsulating the essential themes through analysis. Phenomenology is based on empathy, so the quality of the relationship between the participants and the researcher must be constantly attended to, with a responsibility throughout the data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Danzig & Harris, 1996; Letiche, 2006). This unique aspect of qualitative research and phenomenological design was a strength applied in the study, as it enabled a deeper trust throughout the interview and conversation, and in the understanding to be gleaned.

Such attributes also illuminated the presence of researcher reflexivity in qualitative research. Phenomenological design further compelled the researcher to another layer of reflection, with the push to reach epoche, a state of "philosophical solitude" that is the best attempt by the researcher to suspend prejudices while conducting the research (Husserl, 1970, p. 184). This process is referred to as "bracketing," whereby the researcher sets aside past or personal knowledge to focus more completely on the experiences of the participants in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 149). Moustakas (1994) notes that rarely can epoche be perfectly reached, yet the awareness of the idea contributes to the researcher's reflection throughout the research process. In other words, the phenomenological design acknowledged the personal connection and commitment the researcher has to the problem under study, and provided structures to engage reflexivity in a manner that maintained focus and synthesis of the phenomenon as expressed by the participants (Conklin, 2007). As this researcher has personal and professional connections to the study, as detailed further on in this chapter, this aspect of phenomenological design was an appropriate fit, and provided guideposts for the description and

interpretation of data, as meaning was drawn from the expressed lived experiences of the participating MDLI teachers.

Participant Selection

Analysis Unit. The analysis unit of this study was a Mandarin language teacher in any of grades PreK-12 who has a minimum of one year of full-time teaching experience in a MDLI program. To bound the study, participants were selected from those who taught in the HUSD school district in southern California. This teaching experience included an in-person setting, and not a virtual setting alone. This teacher minimally holds a bachelor's degree; possesses a preliminary teaching credential, intern credential, or teaching permit issued by the California Department of Education (CDE) that is or was active at the time of teaching; and possesses a Bilingual Authorization issued by the CDE that is or was active at the time of teaching. The birthplace of the teacher could be in the U.S. or abroad.

Population. At the time of the study, the known population size of teachers meeting the aforementioned criteria in the HUSD school district was 45 individuals. Of these, 17 were currently employed with HUSD in the 2022-23 school year, and 28 were teachers previously employed in HUSD who were either teaching elsewhere, had changed roles in education, or had left the field of education altogether.

Sample Size. The researcher sought a sample size of 12 MDLI teachers as participants in this study, and was able to interview 13 MDLI teachers during the course of the study. The intent of qualitative data collection is to acquire extensive information from the sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), which semi-structured interviews are designed to provide; thus, the format was open for participants to guide the direction of the conversation, in addition to the pre-designed questions that covered three different constructs that address the research aims: humanizing

experiences/interaction; culturally sustaining practices; ecological systems interaction. Engaging 13 MDLI teachers represented 28.9% of the known population, a sizable sample of the total population.

Purposive Sampling. This study utilized purposive sampling, wherein the researcher selected participants or informants based on criteria that would best help understand the problem and provide answers to the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This is a sampling procedure that is frequently used in qualitative research, using the researcher's assessment and judgment for participant selection for specially defined situations (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Due to the relatively small population size of 45, purposive sampling was warranted. The researcher reviewed attributes from the entire population, and purposively selected in order to include possible participants meeting a broad diversity of the criteria, and representatives from each of HUSD's three MDLI schools and grade levels across PreK-12.

Participation Criteria. Participants had to meet common criteria to ensure they share a defined or unique experience important to the study (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Once these criteria had been identified, the researcher provided an invitation to the eligible population to volunteer as participants. A standard Recruitment Script for the study was provided, detailing the purpose, procedures, possible risks, and benefits of the study. The letter also included information regarding participant confidentiality and flexibility to withdraw from questions or the study entirely. The researcher utilized a sampling frame to organize information about the population of interest, and to purposively select those who would receive initial invitations to participate. The intent was to select from the affirmative responses, using the criteria of inclusion and exclusion until purposive sampling maximum variation was reached (Creswell & Creswell,

2018). The purposive sampling maximum variation for this study is further described in the following section.

Sampling Frame. A sampling frame specifies the population of interest for the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This list was created with the known population of MDLI teachers who had a minimum of one school year of full-time inservice in HUSD in any of its three MDLI program schools (elementary, middle, and high school levels) during the school years spanning 2009-2023. The information was culled from a combination of information systems in HUSD, including records from the Human Resources, Information Technology, and Curriculum and Instruction departments. There were 45 analysis units or individuals in the sampling frame.

Criteria of Inclusion and Exclusion. To be included in the study, participants must have met the following criteria:

- current or former full-time, inservice teacher of Mandarin language, who teaches or taught in an in-person setting
- must have completed at least one school year of MDLI instruction in HUSD (between 2009-2023)
- must hold a bachelor's degree; minimally possess a preliminary teaching credential, intern credential, or teacher permit issued by the CDE; and Bilingual Authorization issued by the CDE

With respect to exclusion, the following categories of teachers in a MDLI program will not be able to participate:

- current or former full-time, inservice teacher of Mandarin language who taught for a period of less than one school year

- pre-service teachers, such as student teachers and teacher residents
- short and long term substitute teachers
- teachers in a MDLI program exclusively teaching English
- multilingual instructional aides and assistants

While these individuals may have had related insights for this study, to maintain a consistent unit of analysis and bound the study to a common experience, this study sought to inspect the experience of full-time, inservice teachers as detailed above.

Purposive Sampling Maximum Variation. Purposive sampling maximum variation aims to capture the widest spectrum of perspectives within the criteria studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Within the population under study, there were differences that included teaching assignment (i.e., school; grade level), years of teaching experience, gender, ethnic, cultural, and national identity, and level of acculturation to the U.S. To achieve maximum variation within the known MDLI teacher population, this study included participants across variations of professional experience and personal identities. The researcher took care to balance representation across these variations where possible.

Protection of Human Subjects

This study followed expectations and requirements of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Pepperdine University. The IRB committee exists expressly to uphold federal regulations for protection against human rights violations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Information aligned with the parameters approved by the IRB committee was provided to potential and selected participants by way of the Recruitment Script detailed in the Participation Selection section of this chapter, as well as written and verbalized Informed Consent as a preamble to the semi-structured interview process. The researcher was aware that in lines of

inquiry that examine lived experiences, there was a potential for participants to experience psychological, social, or physical impact during the process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher took care to minimize such risks through transparent communication prior to and throughout the process, reassuring participants that they were free to withdraw at any time with no consequences, and that anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained throughout and following the process, including in the report of findings and conclusions. Written and signed Informed Consent forms were collected prior to the start of each interview, and verbal consent was again confirmed with each participant prior to beginning and recording each interview.

Participant Recruitment

Following IRB approval by Pepperdine University (see Appendix A), the researcher was able to initiate participant recruitment, seeking 12 individuals for interview. After reviewing the Sampling Frame for criteria for inclusion and exclusion, initial interview invitations were emailed to a purposive sampling of 14 MDLI teachers who represented a broad spectrum reflective of purposive sampling maximum variation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To determine the initial 14 invitees, the researcher considered characteristics and criteria that would reflect maximum variation of the population, including teaching assignment (i.e. school; grade level), years of teaching experience, gender, ethnic, cultural, and national identity, and perceived level of acculturation to the U.S. A list of additional teachers was also prepared, should an invited teacher decline the invitation. The initial email invitation included a copy of the Informed Consent form (see Appendix B) and Recruitment Script (see Appendix C). Within a few days of the email, all 14 purposively sampled teachers had responded affirmatively to participate. Interviews were subsequently confirmed with 13 of the teachers, and one remaining teacher was unable to be scheduled during the time period of the study, due to an extended personal issue.

For convenience and comfort of the participant, this interview appointment was offered in-person at a participant-selected location or virtually via Pepperdine University's Google Meet platform, which permitted the researcher to admit entry to participants in a secure virtual meeting. If an in-person meeting was selected, a recording was taken on a password-protected cellular phone via Otter.ai, a voice recording and transcription application. If a virtual meeting was selected, the researcher recorded the interview with the web-based version of Otter.ai on a password-protected laptop. All audio recordings in Otter.ai were secured within the researcher's password-protected account, and auto-login was disabled to further enhance the security of the files. All recordings and data collected were secured in password-protected files, de-identified for confidentiality, and would be deleted once the study concludes. The interview commenced with a verbal preamble of the Informed Consent, with reassurance that the interview could cease if a participant either did not provide consent, or chose to end the interview after commencement. The researcher was prepared that should the participant not provide consent, or the interview ended before a substantive time, the researcher would thank the participant for their time and remove them from the study. However, in this study such precaution was not necessary, as all confirmed participants provided consent and completed their interview.

Overview of Participants

The study participants were all current or former MDLI teachers who had spent at least three school years teaching in the HUSD, a school district in southern California. At the time of the study, 62% or eight teachers were still employed in HUSD, 23% or three were teaching in an MDLI setting elsewhere in southern California, and 15% or two were engaged in educational work but not employed full time with a school district. The teachers had a broad range of professional experience, from six to over twenty-five years of teaching service, with all having

taught the Mandarin language in more than one school, in either DLI or world language programs. 85% or 11 teachers were relatively new or mid-career, with six to fifteen years of experience. The teachers also had a broad range of life experience in the U.S., from six to over twenty-five years of residency, along with educational experiences as students themselves in U.S. schools ranging from enrollment during elementary grades through graduate school. 62% or eight teachers had been living in the U.S. between six to fifteen years, while the remaining 38% or five teachers had been living in the U.S. for over twenty years. The teachers also represented a diaspora of Asian heritage from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Table 2 provides the overview of participants with pseudonyms and approximate general information.

Table 2

Overview of Participants

Participant Pseudonym ***laoshi (老师; 老師), or teacher, is used in place of gender-identifiable titles***	**Years of teaching experience**	**Mandarin language teaching settings**	**Program type (current or most recent)**	**Teaching location at time of the study**	**Years of residency in the U.S.**	**Self-identified heritage association**
1. Chen laoshi	6-10 years	Elementary & Secondary	Program-in-a-school	HUSD	6-10 years	China
2. Wei laoshi	26+ years	Elementary & Secondary	Program-in-a-school	HUSD	11-15 years	China
3. Lau laoshi	16-20 years	Elementary	Wall-to-wall	HUSD	21-25 years	Hong Kong
4. Liang laoshi	6-10 years	Elementary	Wall-to-wall	HUSD	6-10 years	China
5. Guo laoshi	11-15 years	Elementary & Secondary	Program-in-a-school	HUSD	6-10 years	China

Participant Pseudonym **laoshi (老师; 老師), or teacher, is used in place of gender-identifiable titles*	**Years of teaching experience**	**Mandarin language teaching settings**	**Program type (current or most recent)**	**Teaching location at time of the study**	**Years of residency in the U.S.**	**Self-identified heritage association**
6. Lin laoshi	6-10 years	Elementary	Program-in-a-school	Other district	26+ years	Taiwan
7. Hsu laoshi	11-15 years	Elementary	Wall-to-wall	Not currently teaching	26+ years	Taiwan
8. Yao laoshi	6-10 years	Elementary	Wall-to-wall	HUSD	11-15 years	China
9. Chow laoshi	6-10 years	Elementary	Program-in-a-school	Other district	21-25 years	Hong Kong
10. Li laoshi	11-15 years	Elementary & Secondary	Wall-to-wall	HUSD	6-10 years	China
11. Ma laoshi	6-10 years	Elementary	Wall-to-wall	Not currently teaching	11-15 years	China
12. Song laoshi	6-10 years	Elementary	Wall-to-wall	HUSD	11-15 years	China
13. Tsai laoshi	11-15 years	Elementary	Program-in-a-school	Other district	26+ years	Taiwan

Data Collection

Interviews took place over the course of one month, including follow-up and member checking activities. Teachers were given their choice of preferred setting for the interview, in-person or virtual. While the researcher did attempt to encourage in-person interviews by offering to come to locations most convenient for the teacher, including meeting for a meal, coffee, or tea, only three teachers ultimately selected in-person interviews. Those who selected virtual

interviews cited childcare, tight schedules, distance, or health concerns as the reason to meet virtually. The 13 interviews ranged in time from 44 minutes to 147 minutes long, with the average interview duration being approximately 78 minutes long. Each interview was audio recorded on Otter.ai, with written and verbal consent of the teacher prior to recording.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Given that this study examines the experience of MDLI teachers and the possible impacts of their broader ecology on these experiences, desired data included social, emotional, and cultural factors that would be best captured by open-ended conversation nurtured in semi-structured interviews. The data was gathered via semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions (refer to Table 5), which were used to understand an individual's life histories and experiences, and examine critical incidents and the resulting behaviors (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), suiting the aims of this study to examine the lived experiences of MDLI teachers. The semi-structured interview questions aimed to address the experience and impact felt by these teachers, and their responses revealed holistic information and description from the participants themselves that could not be fully captured by quantitative data methods. This process permitted the researcher to frame a set of questions for the interview, yet was flexible for an expansion of the line of questioning, should the responses call for such a customization (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Semi-structured interviews were conducted in a one-on-one manner between the researcher and participant. The process is described further in the interview protocol below and in Table 3, and the interview questions follow in Tables 4 and 5.

Interview Protocol

The data collection was guided by an interview protocol with the following components, as recommended by Creswell and Poth (2016) to prepare a comprehensive design that reliably

and validly addresses the areas of inquiry expressed by the research questions. Table 3, which follows immediately below, is the Interview Protocol proposed for use by the researcher.

Table 3

Interview Protocol

Interview Component	**Description of Protocol**
General Purpose	The interview serves to garner information regarding an MDLI teacher's experience in the HUSD school system, specifically to consider stories of humanization and cultural sustainment (or lack thereof), feelings of wellbeing and/ or professional satisfaction.
Structure	The interview will be semi-structured in order to focus on issues meaningful to the participant, and to create space for diverse perceptions and opinions to be expressed.
Content	Questions are drawn from the central guiding research question, and categorized by construct studied. However, the line of inquiry remains flexible to expansion or contraction, based on participant responses during the interview. See Table 3 for interview questions.
Participants	A sample of 12 MDLI teachers who currently teach or previously taught in HUSD will be purposively selected from a total known population. A *Recruitment Script* will be provided to recruit possible participants, and an *Informed Consent* form will be provided in writing as well as verbally, prior to the interview.
Length	The interviews will be approximately 60 minutes in length to allow for relational conversation and building of a safe space for conversation. One formal interview will be scheduled with each participant, with possible follow-up interviews if needed.
Modality & Location	The interviews will be in-person or virtual, using a researcher-controlled Google Meet video meeting application. If an in-person interview is preferred by the participant, the location will not be at either of the workplaces of the participant or researcher, unless expressly requested by the participant. Phone interview is not desired, but will be considered if all other options are not possible.

Interview Component	Description of Protocol
Recording & Security	Virtual interviews will be accessed by an entry-protected, private meeting link. An audio recording will be created using the Otter.ai recording application, accessed by password on a web-based version. If the interview occurs in-person or via phone, an audio recording will be carried out on the researcher's cellular phone using Otter.ai mobile application. All recordings will be downloaded and securely stored by the researcher in a password-protected digital folder accessible only to the researcher. These recordings and data will be de-identified to maintain anonymity of participants, and will be deleted after the study concludes.
Transcription Plans	The researcher will transcribe recordings, and de-identify all participants using pseudonyms instead. Full transcripts will not be provided to participants, but member checking will be used when transcripts are summarized, to ensure participants can assess and improve accuracy of the data gathered.

Table 4 holds the initial draft of Interview Questions proposed for the study before applying prima-facie and content validity techniques, both techniques which are described in more detail in the next section. Following peer-review and expert-review validation processes, including feedback from the research committee, the Interview Questions were revised, and an updated version is provided in Table 5 later in this chapter.

Table 4

Initial Draft of Interview Questions

Research Questions	DRAFT Corresponding Interview Questions
Introduction	IQ 1: Please tell me about your background and philosophy about teaching Mandarin?
RQ1 - How do humanizing practices impact Mandarin dual language immersion (MDLI) teachers' professional experiences?	IQ 2: How would you describe your experience teaching in the MDLI program in HUSD so far? IQ 3: How do you feel in your school community, with respect to being treated fairly and/or being included?

Research Questions	DRAFT Corresponding Interview Questions
	IQ 4: How are you asked for input on the MDLI program or what you are expected to teach? If you are not, why not? IQ 5: How do you advocate for your needs or perspectives? Are you successful in your advocacy?
RQ2 - How do culturally sustaining practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences?	IQ 6: How is your cultural and linguistic background respected and valued in the workplace? How do you know? IQ 7: How are you supported to be successful as a MDLI teacher here, and to continue in your role? IQ 8: Are there specific issues that affect your experience working in the MDLI program, at your school, or in HUSD? How so?
RQ3 - Where do MDLI teachers experience humanizing and culturally sustaining impact in their workplace ecosystem?	IQ 9: How would you describe the interactions you have with individuals at your school: students, fellow teachers, principal, and parents? How do they make you feel? IQ 10: Are these interactions and experiences how you expected them to be before beginning your role here? How so? IQ 11: What does an optimal environment at school feel like?

Note. The table identifies three research questions and 11 corresponding interview questions initially drafted prior to applying prima-facie and content validity techniques.

Validity and Reliability of the Study

In qualitative research, validity speaks to the accuracy of the interview protocol in drawing out its intended construct, while reliability speaks to the consistency or stability of responses, evidenced by whether the same results are discerned by multiple coders of data sets, repeatedly (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). When seeking validity in qualitative research, design quality is typically espoused, which addresses whether a study adheres to best practices of the design and methodology (Dellinger & Leech, 2007). Three mechanisms were used to enhance

validity of the study: content validity, peer-review, and expert-review. The following subsections outline the validation techniques applied to this study's semi-structured interview questions, which resulted in the revisions documented in Table 4. Reliability will be further detailed in the Data Analysis section.

Prima-Facie and Content Validity. Also referred to as face validity, this process allowed the researcher to consider whether the content of the instrument's items (semi-structured interview questions) were suitable for the construct they sought to inspect (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This was done as a surface review, and was helpful during the initial drafting of the instrument's items. For this study, the researcher organized the interview questions according to the following constructs: humanizing experiences/interaction; culturally sustaining practices; impact/perception. At face value, the items in the culturally sustaining practices and impact/perception construct categories incorporate a line of inquiry and question phrasing that address the construct directly. However, the questions in the humanizing experiences/interaction construct did not appear to incorporate questions directly drawing from humanization, so one additional question (Table 3, IQ 4) was added to the existing questions, and reviewed again in the same manner for content validity. The researcher was satisfied with the proposed question at this stage, and moved on to the next strategies for validity, peer and expert reviews.

Peer Review Validity. This study sought to increase validity and reliability by also including peer-reviewed validation of the instrument items. This was the use of knowledgeable peers in the field to assess the quality and suitability of the questions proposed with the intent to filter out or improve invalid and low-quality questions (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The peer-review also examined if the questions fell within the scope of the study. For this study, the researcher identified two peers in the field of education research to provide feedback on the instrument

items. These individuals were the Curriculum Coordinator and Educational Researcher in HUSD's central administration. These individuals agreed to conduct a peer-review and met together with the researcher, who provided context to the phenomenological study and research aims. Based on their recommendations for more precise language, and a distinction between the school community and the district as a whole, open-ended questions were revised, removed, or added.

Expert Review Validity. An additional strategy applied to increase validity and reliability of the instrument items was the engagement of an expert in the field to review the questions and provide further input into the appropriateness and quality of the instrument items (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For this study, the researcher identified an expert in the field of DLI and support of CLD teachers to provide feedback on the instrument items. This expert was the current DLI Specialist for HUSD. They were invited to review the questions using the same process the researcher employed for the peer-review validity, detailed in the paragraph above. The DLI expert indicated that the initial questions were not comprehensive enough to capture the perception of the MDLI teacher; they suggested statements that address how a teacher might feel that they "matter." Additionally, clarity of the questions was addressed by adjusting the terms used. Most importantly, during a preliminary defense of the study proposal, the expert research committee suggested a more direct line of questioning associated with the conceptual and theoretical frameworks. This resulted in the greatest modification of the questions to clearly state the interest in the teachers' experiences with regard to their racial, cultural and linguistic background. The final version is found in Table 5.

Table 5

Final Interview Questions

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1 - How do humanizing practices impact Mandarin dual language immersion (MDLI) teachers' professional experiences?	IQ 1: Why is being a MDLI teacher important or meaningful to you? How has your experience teaching in the MDLI program fulfilled this sense of purpose/meaning, or not? IQ 2: To what extent do you have agency in your work? For example, are you asked for input on the MDLI program or what you teach? Are you trusted to make decisions? Why or why not? IQ 3: Do you matter to your school and district community? For example, do you feel valued; are you treated fairly, and/or being included? Do you have a sense of belonging? IQ 4: Do you ever need to advocate for your needs or perspectives? If yes, are you successful in your advocacy?
RQ2 - How do culturally sustaining practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences?	IQ 5: To what extent is your racial, cultural and linguistic background respected and valued in the workplace? How do you know? IQ6: Does your racial, cultural and/or linguistic background affect how you are treated in your workplace? How so, or why not? IQ 7: Do you believe you are supported to be successful as a MDLI teacher here, and to continue in your role? How so, or why not?
RQ3 - Where do MDLI teachers experience humanizing and culturally sustaining impact in their workplace ecosystem?	IQ 8: How would you describe the interactions you have with individuals at your school or district: students, fellow teachers, principal, and parents? How do they make you feel?

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
	IQ 9: Are there specific issues that affect your experience working in the MDLI program, at your school or district? How so? IQ 10: Interaction Map I'd like to understand your interactions with people and systems within your school and district ecosystem. Please think of the people in your work environment who you most frequently interact with; occasionally interact with; and rarely interact with. Please provide their role(s), amount of time spent with them, and the nature of your interactions or support they provide.

Table 4. The table identifies three research questions and ten corresponding interview questions with revisions based on feedback from peer-reviewers, expert reviewers, and a pilot participant. Subsequent changes were made to the order and phrasing of questions within the interview protocol.

Data Analysis

This stage in the research process allowed the researcher to review and make meaning of the data collected, namely the interview responses. This qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2014), which allowed for emergent themes to be identified and grouped in a six-step process. This process helped to avoid confirmation bias in seeking certain results from the data. Clarke et al. (2015) delineate the thematic analysis process as such:

1. Familiarization. The researcher engaged with the data set for in-depth understanding, seeking to move analysis beyond obvious meanings. To do so, the researcher conducted multiple reads through the transcript of the interviews, and multiple reviews of the audio recording, annotating and taking notes as needed.
2. Coding. The researcher systematically labeled features of the data set that were relevant to the research questions, taking care to reflect while doing so. This step sought to identify patterns and to group similar items, and resulted in the establishment of a

codebook. This codebook detailed emergent tags with corresponding definitions to create consistency for the inclusion of additional items.

3. Generating themes. The researcher began to cluster codes to seek connections between the emerging patterns, and generated a map of key clusters or themes in the data. Multiple codes were connected to a cluster or theme, which served to organize the data into larger areas of impact and understanding.
4. Reviewing themes. This step was a pause for review, with a focus on assessing generated themes to ensure matches and fit to the essence of a central concept. This step was included to allow for changes or dismissal of themes.
5. Defining and naming themes. The researcher then wrote a brief summary of each theme and indicated a theme name that captured the concept clearly, paving the way for the eventual write up.
6. Writing up. The final step required the researcher to connect these themes in a narrative that provided a vivid picture of the meaning drawn from the analysis. While the themes generated were used to frame the narrative, the conclusions were derived across themes.

To support the volume of information, coding software programs Quirkos and HyperResearch were utilized to organize and manage the data. Quirkos provided a color-based visualization of the codes, allowing for steps two and three to be sorted and reviewed in multiple formats. HyperResearch was preferred for the organization of the codebook that was referenced throughout the process.

To begin the six-step process for thematic analysis as outlined by Clarke et al. (2015), data was prepared for review, including transcripts auto-generated by Otter.ai, audio files, and researcher notes. Complete transcript and audio files were downloaded from Otter.ai and saved

on a password-protected computer as encrypted files, which will be destroyed at the conclusion of this study. The researcher began the initial step of familiarization by reading through the transcripts alongside playing the audio recordings to ensure accuracy of the transcription. Additionally, to maintain the teachers' confidentiality and privacy, the researcher replaced identifiable information, such as individual names, schools, or locations with pseudonyms in the transcripts. Once complete, the researcher uploaded all transcript files to Quirkos software. The software also enabled the ability to include source properties, such as years of teaching experience, years of living in the U.S., and school setting. Within Quirkos, the researcher was able to re-read transcripts alongside notes taken during the interview, cross referencing to ensure notation of key statements or sentiments, and close reading for overall meaning. At this point, the researcher began the next step of coding, or labeling the text with tags. This included close line-by-line reading and highlighting of statements from each transcript that were relevant to the research questions and identifying patterns and groups for similar sentiments.

After the review of three teachers' transcripts, the researcher paused to increase reliability and validity of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Providing summarized information, member checks were conducted with the teachers to ensure accuracy of sentiments and perceptions that were shared regarding their experiences. Using Quirkos' visualization tools, the researcher generated a tree map to view frequency of codes and determine if there was duplication; further, a report export including the transcript tags was used to review if any statements had been misplaced within a code. At this point, a codebook was developed to organize the tags and emerging categories. The researcher found the maintenance of a codebook on Quirkos to be less linear than preferred, and so utilized HyperResearch software to manually

create and export a codebook, which would continue to be updated as additional data was reviewed.

Interrater reliability was conducted cyclically throughout the thematic analysis. The codebook and transcripts from the initial three interviews were provided to an educational researcher, unrelated to the study, as an interrater, who independently reviewed and coded the three transcripts as an external check (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This allowed for the researcher to consider the degree of agreement the raters had between codes and themes. Using this strategy increased validity of the analysis, especially with the dense information acquired through the semi-structured interviews. The codes were compared and discrepancies discussed, which led to a refinement of the codes and clarifying definitions to increase reliability of further findings. When consensus was reached by both raters, the themes were validated. Thus, the researcher was able to continue on with the coding of the remaining interviews, with the understanding that additional codes would possibly be added to the codebook. After completing transcript reviews of the remaining interviews, including member checks, one additional round of interrater comparison occurred for reliability. The dismissal of some codes and the consolidation of several others resulted.

The researcher then shifted to the step of generating themes, utilizing the color-enabled cluster map tool available in the Quirkos software. This allowed for the visualization of groups of codes to be clustered together within an overarching theme (see Appendix D). Following this step, the researcher paused to review the initial themes generated in order to ensure fit with the concept and emerging sentiments. Some themes were consolidated and others were dismissed, and themes were then named and defined to clear the path for sharing and writing up findings

from the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2014). Rich and thick descriptions of the findings were drawn from this data, and presented via the teachers' responses in Chapter 4.

Statement of Personal Bias

Creswell and Creswell (2018) indicate that the researcher is the primary data collection instrument, and thus must identify personal biases and positionality as a part of the social context of the study. This includes acknowledgement that the context has been interpreted through these personal perspectives, assumptions, and values in some way. This is an ethical consideration, as awareness of and attendance to such positionality is critical, given its impact on the research process and conclusions ultimately reached. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) further indicate that the human factor of the researcher's influence on their own study naturally takes on "perils and pitfalls" (p. 271) and care should be taken to acknowledge the personalized problem-solving approaches each human entity brings to the research process. As such, it is important for me as the researcher to describe my connection and positionality to this research study.

Professionally, I am a career educator who has been employed by HUSD for 23 years, having been matched here with an educational reform organization whose expressed intent was to serve in communities experiencing academic struggle and marginalization. While I presently serve on the school district's executive team, I began my work in education as a K-12 classroom teacher, eventually shifting to a coaching role to support teachers. I moved into administration to oversee staff professional development, and was promoted over time to manage additional departments that included curriculum, instruction, and other academic programs. In all my roles beyond the classroom, I have consistently worked in teacher support and development. Though my current position affords me the opportunity to continue working in these capacities, my time is primarily sequestered in bureaucratic and policy functions. This professional trajectory has

resulted in a core belief in the value of teachers, our collective responsibility to students, yet the understanding that systems can be barriers to success. From my current vantage point, I strive to leverage policy and organizational structure to remove such barriers, so that the excellence of those who we serve can be actualized.

Personally, I am an ethnically Asian female who immigrated at age four to the U.S. from a European country, when California was under legislation that restricted multilingual education. Thus, I have limited command of Chinese Toisan / 台山話 and Italian / italiano, the two home languages of communication with my family prior to our arrival in the U.S.; the use of these languages was eliminated in an attempt to bolster my fluency in English. Knowing that my story is not uncommon, this influenced my decision to enter the field of education, with a desire to honor the diversity that exists within and among otherwise politically grouped identities. Having personally experienced the power of education policy to drastically change lives, however well-intended yet misguided at times, I have a commitment to bring humanity to light in the decision-making of our school systems. I am myself the parent of biracial children who are enrolled in the MDLI programs of HUSD, with a personal commitment to encourage their criticality and embrace of cultural and linguistic heritage in their lives and the lives of others.

As such, I am aware of my personal biases and expectations when I consider the intent of a school district's policies and actions, versus the impact on the teachers, students, and families in our educational community. My belief is that all individuals have value, knowledge, and worth that can be unrecognized or harmed because of systemic compliance and marginalization. I remain alert to the influence that my personal beliefs have on my areas of interest and interpretation of responses. While I do not supervise the participants in this study, I am familiar with some of them from the positions of a professional colleague or as a parent of their student. I

was clear that I would not use my position to coerce responses nor apply any consequences for anything shared during the data collection process and study overall. Creswell and Poth (2016) emphasize the goal of the researcher is to maintain neutrality in data collection, interpretation, and presentation, and I was mindful of these positionalities and beliefs having possible influence in my research. However, the role of researcher reflexivity in qualitative phenomenological research acknowledges the benefits of such influences in the richness and quality of the data collection and process as a whole, and these aspects contributed to supportive and deep conversations throughout the phenomenological interview process. My intentional attentiveness to bracketing and epoché throughout the research process helped to mitigate undue personal influence or bias, while allowing me as a researcher to focus on and draw out the experiences relayed by the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Chapter 3 Summary

This chapter details the research study, having provided a comprehensive description of the selected qualitative methodology, phenomenological research design, data collection, and data analysis. This was launched with an understanding of the researcher's transformative and pragmatic worldviews that informed the selection of a qualitative study. Within the research design, phenomenology was identified as the approach, with the use of semi-structured interviews for the collection of data. Participant selection through purposive sampling was detailed, along with the inclusion of the researcher's interview protocol and questions. The researcher then indicated data analysis would be completed via thematic analysis to code patterns and identify emerging themes across the qualitative data. Validity and reliability for both the data collection and the data analysis were included. Finally, the chapter included a statement of personal bias and positionality on behalf of the researcher, who was attentive to engaging

objectivity and reflexivity throughout the study. A detailing of the research findings of this study follows in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

Introduction

The primary aim of this study is to examine the humanizing and culturally sustaining experiences in the professional lives of MDLI teachers, in an effort to understand the conditions that contribute to wellbeing and satisfaction in the workplace. As detailed in Chapter 1, rapid expansion of DLI programs has given rise to conflicts facing school districts, such as program demand outpacing teacher availability (Bryner, 2021; Ingersoll & May, 2011); and isolation of linguistic skill development, apart from the full cultural wealth associated with the language (Flores & Garcia, 2017; M. Heller, 2003). While job opportunities grow, MDLI teachers contend with environments that commodify their linguistic skill set, yet may overlook their full value as culturally diverse educators. The literature review outlined in Chapter 2 acknowledged a continuing teacher shortage that is even more pronounced for teachers of diverse backgrounds. Noting the need for supportive and culturally responsive professional settings to strengthen teacher wellbeing and retention in the field, Chapter 3 details this study's examination of the impact of humanizing (Todres et al., 2009) and culturally sustaining (Paris, 2012) interaction that acknowledges and elevates teachers' multicultural capital to foster ideal conditions for the DLI workplace setting (Achinstein et al., 2010; Rogers-Ard et al., 2012); without such conditions, teacher turnover is more likely (Achinstein et al., 2010).

To investigate this, the researcher utilized the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of Todres and colleagues' (2009) dimensions of humanization and Paris' (2012) culturally sustaining practices to examine the professional experiences of MDLI teachers, and additionally Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory to discern important points of interaction. Using a qualitative methodology, the researcher engaged in semi-structured interviews to

understand the essence of teachers' lived experiences in their school systems. More specifically, phenomenological interviews allow for the centering of the participant voice through their own provision of anecdotal and narrative reflections of interactions and events, which are key to the aims of the study (van Manen, 2017).

The research questions guiding the study were:

- RQ1 – How do humanizing practices impact Mandarin dual language immersion (MDLI) teachers' professional experiences?
- RQ2 – How do culturally sustaining practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences?
- RQ3 – Where do MDLI teachers experience humanizing and culturally sustaining impact in their workplace ecosystem?

To address these research questions, an interview protocol with open-ended questions was developed and refined in iterations using multiple validity procedures (see Table 5). This interview protocol was applied in a semi-structured manner, meaning the questions were used as a guide for the interview, but the line of questioning was flexible based on participants' responses. Prior to and during the interview, the researcher sought to create and maintain a safe and comfortable space for honest conversation, and permitted the participants' responses to guide any follow-up questions or additional lines of inquiry they appeared to be eager to share. The information collected contributed to a deeper understanding of the professional lives of MDLI teachers, and provided the insights that will be detailed in this chapter.

Data Presentation

The data from this study are organized and presented by research questions, laying out the prominent themes that provided answers to the research questions. In many cases, the

participating teacher was able to respond to all questions, but as the interviews were semi-structured, the line of inquiry many times shifted to conversational prompts to garner additional details. The teachers were also able to skip questions they did not want to respond to, though this occurred infrequently and only due to believing they had already covered the information in an earlier response. Teachers' responses produced key statements and perspectives that were coded and organized into salient themes and subthemes, which the researcher seeks to describe richly to best honor the sentiments expressed during the interview. As such, quotes from the participants are relayed as nearly verbatim to maintain integrity of the data and its meaning, with only filler words (i.e., like, you know, um, right, etc.) removed as needed to increase precision of the statement. To guard confidentiality, each participant has been identified with a pseudonym and the title, "laoshi," meaning "teacher," in place of a gender-identifiable title, and pronouns they/their employed for all participants.

Research Question One

The first research question asked, How do humanizing practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences? Three prominent themes emerged from the data, with frequency of contributing codes noted in parentheses (see Appendix E): agency via structure, not nature (56); teacher identity as core to personal journey (54); and colleague care creating togetherness (44). Each of these themes encapsulate a dimension of humanization as laid out by Todres et al. (2009).

Agency via Structure, not Nature

Agency refers to an individual's capacity to make one's own choices and be in control of their actions and impact. This concept was expressed in various forms by each of the teachers interviewed. It was described robustly when there were structures for shared decision making,

trust in their curricular decisions, and access to professional options. However, it was also described at times as diminishing, with a lack of voice on campus, and more predominantly, with discomfort in the act of advocacy.

Throughout the interviews, MDLI teachers expressed a sense of shared decision making for their school and common goal orientation. This was most evident when the school had avenues for teachers to provide input and engage in discussions beyond the MDLI program alone, such as staff meetings and access to school leadership. Ma laoshi noted this when describing MDLI teachers' inclusion in Instructional Leadership Teams and other influential committees, "… as long as we all have that goal to make the school better, for teachers, students, and I. For me, I like to work with teachers who really love doing their job." This involvement empowered teachers within the school community as a whole.

This agency was frequently attributed to their content expertise and leadership in MDLI curricular decisions. All 13 teachers interviewed acknowledged the confidence that their school or district administrators had in their Mandarin language content knowledge, and the independence they were provided in designing their instruction. Hsu laoshi described the trust that was placed on teachers to make decisions about curriculum and vertical alignment for MDLI instruction that could be used beyond their own classroom:

> On any changes or improvements to the program or the structure, the principal, both principals did ask me for input just because I had experience from a previous school and then also I guess, the number of years that I taught in Mandarin immersion, so I was part of the team that that went over all the standards, the Mandarin and English standards from Kinder to Fifth to start to create a cohesiveness throughout the program.

Hsu laoshi noted that the teachers were called upon to develop learning outcomes and trajectories for the growing program in HUSD. Likewise, teachers interviewed throughout the study uniformly expressed feelings of confidence and competence that were byproducts of this curricular trust.

In some cases, this growing sense of agency poured beyond Mandarin content expertise, and provided confidence in other areas of advocacy and decision making. Yao laoshi describes such a reflection thusly,

> And at that time, I guess I was encouraged to speak up when I actually need something. I am again supported because every time I ask for something as simple as more desks and chairs in my classroom, or some books in my classroom, I get those things. So, I am encouraged to think, what else do I need that I could create more, like a better learning environment for my kids. And if they're missing something, I can speak up for them.

Another contributor to the teachers' sense of agency in their role was the security of their position. This was conveyed by HUSD's retention practice of employing "skipping criteria" protections for DLI teachers during Reduction in Force (RIF) layoffs, and additional job opportunities as programs expand in HUSD and other districts nearby. Song laoshi described the sentiment expressed by multiple teachers in the study, "We feel more secure as Mandarin teachers. We don't need to worry about being bumped or getting fired because there is a big need for Mandarin teachers. And because we speak the language, we are specialized in this area, then we have a say when we ask for resources."

Yet, there were multiple acknowledgements that their professional agency was at times uncomfortably in conflict with that of their non-MDLI colleagues. Yao laoshi recounted the following memory:

> I think what we do really matters, but also I know for a matter of fact that my English counterparts, English teachers who worked at our school may get a pink slip at March 15 because of personnel changes. I know last year, my English partner got a pink slip. I did not, even though … she has more seniority than I have. So I know that it's because of my specific skill set, that I speak Mandarin and she does not, and that's the only reason that with my lack of experience I get to be safe when this came. I feel really, really bad. I think she is a great teacher. And she works really hard, if not the hardest in our school.

Yao laoshi's reflection conveys another commonly noted sentiment, that despite the MDLI teachers' positive sense of agency in their role, there is a strong sense of unease when it negatively impacts others. This was also noted similarly with discomfort in the advocacy connected to that agency. This appeared both when teachers felt their empowerment was an imposition on someone else, as well as when their advocacy seemed like an unwarranted burden on themselves. Lau laoshi explained such a concern:

> I feel like if I keep advocating for myself, I feel like I may give people impressions that Lau laoshi asks for so much, or Lau laoshi keep asking, asking, and asking. Yeah, so I want people to think Lau laoshi is easy-going, even if it's a false image. But I rather people think that way… it's cultural, we don't want to make things too big, or make it a big deal. If we can solve that or if I can do some extra work that try to solve the problem, then we will just go that way… I just know all the principals are very busy. I feel like I'm taking their [principal and curriculum coach] time… I definitely need their help. But I know she's also very busy. And I just feel bad to keep asking them for help.

Lau laoshi's natural stance was to not ask, but to instead take on extra work rather than impose on others. So, while they understood the agency they had in her role, they did not desire to enact it for concern that they would be perceived as demanding or uncaring of others' time.

In other cases, while acknowledging the empowerment of teacher leadership, some teachers touched upon the undue burden of advocacy for some aspects of the job. Having taught in a MDLI program at two different schools, Tsai laoshi had experienced practices in one school that differed from the other, causing them to reflect on the need to advocate in and of itself.

> It's more of teachers always having to advocate for yourself; you have to advocate for your class. If you want something to happen you have to bring up, there's no one above who's gonna say, 'Hey guys, let's do this. Or what do you guys want to do? Lunar New Year? What do you guys want to do about this?' Here, I feel like it's bottom up instead of like… where someone's leading you.

Despite Tsai laoshi's confidence and success in advocating for their students and the MDLI program, their sense of agency was somewhat tarnished with the revelation that the sheer act of having to ask for space or bring up ideas was an unnecessary burden on teachers' energy and emotional labor. Being provided an avenue for responding to ideas would have felt more natural, comfortable, and respectful for Tsai laoshi.

Relatedly, Guo laoshi noted that when they moved to a school with a significantly smaller MDLI program and teacher representation, their sense of agency declined.

> Sometimes we feel isolated, because we are just a small group of Mandarin program. The other teachers, they don't really understand our culture, and then they don't really understand why the student learns Social Studies in Mandarin, like what's the point for that? So then when they make decisions, yeah, we don't have a lot of input for that.

Overall, MDLI teachers conveyed a strong sense of agency in their professional role, in particular with programmatic and curricular decisions, and being trusted as instructional designers for Mandarin language lessons and cultural activities. However, there was a noticeable amount of discomfort in the enactment of their agency when it either imposed on others, was an avoidable imposition on their plate, or was due to limited voice. The latter was more pronounced for teachers at schools where the MDLI was described as a "program within a school" or a minority percentage of the campus staff or student enrollment; this is further described in the findings of Research Question Two. In situations where structures were provided for teachers to voice their ideas and needs, an empowered sense of agency was more evident. Additionally, as teachers like Lau laoshi and Tsai laoshi noted, their natural stance or demeanor was not to have to enact advocacy on their own. At times this was due to not wanting to burden others, but at other times it was due to feeling it as a burden on their own time and energy. In both cases, structure would help grow agency, when nature would not. Leaving advocacy to the individual to discern on their own left teachers feeling at times powerless, uncomfortable, and frustrated. Yet, structures such as committees and protective policies provided avenues for teachers' voice and value to be uplifted, contributing to agency and humanization.

Teacher Identity as Core to Personal Journey

Another dimension of humanization that arose from the data is that of personal journey. Todres et al. (2009) describe this as the ability for an individual to live continuously in their full identity, in progression from their past history to future hope and potential. For the MDLI teachers interviewed, the universal identity described was that of "teacher." More than half the participants had parents or close relatives who were teachers, and all but one participant had geared their postsecondary studies to become teachers. There was a significant amount of

intention to being a teacher. Liang laoshi expressed the following sentiment that resonated across the interviews:

> Teaching itself is very meaningful for me no matter what kind of program I'm teaching. I can help students develop other essential skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, by integrating different subjects and perspectives into their lessons. I can also bring optimism, kindness, resilience, to the little minds which will benefit their whole life.

For nearly half of the MDLI teachers interviewed, the desire to spread multilingualism was the guiding factor in entering the teaching profession, or even moving to the U.S. Tsai laoshi stated, "I value multilingualism and multiculturalism and I, for myself, I just really find joy in learning languages. This is really fun for me. So, I just want to pass on that passion and joy to my students." Similarly, Lin laoshi described that, "I find it more rewarding to teach kids a different language. It's like the a-ha moments, but they can converse in two different languages. I think it's beautiful, it makes me so happy. It's really that simple."

This identity in their personal journey was closely associated with their care for students, which was rewarding when experiencing success in the role. As Chow laoshi described,

> There are a lot of small factors that will make your day, but at the end of the day, and at the end of every school year seeing your class, it's worth it. So, I know my passion. I don't think I'll get burnout as of now, just because I'm very certain about why I did this, even I was so exhausted. Being a teacher is great, but you're using Chinese to teach kids and… that really helped me open up my eyes to see that you can really change your child's life… just using another language and you will have such an impact.

In addition to such foundational responsibilities that the teachers imparted, all 13 teachers noted the feeling of accomplishment in serving students and seeing them understand and use the Mandarin language or more. Five of the MDLI teachers interviewed use three or more languages, and all considered themselves learners as well as teachers, which helped provide empathy for the student experience. Yao laoshi shared their own humanizing interactions with students, “They come in this program as an outsider, and it’s very overwhelming to them to learn everything in a brand new language. As a language learner myself, I know that feeling is very, very scary.”

With such a strong sense of teacher identity and care for students, the participating MDLI teachers accordingly expressed a blow to their personal journey in situations when they did not feel successful or discovered they were not viewed as competent teachers by parents or other colleagues. Li laoshi noted the learning and acculturation gap they encountered when first teaching in the U.S. It took the remote learning of the COVID-19 pandemic to reaffirm to Li Laoshi their instructional competence, based on what they knew from their teacher preparation in China, and also of the growth they had made in learning additional pedagogy in the U.S.

> The pandemic when we were in remote learning, because we were not in the classroom, we put more effort in the lesson part. So that’s more similar to China. Teacher prepares lessons and teach those things. I remembered I can do this… here it’s different, besides teaching you also need to do management, social emotional learning. In 2014 [arriving in the U.S.] that year is very challenging, because I had to learn more about the cultural difference in how to get along well with students, how to do the classroom management, and sometimes I was pretty frustrated… I heard some teachers, they cried… Gradually we adjust to the changes… I am now not worried and not frustrated by the management, the cultural difference. I get along well with the students and that makes the job fulfilling.

For the MDLI teachers interviewed, the ownership of teacher identity as a core aspect of their personal journey acted as a safeguard if they encountered negative experiences in the role. The teachers repeatedly returned to their service to their students as a core tenet of their role, with Ma laoshi succinctly stating, "... as long as you are loving the child… I am doing my job, I am trying my best to get them to where they are going." The MDLI teachers interviewed were deeply rooted in their sense of self as a teacher, and some even more so with their understanding of the importance of imparting multilingualism and multiculturalism to the students in their care. Their consistent reflection on their competence as educators and compassion for children seemed to be a reassurance of being on the right path, and in the right place in their lives. Being able to carry out a role so well matched to how they envisioned their personal journey gave them a humanizing fulfillment in their work as an MDLI teacher.

Colleague Care Creating Togetherness

Togetherness as a dimension of humanization (Todres, 2009) also strongly reverberated across the interview data. This refers to the feelings of connection and belongingness experienced in a community. The MDLI teachers spoke overwhelmingly of the supportive climate and sense of belonging cultivated by interactions with colleagues, and isolation when such interactions were missing. Most notable were the formal and informal networks of support, along with personal concern and allyship.

For ten of the teachers interviewed, there were designated collaboration times to work with other teachers, be they other MDLI teachers, grade level teams, or English language partner teachers. For three teachers, there was no designated time, but all 13 teachers interviewed craved collegiality and referenced it as an ideal to either strengthen their work or as a support to them directly. Hsu laoshi shared that, "It wasn't super stressful because there was a team of other

teachers and we were able to collaborate and just share our input on what is best based on our experiences… I think it was helpful that there was a team and there were other Mandarin teachers with me to talk." This also extended beyond fellow MDLI program teachers, as Chen laoshi frequently cited the teacher next door as an informal mentor, and four other teachers cited another colleague not involved in the MDLI program as either a coach, counselor, trusted coworker, or someone important in helping them feel connected at the school.

This sense of connection also surfaced in colleagues caring about their personal wellbeing. Chen laoshi was in an unusual situation during the time of this study, unable to work due to a delay in their visa paperwork from the federal government. This had caused stress as they worried not only about their personal stability, but also about the rate of their students' progress while with a substitute teacher. While Chen laoshi anxiously awaited the processing of their visa renewal, they cited their colleagues' concern as a source of strength.

> Our school community, Ms. London like I mentioned, our grade team, they miss me too. What's helpful is that we're all supporting each other. I feel now we're really like a family… Because I cannot work, they send me gift cards for the food. The first time was in October, then Thanksgiving, and now even a third time! I really, really feel amazed.

At times, it was the personal connection that resolved misconceptions about the teachers' roles and the MDLI program itself, creating a stronger bridge in the school community. Both Lin laoshi and Tsai laoshi had noticed hesitation early on from veteran teachers at their school to welcome the MDLI program, concerned it would displace existing teachers. Eventually, Lin laoshi noted that their engagement with non-MDLI colleagues changed the early misconceptions. "I go out, have dinner, or we spend a weekend, I guess that personal connection. So, it changes their perception. They're like, oh, before this, I didn't want you to come in. But when you know

each other, it's different." Over time, Lin laoshi was able to connect with colleagues and over time their reciprocation forged a caring community they are now happy to call a work home. Instead of being seen as someone brought in to displace others, being seen as a person restored humanizing interactions, and opened the door to belongingness.

An additional aspect of colleague care that contributed to the sense of togetherness for MDLI teacher Guo laoshi was an act of allyship from a coworker. During a tense meeting with a parent and multiple teachers who also shared the student, Guo laoshi was feeling isolated in their attempt to explain the inability to adjust a grade, as the school district's electronic portal had closed. They described that the parent continued to be upset until a colleague stepped in.

> Then the math teacher said, 'Oh, if I were the teacher, I would have to do the same thing. You've passed the grading period and we cannot do anything to open the portal.' But the mom was still blaming me. At that time only the math teacher was saying it out. Other teachers there were quiet. I don't think they want to make the parents feel mad at them. Even though we are not very close, in the meeting [the math teacher] can say that louder, made me feel much better.

The MDLI teachers resoundingly conveyed that the sense of togetherness at their respective schools was established by acts of collaboration, concern, and support, and likewise could be diminished when such factors do not exist. Yao laoshi sums this up by stating, "A healthy, supportive working environment is very important. I never got the feeling that I was burning out. But I was lucky because I had a team. Some of our teachers did not really have a team, and that's probably why they left the program." Having a team to be a part of and through which support could be given and received was a common refrain from all 13 MDLI teachers. The idea of *togetherness* referred not just to the physical presence of other MDLI teachers in their programs

and schools, but of the sense of community that was cultivated across programs, grade levels, subject areas, and more. The teachers cited the authentic care and support of colleagues coming from all corners of their professional lives as a protective, joyful, and humanizing factor in their daily experiences.

In summary of Research Question One, the three most prominent themes of humanizing impact in the MDLI teachers' workplace lives were the idea of agency via structure, not nature; teacher identity as core to personal journey; and colleague care creating togetherness. The volume of responses that pointed to each of these was significant enough to understand that these three areas most impacted the humanizing experience the teachers felt or missed in their workplaces. Agency provided empowerment without frustration, particularly in situations where structures were clear and inclusive of all voices. It was also evident that in situations that diminished a teacher's agency, the dehumanization was deflating. The MDLI teachers' strong continuity of personal journey was also a prominent theme. They were fairly uniform in conveying a strong identity as an educator, and this provided a strong belief in themselves that edified them in their personal journey, or provided reassurance in moments that threatened to shake their sense of where they should be in life. Finally, an abundance of responses spoke to the importance of being in shared community with colleagues. The genuine care and togetherness of those in their professional lives was a significant contributing factor to a humanizing experience in the workplace.

Research Question Two

The second research question asked, How do culturally sustaining practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences? Paris and Alim (2017) indicate that an intent of such practices is to sustain the lives and revive the souls of CLD people and communities. While the

literature has explored the classroom environment as a place of impact for culturally sustaining pedagogy, directed toward students to uplift their ways of being (Paris, 2012), this research question was intended to explore how the school environment may do the same, or not, for the MDLI teachers. The most prominent themes to that effect were as follows, with frequency of contributing codes noted in parentheses: MDLI as a lifeway (65); and non-centering as a reminder of outsiderness (61).

Immersion as a Lifeway

The leading sentiment unearthed from the data revealed that being a Mandarin language teacher in a MDLI program was itself a culturally sustaining lifeway. Not only in allowing the teachers to maintain their own linguistic and cultural ways of being, but in embracing multiculturalism such as theirs as a mainstream way of being. There were additionally a number of responses that spoke to a varying extent of cultural sustainment, seemingly connected to being a majority or minority program (i.e., "wall-to-wall" or "program within a school" models).

Hsu laoshi expressed an appreciation in discovering that they could maintain their language by teaching in MDLI, sharing that,

> Since my first language is Mandarin, and living in an English speaking country, it was kind of hard to keep it up. So, I wanted to make sure to retain this language and when I was on the path of becoming a teacher, I learned about the immersion program. So, I was really interested in that path and being able to use my first language as well as share it with students. I really found joy in that.

The engagement of their linguistic abilities also became a means to helping them use and maintain constant interaction with the language. This sentiment was also expressed by Ma laoshi, who saw the MDLI program as an extension of their normal way of being. They described that,

"When I'm teaching in class, I speak Mandarin all the time. The only time I use English is with my principal, some students' parents. When I go home, I speak Mandarin. I hang out with friends, I speak Mandarin. I talk to my son in Mandarin."

The sustaining aspects of MDLI programs also transferred into cultural traditions and norms. Lau laoshi noted that, "Before I became a Mandarin teacher, I did not emphasize or share my culture with anyone else as much as I do now. As a Mandarin teacher, I feel like it's my job to let people know the beauty of our culture, and I am surrounded by it." As mentioned earlier, Chen laoshi was unable to be at work for several months of the school year, which included the time period of the Lunar New Year. They detailed the dismay and surprise they felt in the loss of community atmosphere, by describing, "It was Chinese New Year. The whole country [China] celebrated. But this year, because I didn't work, I didn't join the celebration at school. I just had dinner with friends. I didn't feel the New Year environment." For many of the MDLI teachers, their school was a hub for traditions that were heavily honored in their home communities, and a gap appeared in the absence of the school community. It was as if their school community, in becoming a place for home traditions to be celebrated, had become a cultural lifeway for Chen laoshi. Their sense of cultural normalcy was in place at school, and they felt the absence sharply. This reflection speaks to a potential for MDLI school communities to not only honor MDLI teachers' cultural ways of being, but to keep the teachers connected to them as well.

Moreover, MDLI teachers expressed joy in the growing intersection of linguistic and cultural practices in their schools, essentially seeing multiculturalism become a mainstream norm in their schools. Yao laoshi enthusiastically described their school's "Night Market" event, replicating street fairs commonly found abroad.

> I have a plate full of hot dogs, pizza, xiao long bao, noodles. In front of me, providing them, are my students. They were talking fully in Mandarin, bargaining with me. They act just like the street vendors I'd see in China at the night market, and I get to share my culture. I see my students feeling the pride of using their languages, appreciating culture. I've seen amazing moments when all cultures come together, it's just very, very fulfilling.

Song laoshi resonated this sentiment even among the teachers themselves, "It's as the culture maybe also combined with some other places like Taiwan and Hong Kong and Korea, those Asian all mixed together. It's not just Mainland China… because there are so many places, there are some variations, but mostly it's the same way we celebrate." The embrace of multiple linguistic and cultural lifeways was present in nearly all the teachers' responses; several of them further pointed out the political or historical divides in their diverse cultural backgrounds, but placed an emphasis on the inclusive and unifying force as an MDLI community that they found in their schools.

Importantly, some teachers were explicit about the personal sustainment experienced and hoped for in the MDLI programs. Of these, Tsai laoshi most passionately described their sense of pride and impact these programs could have; connecting them to the cultivation of understanding and confidence in one's identity.

> I want to raise Autumn [Tsai laoshi's daughter] to be confident, comfortable in her skin and proud of who she is. I had her during COVID, when there was a lot of anti-Asian sentiment, and it was a really tough time. I remember thinking if more people were multilingual in the U.S.… it opens your mind, opens your heart to diverse people and cultures, and you wouldn't be so narrow minded about certain things. I want to be able to

> empower my students to be accepting of people who are different from them. And for my students who have an Asian heritage background, I want them to value that and be proud that they are both American and Asian. For Autumn, Chinese and Taiwanese to be specific. That's something she should be proud of and never have to feel she needs to hide that part of her… Learning the language and being exposed to the culture will develop and nurture that love and self confidence in my students who have an Asian background like my daughter.

Throughout the interviews, the MDLI program itself was positioned as a culturally sustaining and reinforcing space. Li laoshi, who had taught in MDLI programs in both Utah and California, similarly noted, "I don't want my son to forget his roots, but remember his culture, and just speak… Especially in California because there's a large population of Asian or Chinese families and communities, we are part of the reason that they won't forget." Several teachers in addition to Tsai laoshi and Li laoshi expressed the importance of these programs for their own linguistic and cultural lifeway, and the additional hope that they would serve in the same capacity for their own children and students.

Interestingly, a noticeable difference in culturally sustaining experiences was discerned between teachers who served in a "wall-to-wall" program versus a "program within a school." A wall-to-wall program indicates that every student and teacher at the school is a part of the MDLI program; in the case of HUSD, this also includes English language teachers teaching alongside Mandarin language teachers. A program-within-a-school indicates that the MDLI program consists of a cohort of students and teachers, but that there are other classes of students and teachers at the school who are not a part of the language program, and typically engaged in English-only instruction. As this study's criteria for inclusion necessitated some employment

time with HUSD, all 13 teachers interviewed had taught at least one year in a wall-to-wall program at HUSD's Park Elementary School. At the time of the study, seven of those teachers had moved on to other schools that used a program-within-a-school model, either in HUSD or another southern California school district; of the remaining six teachers still at Park Elementary School, four had previous experience at another school that used a program-within-a-school model. Thus, 11 of the 13 interviewed MDLI teachers were able to make firsthand comparisons of the different settings created by each model, though there were acknowledgements that other variables and factors existed in the schools besides the model alone. While teachers in both settings noted their own sense of linguistic and cultural sustainment while teaching in an MDLI program in either model, there were some distinctions expressed. This was not a question or comment posed by the researcher, yet multiple interviews included statements from the teachers themselves regarding the difference. Yao loashi summarizes it as such,

> It is a tight knit program, and we have structure consistent from PreK to Fifth grade. We are all learning and speaking Mandarin and we all participate in the same activities: Market, Mid-Autumn Festival. All those things make us feel as one. But if it's not a wall-to-wall program, if it's just one special program inside a huge school and we're just a small part of people, it feels a little lonely that only selected people are here.

Multiple teachers noted the isolation in numbers that was felt in a program-within-a-school, leading to the sense that their voice was minimized on campus, and that others either did not understand or did not consider their perspective to be important. An additional teacher mentioned a slight sense of performativity to the cultural activities when they taught in a program-within-a-school; they felt that their students provided entertainment for the community, rather than the community embracing and participating alongside their students. In this comparison, the teacher

noted that such events and activities seemed to be well integrated throughout the community when they were in a wall-to-wall school.

The pride and joy with which the teachers relayed their stories of cultural and linguistic familiarity in their schools was abundant. Teachers were enthusiastic about the ability for them to use their language daily, as well as its professional positioning. Many teachers addressed a sense of normalization of their cultural ways of being, as they became respected and expected parts of the school climate. Importantly, the teachers pointed out the MDLI school community as being an avenue for students and families with similar backgrounds to experience a sense of pride and connection to their heritage, and to honor multicultural bridges for all students. Such aspects of their stories assert that MDLI communities, by virtue of immersion in both language and culture, are lifeways unto themselves.

Non-centering as a Reminder of Outsiderness

Yet, amid the rich experiences that the MDLI teachers noted within their MDLI schools, they also referred to numerous reminders that their culture, language, or even work as an MDLI program were not central to the decision-making of their school or district. In some instances, they appeared resolvable through education and communication, such as replacing the "other" labeling of multilingual books in a school library, but in all instances these seemingly disparate actions culminated in an understanding that they were still outsiders in a system that did not include their needs or perspectives in its center or design with them in mind. Tsai laoshi recounts a planning meeting that conveyed this sentiment.

> So, for example, the Winter Concert… When I first started here the first few years, we didn't do any Chinese songs. And then one year, I brought it up, and I actually taught the entire second grade a nursery rhyme, poem in Chinese. We did it once or twice, it was

> really cute. But then this year at the leadership team meeting, they decided that they weren't going to do any more Chinese songs for the Winter Concert, because they felt that it was going to drag on too long. It's a little bit sad because while there are non-MDLI classes, there are also [about the same number of] MDLI classes, so it'd be nice if they just went one Mandarin song and one English song, but because they felt like it's too much, they decided on just English songs. And then the MDLI classes can just do a little performance for Lunar New Year or something.

No longer an innocuous event, the Winter Concert had become a reminder of the separation of the language and culture, and created a demarcation of superiority and privilege for one over the other. Further, the delegation of the Mandarin songs to Lunar New Year conveyed a lack of dimension in how the culture was viewed. In including Mandarin songs or poems in the Winter Concert, Tsai laoshi's perspective and desire was to increase integrated multiculturalism, but this action positioned the cultures as separate, further reminding the MDLI team that they were the outsiders in a school positioned around the English mainstream programs and ways of being.

This sense of outsiderness or being an afterthought was also pervasive in instructional decisions and professional development interactions. Like several teachers interviewed, Lin laoshi described having to unpack English-centered methods or materials in order to redesign and oftentimes translate for Mandarin instruction.

> To add on to my instructional teaching for Mandarin, now we have the writers workshop to add in, but the lessons, everything is English. We're planning out, like here's the next slide for writing. But it takes me time to create a new theme that the English teachers already have. Like [they say] 'Oh, I just Google YouTube and then I can share them.'

> There are examples readily available for English. Where am I going to find my materials? When am I going to have more time to do this?

Chow laoshi also described their district's emphasis on the Science of Reading, so they were excited to be sent to a NABE (National Association of Bilingual Educators) session attuned to the application in immersion settings. "99.9% of those presenters and attendees are from Spanish. I attended a session about science of reading in dual language instruction. I was very excited… But then halfway through I realized, oh, this doesn't really apply to non-phonetic languages, languages without a sound[-symbol] system." Frustration for the additional workload of translation was abundant, but so too were requests to have training centered on applicable linguistic needs, rather than the imposition of "make it fit Mandarin," as Wei laoshi bluntly stated, that was frequently asked of the teachers.

Relatedly, there were responses that alluded to the objectification of MDLI teachers and programs. In most cases this was with respect to the additional burden and expectation of translation or materials creation, but three of the teachers also made mention of the ways in which their language was positioned for the school or district's gain, without a full consideration of the holistic environment needed to ensure its success. Chow laoshi had been in communication with colleagues and other districts seeking to open new MDLI programs, and described her perspective as follows:

> It's like a very valuable language; they want to use it for financial gains. A lot of districts probably have schools that are about to close or they're seeing their enrollment drop, so they want to start a Mandarin school. But I feel like they don't really. Eventually they don't put in as much effort to build it. I feel like they see the value, but they don't want to do what it truly takes… They're starting a TK/K [transitional kindergarten /

> kindergarten], but they don't even know what kind of model they want. And they don't even have teachers hired and they're already starting it… It's a little upsetting to hear… I mean, it's good that they're providing dual language programs to the families in that area. But are we going to have a teacher for that next grade level? And how are they going to sustain that program? I just feel bad for the family and school to challenge that program with the district. It's always money, politics, and money.

In such cases, the MDLI teachers understood their language and their skillset to be commodities. Yet, their cultural and linguistic wholeness did not appear to be a consideration in the growth of the programs. Chow laoshi further detailed that despite MDLI teachers having the most intimate knowledge of the program needs, their perspective was not centered or, at times, even considered in the decision-making, reducing them in a dehumanizing manner to commodities, rather than people of intellect and contribution.

Finally, the most frequent reminders of their outsider status seemed to come from interactions that were less than humanizing. In 11 of the interviews, MDLI teachers detailed such interactions, and in several instances the teacher connected it to their race, English language ability, or culture. Song laoshi describes one such interaction.

> I am glad that some parents are very generous and supportive, but also there are some parents, they're judgmental. I got long emails to tell me what to do. They say, 'Oh, I have an educational background, if you like we can talk about it.' Or at the bottom of their email, it's their resumé, like doctor something, something and list all the degrees they have and those are all their qualifications to judge. One parent mentioned that, 'This is not how we teach in America, maybe you are from China and the way you grow up is different.' That year was tough because of that parent. After so many years, I got the

> [HUSD] Teacher of Excellence Award, yet I still got an email from them and yes, it's emotional to get emails at that time.

While Song laoshi referenced their positive sense of teacher identity as a means of carrying on in spite of such interactions, the toll taken by this comment was still clear. Their ways and approach to teaching were labeled as a negative "different" due to their Chinese background. This designation demeaned Song laoshi's ethnic and cultural identity, positioning it as wrong, and not a fit in the school. The feeling conveyed then was of a culturally conflicting problem, which was in direct opposition to the culturally sustaining experience that Song laoshi should have experienced in a program that prioritized multiculturalism. Therefore, when years later Song laoshi received the district's highest honor for a teacher, contrary to the parent's sentiment, the acknowledgement felt ever more rewarding and validating, and drew them back from feeling that they were seen as an outsider.

The emerging themes of immersion as a lifeway, but also with reminders of outsiderness demonstrate the often conflicting experiences of being a CLD teacher in the U.S. While MDLI school communities were described as spaces of belonging and sources of pride for the teachers, there were still aspects of school decision-making and interaction that communicated that the teachers were still an "other" (Bettini et al., 2022), or worse yet, a linguistic commodity not fully valued beyond drawing enrollment and funding to schools. The potential for MDLI settings to operate as culturally sustaining homeplaces is promising, but there are structures and understandings that necessitate intentional change in order for authentic cultural sustainment to be realized.

Research Question Three

The third research question asked, Where do MDLI teachers experience humanizing and culturally sustaining impact in their workplace ecosystem? Drawing from Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977), two salient themes emerged from the data, with frequency of contributing codes noted in parentheses: microsystem interactions versus macrosystem distance (59); and leadership as a lever for humanization (47). MDLI teachers primarily described the people who made up their microsystem as their students, parents, and school colleagues, and tended to view district or external personnel as a part of the macrosystem that was further out of their regular interaction. Leadership primarily referred to school site and district administrators, and at times, teacher leaders such as instructional coaches and curriculum specialists were also included.

Microsystems as Humanizing Hubs

For the purpose of this study, the microsystem was defined as the immediate classroom and school environment, and the macrosystem as operations at the district level or beyond that influenced, but did not necessarily need to directly interact with the teachers. The data included very few responses that addressed the meso- or exosystems, and so this study discusses findings with regard to micro- and macrosystem interactions only. The data indicates that the MDLI teachers experienced most of their humanizing and culturally sustaining interactions at the microsystem level, and while fewer, there were also some negative interactions within their microsystem. The frequency of humanizing interactions within their microsystem seemed to be a stabilizer that supported teachers through the negative experiences. Conversely, most interactions at the macrosystem level were described as detached, though there were some exceptions that

MDLI teachers noted that felt humanizing. The lever that seemed to make the difference in both settings was the humanization exhibited by individuals at both micro- and macro- levels.

All 13 MDLI teachers credited students, various colleagues and some parents in helping them feel appreciated, valued, and respected. As noted earlier in the findings for Research Question One, colleague care contributed to a significant amount of humanization. Lau laoshi described the connection they experience with their partner teacher. “We treat each other as close colleagues. I’m very fortunate that she’s my partner. She and I have a very similar philosophy and ways of doing so I talk with her every day.” Chen laoshi praised their neighbor teacher for engaging in content discussions about Social Studies, without judgment of their instruction in different languages. “I have lots of communication with the English history teacher. She is like my history mentor because she is a history expert. So, we share teaching questions and support.” Wei laoshi also described the support received by a non-MDLI teacher at their school to receive a grant specifically for Mandarin instruction.

> I applied for a grant from Pacific Coast University. Actually, I was helped by the Special Education teacher, Ms. Angel. She helped our Mandarin program to apply for the grant, which gave us more support to gather materials to enrich our teaching. This is how our colleagues support us, know what is important to us.

This action conveyed to Wei laoshi that their language was valued by Ms. Angel, and they were appreciative of the time she took to support its instruction.

Partnerships and team structures seemed to impart the majority of the humanizing and culturally sustaining impact of the MDLI teachers’ daily experiences. Liang laoshi states succinctly, “My colleagues, especially my team, are incredibly kind and friendly. We work closely together, sharing resources and ideas to better support our students. Additionally, our

current principal is highly responsible and caring, and I feel comfortable approaching her with any concerns or ideas I may have." This also included using informal avenues to communicate and support one another beyond the school day. Ma laoshi explains:

> We have an app where we talk and ask for advice anytime. And we also communicate about, 'How do I support the students?' And someone would tell me how to handle the emotional challenge or something… Every year we create a new group [in the app] so we have all the teachers, also the English teachers included… So, in that group, we talk, talk, talk. Socially, of course, but also for teacher tools.

Parent interaction was also noted at the microsystem level, with a variety of interactions that conveyed appreciation of the teachers themselves, but moreover, value for the teachers' linguistic background. Four of the MDLI teachers noted the empowering effect of building linguistic bridges for their students' parents. Yao laoshi described a "cool" and unexpected type of interaction:

> Sometimes parents are more comfortable because I speak Mandarin and they speak Mandarin. They are not very comfortable with their [English] language skills so they would come to me and ask me some questions regarding English class, or they would say, 'This is what the English teacher was saying, what do you think?' Because of the language barrier, they will want one more way to confirm that they are understanding.

Yao laoshi was proud of their ability to be a bridge builder into the school community for their students' parents. Similarly, Chow laoshi connected the interactions they were having with students' families as a validation of their personal background:

> After I decided to become a MDLI teacher, it really helped me to see that connection. My personal experience of being trilingual helped me to connect with a lot of parents and

> students. Some parents only speak Mandarin, and because I can speak Mandarin, I can help them. Others don't really speak Mandarin and I was like, 'Would you prefer me to do a conference with you in Cantonese?' So that's when I realized being trilingual really helped me to build relationships with these parents. And I transferred that, I reflected on what I do with the kids. Like, oh my gosh, it's going to change your life. If you become even bilingual, imagine what kind of places you go, what kind of friends you'll make.

Such interactions with multilingual families like their own provided affirming experiences for the MDLI teachers, and caused them to embrace broader aspects of their work in the program.

In summary, when asked about their experience in the school microsystem, Song laoshi stated, "I feel very lucky doing my job and at the same time, it's the things I really enjoy every day. I just feel I am surrounded by love." They were careful to point out that more than the fulfillment of the teaching role, their experience in the MDLI program and at their school had been a humanizing one.

In contrast, when considering the macrosystem, seen as the hierarchy above or beyond their school environment, there was a pervasive concern that decisions there could impact their careers and lives, but that they had little control or knowledge about discussions that occurred outside of their daily setting. Song laoshi describes the detachment felt by the lack of communication with a district department regarding work visa paperwork.

> They just need the school district to support them. They cannot just go get a visa, or after six years of visa, the sponsorship for a green card. Many teachers feel that it's hard to get a response from HR. We don't have a really clear timeline. You keep sending emails, but you barely get a response, so always worry about our status.

Similar sentiments were shared by three other teachers who had visa concerns, noting the impersonal interaction on an issue that was very personal to their sense of security and stability. The lack of compassion provided the feeling of dehumanization from bureaucratic entities that were detached from them. Chen laoshi likewise noted an additional consequence of the delay, "Because of my paperwork, I don't have the credential cleared. So, HR gave my principal a letter to share with all my families. It is totally a surprise, why did they say it like this, and do it like this? I didn't even know, and I feel so humiliated." While they were engaged in the immigration process, their credential clearance was on hold, which momentarily rendered them into the category of "not highly qualified" per the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC, 2022). A policy to notify parents with students in such teachers' classes resulted in an auto-generated letter from the district's Human Resources department, issued to Chen laoshi's families notifying them of their teacher's lack of qualifications. The unwarranted humiliation and additional burden of convincing parents of their credibility was felt significantly in Chen laoshi's microsystem, but they perceived a detachment from the macrosystem policies and actors that operated from a distance.

Even with parent concerns, there seemed to be a lack of connection when the issues shifted out of their microsystem. Guo laoshi mentioned that "A lot of parents if they don't like the way you do it, they don't talk to you, they directly talk to your supervisor." Wei laoshi concurred with an example of a specific interaction with a parent, sharing that, "She wrote a letter to the school district. She wanted to fire me. I was shocked that I didn't know anything about that." Both teachers separately relayed anxiety about decisions being made about them, without their input, as Guo laoshi described a meeting parents held. "They had the meeting all together, the Superintendent came. I was not in the meeting because I think [my principal] didn't

want a complication. But to me, the parents are arguing together, and I didn't have a say for myself."

Further, teachers noted feeling misunderstood when interacting with individuals outside of their microsystem environment. For example, Lin laoshi explained, "We have this new consultant, but she just wants to criticize us the whole time. Sure, you can help us improve, but our first conversation was just, 'You're not doing too well with your program.' Just criticizing and wreaking havoc on everything." Without personal connection or acknowledgement of the teachers' contributions, Lin laoshi felt unseen and demeaned.

When it came to macrosystem interaction, humanizing and culturally sustaining experiences were harder to discern. In exceptions that were described, the humanizing factors included individual conversation and visits to their classroom or space. Ma laoshi remembered the impact that a visit had on them. They had been communicating with the district HR department on their job status, but the responses received had not fully addressed their questions. After several emails to request clarification, Ma laoshi expressed frustration and despair that perhaps their needs were not understood. A district administrator learned about this interaction and decided to visit in person to see how they might help.

> I still remember the time, the day and the way that [district administrator] came and talked to me, very clear in my mind. Outside my classroom patio. How many years ago, I think at least five or six years have went by. So, you see that just these little things can change someone's mind or life. I still remember that.

Ma laoshi was emotional in sharing this statement, expressing that this personal visit had touched them and was ingrained in a positive memory. This action taken by the administrator to visit in

person and spend time talking with them conveyed genuine concern, and allowed Ma loashi to feel heard and valued.

Wei laoshi summed up such sentiments by sharing the relational connection that made both their micro- and macro- environment feel welcoming. “I feel I belong to the district because I feel they are supporting this program. The parents want the program. I feel it’s all relationship, you feel you have support from up and the bottom… I am inside of this community.” So, while macrosystem interactions did not seem to lend themselves to humanizing or culturally sustaining experiences, there were instances where connections could be made. This acknowledgement and relational reach across the perceived macrosystem distance made Wei laoshi feel seen and valued as a person.

Leadership as a Lever for Humanization

Leaders emerged as pivotal individuals in both the micro- and macrosystems of the MDLI teachers’ professional ecosystem. Site and district leaders were often cited as cultivators or barriers to humanizing and culturally sustaining settings, as it was clear that they were looked to in establishing the climate or creating structures for the environment. All 13 teachers had experience with multiple leaders in their MDLI programs, and thus had observations as well as comparisons to make about the power the leadership held in humanizing their experience.

During their interview, Liang laoshi effused, “Right now I work as a veteran teacher and work with a good leader, a great team, yes! I also feel being included within our community. But these feelings could really be different when I first join this community with the totally different administration team as a new teacher.” Liang laoshi expressed contentment and enthusiasm with their professional setting now, crediting their current principal for the change. In contrast, they

described a starkly different experience, occurring four years earlier, that had diminished their sense of regard by the school and district:

> As a first-time mother, struggling to balance my personal life and work, the pressure of pumping during work was already overwhelming. It felt like the school administrators were not being supportive. Therefore, I contacted the union to find out what the rights for breastfeeding mothers at work were. Despite reaching out, I received no follow-up from the union. Additionally, I never heard anything else regarding this conversation or my lactation break from the administrators.

For Liang laoshi and others interviewed, leadership action or inaction made the difference in how they were treated in their workplace. This was especially pronounced in the face of difficult circumstances. Guo laoshi described watching an interaction with their principal and a substitute MDLI teacher who was facing disgruntled parents. “He told her, ‘I know that’s not your fault. I will deal with the parents, you deal with the students.’ So, he is trying to support, but it’s really hard. The teacher was crying and she wanted to quit. He said this, and she could continue.” The principal’s humanizing response was able to reassure the substitute teacher, which did not go unnoticed by Guo laoshi.

Another often noted factor was the ability of leadership to create or deny structures that were fair and inclusive of the MDLI teachers and their program. Ma laoshi noted a principal who did not provide space for their voice to be included:

> He didn’t provide an opportunity for everybody to talk. He might just ask someone, ‘Hey, what do you think?’ He didn’t provide a place for all the teachers to come in and talk. So basically he takes suggestions from one [English teacher] who maybe just came to talk to

> him. So that's not fair because maybe some teachers also have other ideas, but they are too shy to talk, like me, so they didn't get a chance to vote.

In the absence of structures that provided opportunities for all teachers to weigh in on decisions or provide feedback, Ma laoshi noted that the perspective of the MDLI teachers could be overlooked. In this case, they described a principal who relied on convenience or on those who would be most comfortable speaking with him. In the event that this person was not a part of the MDLI program, the decision would still be applied universally, even if the input was not universal.

This also overlapped with the importance placed on leaders who listen. Tsai laoshi described a situation where they felt not only unheard, but isolated by the response.

> There's always this comparison. I remember when I told [my principal] about the report card, she said, 'Well, that's probably not going to fly because it's only nine MDLI teachers.' We have to manually import our grades because the data is always like this and we have to do it in Google Docs! It's like when we try to say oh MDLI teachers have to do XYZ, someone would say, well non-MDLI teachers have to do ABC. It's almost like instead of addressing a need or a concern from the MDLI, they're doing a comparison. Like, 'Oh, my feet hurt. Well, you know what, my arm hurts.' Instead of, 'Hmm, what's wrong with your feet? Let's figure it out.'

Not only did Tsai laoshi not meet their objective in asking about the report card, they felt that their request was overlooked and dismissed by their leadership without truly hearing the root of the issue. Tsai laoshi further explained why the report cards were important enough for them to bring up:

> Mandarin language arts on its own is a separate report card that Mandarin teachers have to do in Google Docs. So, when it comes to that, it brings back the whole theme of we're just the "other." It's not *with* the English report card in one unit, and it also doesn't seem as official when you have a Google Doc printed report card.

In brushing off their request and declining to consider the impact and message conveyed by the separate and informal-appearing MDLI report card, Tsai laoshi's principal dealt a dehumanizing blow, minimizing them and reminding them of their separateness and outsiderness. The principal held power to make this a humanizing moment, but did not do so.

In contrast, leaders who did use their power to humanize were praised by the MDLI teachers in the interviews. Like a lever, leadership decisions and actions could be pivotal mechanisms that lifted up the platform of MDLI teacher voices. There was hope described in the examples where they did so. Multiple MDLI teachers shared feelings of respect and belonging when leaders did listen, even if the result was not exactly what the teacher had requested. Ma laoshi noted, "Our principal, she's really providing chances for teachers to have the voice, even though she might not decide to pick your suggestion. But she's hearing the suggestion, asking for the voice of all the teachers. And that is a big difference to our trust."

Leaders were also described as having the power to create spaces that honored and normalized the MDLI teachers' cultural interests. Li laoshi expressed being pleasantly surprised by their principal's inquiry on the morning of a professional development session with the entire staff. This included Mandarin and English language teachers.

> Principal Wilson asked in that training, 'Oh, do you have a favorite Chinese singer or star?' I told her I have one, and I think many Chinese teachers may like that same singer or artist. Then she really went to her cell phone or maybe the computer and found that

> guy, and she played his music! And also the next week at the [staff] meeting, usually before the virtual meeting starts, she will play some music, but that time she played another song from that famous Chinese singer! We were impressed, especially the Mandarin teachers.

This seemingly minor action allowed Li laoshi and their fellow Mandarin teachers to feel seen as more than a MDLI teacher, but rather, fully human with interests and enjoyment in popular culture, which he warmly expressed. Their principal had positively positioned the integration of trending music from all cultures and languages, and welcomed it into their school community by normalizing it in everyday actions and spaces.

The data revealed significant power held by those in leadership positions; MDLI teachers cited that they could humanize and sustain, or disregard and limit the MDLI teachers by way of their actions, stances, and spaces created. Wei laoshi summarizes the point that it is about the leader and their demonstration of care and interest that makes a distinction:

> When the district leader reaches out to us, ask for what we're thinking, what we're feeling. And not that *we* ask, that is a different process. When they reach out to us, then we feel okay, the leader of the program is willing to listen to us. But if we are asking, that's different. We feel like, are we going to be listened to? Because they're reaching out to us, I know they want to make this program stronger and better.

Even when much of the data described interactions with macrosystem people and structures as typically distanced and dispassionate, Wei laoshi described the humanizing impact of a district leader validating and valuing their voice by reaching out to converse. In such stories, it is evident that intentional leadership actions, regardless of place in the teacher's workplace ecosystem, have the ability to humanize.

An examination of the ecosystem of MDLI teachers' professional lives revealed that their microsystems operated as humanizing hubs, where teachers most frequently experienced care and camaraderie, but also comfort and reassurance when negative experiences occurred. These features resonate with earlier themes of colleague care and immersion communities as lifeways, with the abundance of felt love and joy attributed to the people and experiences in their school microsystems. Additional findings pointed to the pivotal nature of leadership in establishing these humanizing climates. This was consistent regardless of the leadership actions being generated at the microsystem or macrosystem level; in all cases, leadership could be used as a lever to bridge distances, cultivate closeness, and bring personal regard to teachers.

Chapter 4 Summary

Chapter 4 laid out the detailed data collection and research findings from the qualitative phenomenological study of the humanizing and culturally sustaining experiences of MDLI teachers in their school ecosystems. This chapter began with an overview of the participants, along with a review of the six steps of thematic analysis (Clarke et al., 2015) applied to data analysis. The researcher set out to study three research questions, using an interview protocol of ten questions, though the semi-structured format of the phenomenological interviews allowed for additional lines of inquiry and conversational responses to guide the data collection. Following line-by-line transcript coding, seven themes emerged from the data that most saliently addressed the research questions: agency influenced by structure and culture; teacher identity as core to personal journey; colleague care creating togetherness; immersion as a lifeway; non-centering as reminders of outsiderness; microsystems as humanizing hubs; and leadership as a lever for humanization. Each of these findings are presented through rich and thick descriptions, drawing

upon direct quotes from the participants themselves. These seven themes are summarized in Table 6, below.

Table 6

Summary of Themes Organized by Research Question

RQ1. How do humanizing practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences?	**RQ2.** How do culturally sustaining practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences?	**RQ3.** Where do MDLI teachers experience humanizing and culturally sustaining impact in their workplace ecosystem?
Agency via structure, not nature	Immersion as a lifeway	Microsystems as humanizing hubs
Teacher identity as core to personal journey	Non-centering as reminders of outsiderness	Leadership as a lever for humanization
Colleague care creating togetherness		

Humanizing practices that appeared most prominently in the data revealed the positive impacts of agency, personal journey, and togetherness. MDLI teachers conveyed confidence in their competence and contribution to education, as well as a strong identity as a teacher in service of students. Further, caring networks found amongst colleagues created a sense of togetherness and belonging that allowed MDLI teachers to feel a part of their workplace community. When applying the lens of culturally sustaining experiences to the data, MDLI teachers conveyed a sense of place found in their school communities, but the impact of outsiderness remained as a barrier to feeling fully seen in the community. Yet, the findings

reveal that the MDLI program and immersion itself could operate as a cultural and linguistic lifeway for the teachers. Those who felt surrounded by their culture exhibited pride and appreciation, and moreover, multiculturalism was noted as an emerging norm. However, schools still have a ways to go in centering Mandarin and Chinese language and culture in decisions; data revealed reminders to the MDLI teachers of being the cultural "other" in school wide decisions. Interactions were inspected at all levels of the teachers' workplace ecosystem, with the most frequent interactions occurring within or between the micro- and macrosystem levels. Interactions within the microsystem of a teacher's experience tended to be more humanizing and culturally sustaining, while the further macrosystem did not. However, leadership emerged as a hopeful lever for humanization and sustainment at both levels, suggesting the potential for all levels of the ecosystem to contribute to humanizing and culturally sustaining experiences. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of these results in relation to the research questions of the study as well as suggestions for future application.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

Introduction

With U.S. schools increasingly prioritizing instruction that develops a more globalized and culturally competent student, multilingual education programs are growing at a rapid pace (Singleton, 2018). However, historically monolingual policies and practices in this country have created a climate where multilingualism and multiculturalism are not equivalently respected for all people (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016), and have produced decades of "(mis)preparation" of teachers into passive purveyors of standardized education rather than critical partners in addressing multicultural nuance (Balderrama, 2001, p. 255). Therefore, the increasingly rapid expansion of multilingual programs is complicated by the need for deeper rooted issues of raciolinguistic positioning to be addressed as well (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Morita-Mullaney & Chesnut, 2022). Exacerbating the issue is the U.S.'s increasing teacher shortage, which is particularly pronounced for teachers of diverse backgrounds, often due to impacts of the aforementioned climate, and resultant conditions in the workplace that can place undue burden and strain on CLD teachers (Bryner, 2021; Ingersoll & May, 2011; MacIntyre et al., 2019).

Yet, the implications of this study offer a respectful route forward for schools and districts offering such programs, and importantly, for the CLD teachers who make the programs possible. In this shifting and complex climate, DLI programs demonstrate promising potential to operate as multilingual and multicultural lifeways, not only for students, but for the teachers themselves. While DLI programs have room for improvement with respect to implementation (Flores, 2019; Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Wong & Benson, 2019), considerable research has been produced regarding positive outcomes for students, with evidence of access to shared multilingualism and multiculturalism for all students regardless of their dominant language

background (Genesee et al., 2006; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Murphy, 2014; Serafini et al., 2022). This study discerns that DLI programs can also produce positive outcomes for DLI teachers. Until this point, little research has been conducted on the impact of such program settings and communities on the CLD teachers within the DLI programs themselves, and in particular with Mandarin language communities, as Spanish language communities have been more frequently studied in the U.S. With acknowledgement of the complex climate and historical perceptions around race and language in U.S. schools (Delpit, 1995; de Oliveira, L, 2021), along with an increasing amount of research on CLD teacher wellbeing and retention (Aguilar, 2021; Kohli, 2009; Tyler et al., 2004), it was imperative that the experience of CLD teachers in their school settings be inspected.

This study recognized the broad scope of such examination, and therefore began with a focus on language teachers within DLI programs, with a further narrowing to focus on Mandarin language teachers in particular. This selection was intentional, as the researcher noted a concerning conflict in the touting of the Mandarin language value for globalization (M. Heller, 2003; Schaeffer, 2009), while long standing English-first practices had diminished the value of multilingualism arising from racially non-Eurocentric speakers (Gándara & Escamilla, 2016; García & Curry-Rodríguez, 2000). Moreover, and most pronounced, was the reality of increased polarization brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in anti-globalization and anti-Asian sentiment that threatened to devalue Asian and Asian American people themselves, and their associated cultures (Chen et al., 2020; Tessler et al., 2020; Wang & Yu, 2021). Unaddressed, this would lead to or reveal an unconscious commodification (Freire, 1970) or dehumanization of a Mandarin DLI (MDLI) teacher's linguistic skills over the full breadth of who they are and the richness that they bring to the school community as culturally and

linguistically diverse individuals. Therefore, in a conscious effort to prioritize the humanity of MDLI teachers, this study sought to inspect the workplace environment in which MDLI teachers find themselves, to discern how humanizing and culturally sustaining their experiences might be, and what impacts have resulted on their wellbeing and satisfaction in their teaching role.

The research questions this study aimed to answer were as follows:

- RQ1 - How do humanizing practices impact Mandarin dual language immersion (MDLI) teachers' professional experiences?
- RQ2 - How do culturally sustaining practices impact MDLI teachers' professional experiences?
- RQ3 - Where do MDLI teachers experience humanizing and culturally sustaining impact in their workplace ecosystem?

The researcher employed a qualitative phenomenological approach to the study (Creswell & Poth, 2016), to best capture the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon of the MDLI teacher experience within their school settings. Phenomenology is based on empathy (Nissim-Sabat, 1995), and this unique aspect of the design was a strength applied in the study, as it enabled a deeper trust throughout the interview and allowed for open-ended data collection that would provide rich insights from the teachers themselves.

Chapter 5 presents the insight gleaned from the study, in relation to the existing literature and conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of humanization, cultural sustainment, and ecological systems. For the purposes of clarity and synthesis, it is divided into four main sections: discussion of findings; conclusions and implications; study limitations; and future research recommendations.

Discussion

The Impact of Humanization

Freire (1970) advanced that the restoration of one's humanity is the anecdote to reductive and marginalizing experiences, and so the lens of humanization was central to this study. Humanizing pedagogy has been evidenced as a bridge builder for students in classrooms (Peercy et al., 2022), and this study finds that this is likewise applicable to teachers in their own school settings. MDLI teachers relayed stories with both humanizing and dehumanizing characteristics that impacted their professional lived experiences. Experiences were unlikely to be neutral, as interactions were perceived as being either humanizing or not. However, despite the existence of dehumanizing experiences, the power and impact of the humanizing experiences acted as sources of strength, and assured the MDLI teachers that they were in the right place, with the right people, doing the right work.

This study utilized the conceptual framework of humanization established by Todres et al. (2009) for healthcare, and found it apt for the field of education as well. This framework detailed eight dimensions that are essential to humanized care, noting that the eight dimensions operate as continuum in relation to an opposite, dehumanizing counterpart. This was important for defining the research findings, as the responses gathered in this study's data collection at times pointed to richly humanizing experiences, yet at other times, MDLI teachers provided reflections that were quite the opposite. While all dimensions of humanization detailed by Todres et al. (2009) appeared in the data, three themes emerged most abundantly when viewing the data through this lens: agency as a matter of structure instead of nature; MDLI teachers' strength of identity as an anchor to their personal journey; and colleague care creating a sense of togetherness in the school community.

Agency and Uplifted Voice. When teachers spoke of agency, those who were in settings that included clear communication and avenues for shared decision making were most certain of their empowerment and influence. Words such as trust, confidence, and competence were noted repeatedly in the data, as teachers relayed the agency they held in curricular and instructional decisions, and an assuredness in their flexibility to design lessons and make choices for their classes. This agency also parlayed into confidence in advocacy for issues as mundane as needing equipment to larger concerns such as allocation of funding for their program and students, as Li and Ruppar (2021) note is predictable growth in the fostering of teacher agency. From this standpoint, the MDLI teachers had no doubt that their voice mattered. Conversely, there were four of the 13 MDLI teachers interviewed for whom the sense of agency felt newly missing. These teachers experienced a stronger sense of agency in another school setting, but that feeling had changed in a different school setting. This was either due to now being in a school where the MDLI teachers or students represented a small percentage of the total school population, or in cases where they frequently needed to advocate for the program or their students. The teachers originally used their perceived agency to speak up and offer ideas, but consistent failures in their advocacy over time led to a diminished return on effort, and ultimately created a passivity toward advocating as they encountered repeated dehumanizing interactions. Essentially, their sense of agency felt lost in a new school environment that had different structures. Regardless of confidence in themselves, the teachers expressed that it was a preference not to have to enact their advocacy, at times because of a cultural preference to defer to and not disrupt leadership (Mercado & Trumbull, 2018), but also a structural preference based on the responsibility of their leadership to create avenues for those in their care. In fact, there is an intricate connection between agency and structure, with structure providing access to agency development

(Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). For both MDLI teachers who felt their agency lacking due to minority numbers on campus, as well as those who had given in to a sense of passivity, it is clear that intentional structures and avenues for input and voice would make a difference.

MDLI teachers also conveyed a sense of agency produced by job security and job options as programs grew and schools and districts sought to recruit and retain. Many of the teachers were aware of how valuable they were to the district in which they were currently employed and that they had more flexibility and stability as a result. However, as will be described in the discussion of research question two, this value was primarily credited to their Mandarin language ability. So while the teachers exhibited agency in their language teacher roles, this did not fully equate to a full embrace of all attributes and ideas the teachers brought to their programs, resonating with Katznelson and Bernstein's (2017) research that language can be seen as a resource, and not a cultural identity or integration. This finding illuminates the complexity of humanizing interactions when only some or part of what a teacher brings to their role is explicitly valued. MDLI teachers expressed appreciation for the job stability, but it fell short of embracing their full value as culturally rich educators. The interview data also revealed that in some cases MDLI teachers felt discomfort with their agency. In particular, when their agency imposed on others, the teachers noted guilt or regret, indicating that the natural preference of the MDLI teachers was not to use their agency for individual requests or individual benefits. As Li and Ruppar's (2021) systematic review of teacher agency for inclusive education similarly revealed, the development of agency was most evident for societal good and equity in education, not material or personal gain. The MDLI teachers were far more comfortable when they believed their agency contributed to a greater good of the program, for their students, or fellow teachers.

It is important then, for schools to remove the individualistic approach to agency, and intentionally establish structures that honor all voices transparently, so that agency is seen as a contribution to discussion and collective good, rather than individual advancement. Agency must be cultivated by inclusive structure and design, as evidenced by the MDLI teachers' discomfort or despondence when such avenues did not exist. What the MDLI teachers felt they could not overcome by natural will and effort, would be helped by more formal structures for the humanizing inclusion of their perspectives.

Strength of Identity as a Teacher. Relatedly, agency is a significant factor in identity formation, allowing an individual to define themselves by their own terms rather than the imposition of structurally or politically determined identity (Varghese et al., 2005). The data in this study revealed that MDLI teachers' strong sense of teacher identity was core to the maintenance and fulfillment of their personal journey, which is described by Todres et al. (2009) as embracing the full identity of a person and emphasizing who the person is, more so than how the person is in any given moment of time. This allows the individual to be seen in the ways that they have defined, including their history and potential for their future, rather than defined by how they may be showing up momentarily. For all 13 MDLI teachers interviewed, the identity of being a teacher was a main defining sense of self, and for just over half of them, being a teacher of language was a clear part of their personal journey as well. Their current role in an MDLI program provided connection to their sense of purpose, resulting in a humanizing fulfillment and expression of their identity.

The care and commitment the teachers felt toward their students' learning and success was evident in this sense of purpose. As noted earlier, the MDLI teachers felt strongly about their responsibility to create or advocate for conditions that would provide successful learning

experiences for their students. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) have found that the complexities of teacher identity development are associated with these interconnections, noting the overlap of agency and teacher identity formation, such as the strength of teacher identity leading to increased agency in the role and vice versa. In such descriptions, the MDLI teachers expressed the humanizing perspective of being seen as a part of the community of teachers at their schools, and not as a separate and distinct entity due to their work in a specialized program. The teachers enjoyed their work with young learners, and had confidence in their ability to carry out the intricate demands of teaching. Twelve of the teachers shared a continuity between the positions they now held, and either growing up in an educator household, and/or their undergraduate or graduate studies; to them, this was not a role taken simply because of their Mandarin language ability, but very much a cultivated part of who they saw themselves to be. Much like their non-MDLI colleagues, they were deeply engaged in the work of education and support of students, and fulfilling their self-defined personal journey. To be seen and valued for this identity allowed them to be whole in their humanity.

Conflicting Identity as a Language Teacher. For those who noted a connection to being a teacher of language, their sense of personal journey in an MDLI role held additional fulfillment, as imparting multilingualism and multiculturalism was an explicit part of their desire to become a teacher. They were proud of their extra efforts in conducting instruction in another language, with students from varied linguistic backgrounds, and conveyed their sense of purpose as very much related to this illumination. Yet, at times this particular responsibility carried with it some internal struggle. As Varghese et al. (2005) found, the language teacher identity comes with not only the possibility of fulfillment due to work toward linguistic access, but at times also presents conflicting identities for teachers, such as being a language learner while also being a

language teacher. This appeared in six MDLI teachers' stories, as they grappled with consciousness of not only their communication with parents or school leadership in English, but also their striving for "perfect" Mandarin to meet a perceived expectation for good linguistic modeling for students, all day long, in multiple subject areas (Zhou & Li, 2017). In other words, the teachers' continuity of personal journey was closely linked with the fulfillment found in teaching, but the additional layer of being a teacher of language presented a more complex sense of identity that could be impacted by cultural and linguistic interactions in their school settings. This indicates an intricate connection between humanizing and culturally sustaining practices that will be further detailed in the discussion of research question two.

One such instance was described by a MDLI teacher who found themselves questioning their ability due to a struggle with student interaction and engagement in their first years of teaching in MDLI programs in the U.S. Having trained to be a teacher in another country, China, they discovered they had not been prepared to address the relational and social emotional aspects of interaction with students. Instead, their training and understanding of the role of a teacher was primarily based upon lesson design and content competence. For some time, the teacher was disconnected from their personal journey, as they grappled with the cultural shift and the new learning and application of relational interaction with students, something noted in other studies involving the acculturation of international Chinese teachers (Maddamsetti et al., 2018; Marom, 2018). In a time of self-doubt, however, the MDLI teacher acknowledged the very human aspect and acceptance of an evolving identity, which encouraged them to keep growing. In fact, this humanizing sense of a meaningful personal journey parlayed into a protective factor for the teacher to embrace growth, rather than be diminished by a false inadequacy. An illuminating moment during the period of remote instruction from COVID-19 school closures

confirmed that they were on the right track; in this setting, the teacher found themselves flourishing in the creation of Mandarin lessons for virtual instruction, and reconnecting with the sense of competence and design that had been a core part of their teacher identity at the start of their career. This moment reaffirmed for them that their personal journey was not lost, and moreover, that the thriving relationships they now held with students was a valuable addition to their teacher identity.

Community Closeness. The strength of the MDLI teachers' identity as teachers also created a solidarity with colleagues at their school, whether they were teachers in the MDLI program or not. The care of colleagues created a community of togetherness felt by the MDLI teachers, and imparted the sense of belonging in their school. Todres et al. (2009) explain that togetherness, as a dimension of humanization, is the ability for individuals to connect with others in personal and empathetic ways. The sense of shared teacher identity, shared goals, and sometimes shared students, seemed to draw teachers together and provide humanizing interactions that were understanding and supportive of one another. Several studies have noted the benefits to the wellbeing of diverse teachers when mentorship and robust cultural training are provided (Jia, 2014; Jin et al., 2021; McCann et al., 2012) but the MDLI teachers noted interactions that were beyond formal mentorship or training. In fact, the feeling of togetherness was cultivated more by informal investments of time, concern, and allyship that the MDLI teachers experienced in their day-to-day tasks and events. Much like Bartolomé's (1994) early work on humanizing pedagogy in education, schools need to move past strategies, and instead connect relationally, empathetically, and in ways that validate students' and teachers' full selves. When the MDLI teachers spoke of togetherness, they abundantly cited very human acts of service and support, not only formal partnerships or structures. This study lifts up these stories as

evidence of the need to attend to more than structures in order to achieve true humanizing togetherness and build spaces of belonging. Certainly, structures open avenues for voice and relationship building, but the shift toward togetherness also requires substantive connection on a personal level; essentially, driving colleagues to know and see one another beyond their work tasks.

While collaboration time with partner teachers or grade level and subject area colleagues were included in the stories of colleague care that were common in the data, the feeling of togetherness was attached to humanizing interactions within that collaboration and beyond. For many of the MDLI teachers, having a team to work in common with and to think with someone experiencing a similar context, already felt like community. When colleagues demonstrated actions beyond typical behaviors of teaching and planning, the sense of togetherness was deeply felt. For example, one MDLI teacher described that they were forced to take a leave of absence from their position because the U.S. government was delayed in processing their work visa. Because this resulted in loss of salary, the teachers' entire school community repeatedly chipped in to ensure the teacher would receive gift cards for groceries and food throughout their months-long leave. Further, various colleagues took turns delivering the gift cards to the teacher as a means of paying a visit and ensuring they did not feel forgotten. The MDLI teacher did not have family in the country, and stated that this act enabled the teacher to view their school community as their family. As del Carmen Salazar (2008) notes, such acts embrace the dignity and humanity of the individual within a school system that can often otherwise be focused on work output. This study positions the very critical importance of care and closeness to be attended to in the school setting, so that the individuals in such communities experience shared solidarity and

support for one another's wellbeing. This humanizes the profession from a series of transactions and delivery of information, to an appreciation for the people in the spaces.

The data indicated that the most humanizing impacts in MDLI teachers' workplace environments came from interconnections between their strength of agency and identity, fulfillment of personal journey, and colleague togetherness. The interconnectedness also suggests that multiple and varied interactions collectively reinforce teachers' humanity, and culminate in a net understanding that they have worth as individuals. In sum, they contributed to a sense of being fully seen and loved in their workplace. In cases when they were lacking, feelings of demoralization or isolation were felt, confirming that there is no neutral ground with humanization. The findings indicate that schools can either be places of humanizing care and love, or places devoid of them, and it is imperative that schools work to become the former.

The Impact of Cultural Sustainment

Given the intersection of race and language in the perception of MDLI teachers, the concept of cultural sustainment is also applied to the research. The findings point to the overlapping nature of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices, as humanizing and dehumanizing interactions surfaced repeatedly in the impact of cultural sustainment experienced by the MDLI teachers. Two prominent, yet opposing, themes emerged in response to this inquiry, suggesting that for MDLI teachers the presence of culturally sustaining practices contributes to a humanizing sense of place and belongingness, while conversely, the absence of culturally sustaining practices marginalizes them as dehumanized outsiders. Paris (2012) introduced culturally sustaining pedagogy as an approach to honor students and youth of color through their heritage, language, and culture, with the intent to develop cultural pluralism and sustain the lifeways of their communities. It assumes that the funds of knowledge (Moll & Diaz,

1985) and full totality of resources brought by an individual are assets to be centered, and not deficits to be measured within a cultural and linguistic hegemony (Paris & Alim, 2017). Through this lens, the study discerned a promising fulfillment of such goals in the professional lived experiences of MDLI teachers, indicating that immersion programs and school communities in and of themselves can operate as a lifeway of cultural and linguistic sustainment for MDLI teachers. Yet, the data also unearthed barriers in the constant reminders of *outsiderness*, when MDLI teachers' cultural ways of knowing, doing, and being were afterthoughts in the school or district planning and decision making. These findings push the understanding of MDLI settings as more than instructional programs, but in fact, spaces that can sustain cultural and linguistic lifeways, and nurture the souls and full identities of the people within them.

MDLI Communities as Lifeways. With the effusiveness and emotion that many of the MDLI teachers described their sense of home and place in their school community, it was evident that being a teacher in a MDLI program was a means of maintaining their linguistic and cultural ways of being. Being in the U.S., several of the teachers noted that the opportunity to use Mandarin on a daily basis was not only a means of preserving their language, but also a relief for those who felt overwhelmed by the English-dominant culture beyond their schools. The positioning of their linguistic expertise was a welcome feeling, in comparison to feeling less credible due to their accented or imperfect English, and racially apparent "otherness" elsewhere (Nguyen, 2012; Tajrobehkar, 2021). Teachers noted that MDLI school communities acted as a safe space for their linguistic capacity to be respected, which, as Gardner et al. (2021) found with students, fostered agency and emotional justice. This finding holds incredible promise, indicating the potential for immersion settings to operate as linguistic lifeways for MDLI teachers to not only maintain, but uplift their language. Schools and districts must think beyond only the student

learning benefits enabled by language immersion programs, and recognize the ability for simultaneous empowerment and esteem for their culturally and linguistically marginalized teachers.

Immersion programs inherently lend themselves to cultural sustainment when the MDLI teachers' ways of being and doing are centered in the design. The teachers felt edification when their heritage traditions and cultural practices were brought into the school setting, indicating their identity beyond language instruction was embraced by the individuals within their MDLI school community (Bettini et al., 2022). This conveyed a value for their cultural ways of being, rather than a singular value in fostering language acquisition alone, as MDLI teachers noted that DLI programs aim to foster cultural inclusivity (Nordstrom, 2022), distinct from world language or elective courses. The programs engaged colleagues, students, and families in the cultural components of celebration, such as festivals and fairs, performances with dragon and lion dances, and expanded the sense of meaning to a more robust expression of their whole identity. Further, the MDLI school community normalized cultural activities that created a sense of connection within the school routine, such as Chinese poetry competitions, afterschool night markets, and Mandarin-based community service options. Alim et al. (2020) note that such actions center the ways of culturally diverse communities, fostering love and pride in one's own way of being through the cultural and linguistic plurality of the engaged practices, and the findings resonate abundantly with these emotions. Further, the MDLI teachers indicated that the MDLI program inherently creates this pluralistic environment, which contributes to humanizing experiences that build up their sense of belongingness. Both are key to the wellbeing and retention of MDLI teachers, if not more importantly, their joy in their workplace.

Influences of Program Design. While the sense of wholeness and joy appeared dominantly in the responses from MDLI teachers in a wall-to-wall program, the teachers in a program-within-a-school model were no less enthusiastic about their experience of incorporating their culture and language in their school setting. However, a clear distinction to note was the fullness of the involvement of others in the former model, encompassing interaction and engagement of the entire school community in ways that emulated cultural sustainment (Paris & Alim, 2017). In the latter model, MDLI teachers described the involvement of other members of the school community in ways that recognized their appreciation of culturally relevant events (Ladson-Billings, 1995b), noting respectful acknowledgement and observation, but not necessarily integrated participation. So, while cultural and linguistic lifeways were honored and able to be sustained for the MDLI teachers in all schools, there were varying degrees of community immersiveness, which suggests that variation across the continuum of cultural proficiency affects the impact on the MDLI teachers (Cross et al., 1989). These findings push practitioners and researchers alike to consider how authentic immersion can include all people in the school community; without such involvement, MDLI programs will retain a sense of separation from the mainstream.

Critical Consciousness. Finally, a small number of MDLI teachers also alluded to the critical consciousness that was inherent in the MDLI programs, noting the potential for their programs to shift socio-cultural norms and offer an inclusive and equitable way forward for them as CLD teachers and for their students and families of similar heritage backgrounds (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Freire, 1987). In using their own children as examples, they could see the promise of cultural connectedness and pluralism for future generations of students and communities. MDLI teachers themselves spoke of diversity among their MDLI colleagues,

pointing out the uniqueness of various heritage identities, most particularly drawing from cultural distinctions among those from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and for one teacher, Korea. The school community viewed them with a sense of uniformity, but within their MDLI community, they reveled in their differences while simultaneously forging solidarity as a Mandarin language community. These distinctions were as frequent as the use of traditional or simplified Chinese characters and pinyin, or as momentary as the wearing of a hanbok instead of a qipao or cheongsam during the Lunar New Year festivities. If MDLI programs truly operate as lifeways for the diverse teachers within them, they must also sustain cultural pluralism across the multiple heritages of the Asian diaspora. This finding indicates a strength in solidarity, without sacrificing the unique identities of the MDLI teachers that contribute to the shared community.

Outsiderness and Objectification. However, alongside great potential for MDLI programs to become lifeways themselves, there were missteps and barriers that included cultural isolation, de-centering, and objectification. These moments were reminders to the MDLI teachers that while they had value in the school community, they were still at times outsiders, or objectified commodities. A large portion of the data indicated the designation of instructional methods and resources centered on English language standards and processes, and the heavy burden on the MDLI teachers to redesign or fit them for Mandarin language attributes, clear reminders of the bias toward English as the language of privilege (Nguyen, 2012). This way of planning and thinking from district or school administrators communicated to the MDLI teachers that their needs and linguistic constructs were not centered, despite teaching in a program touting multilingualism and multiculturalism (Paris & Alim, 2017). For some MDLI teachers, this also parlayed into other school procedures and practices that positioned their language or culture as less worthy than English-based practices (Bettini et al., 2022). Examples included the unofficial

presentation of MDLI report cards, the removal of Chinese songs from a schoolwide Winter Concert, parental judgements on non-American teaching practices, and in one school, the physical location of MDLI classes in various available classrooms rather than near partner teachers, so as not to inconvenience existing English mainstream classes. When seen cumulatively together, each of these seemingly separate stories collectively told the MDLI teacher that their program, their students, and ultimately, they, too, were outsiders and not members of the mainstream (G.M. Kim & Cooc, 2021; Sabharwal et al., 2022). Not only were these moments lacking in cultural sustainment, they were dehumanizing in their marginalization.

MDLI teachers recognized their objectification within the institution of the U.S. education system. While they were unanimously in support of expanding MDLI programs, it was with the expectation and hope that their language and culture would become more widespread in the U.S., and that ultimately people of Asian heritage would be more seen and understood. Their lens was an inclusive one, noting the benefits of the multilingual skillset, but also with esteem for the communities who engage in the language and culture. Yet, the experience was repeatedly described as offensive. Multiple MDLI teachers detailed the expansion of programs as poorly planned and lacking in consideration of the MDLI educator community faithfully attempting to take care of the families hoping for meaningful linguistic and cultural learning for their students. The teachers were keenly aware of the global advantages and value of the Mandarin language (Chiswick & Miller, 2016; Koh et al., 2021; Schaeffer, 2009), and felt exploited when districts or schools launched MDLI programs for purposes other than the fostering of multilingualism and multiculturalism (Fitts & Weisman, 2009; Katznelson & Bernstein, 2017). Primarily evident in the data were examples of districts using MDLI programs to draw student enrollment and funding. In one case, an MDLI teacher wondered if the growth of the program was to acquire

additional teachers for the English mainstream program, using the increased student enrollment to mathematically support more staffing within California's structures for student-teacher ratios. MDLI teachers identified the structural advantages for their employers when their programs could generate waitlists of students, and create coveted funding. Not only was the MDLI program growth not perceived as an intent for cultural sustainment, but as Freire (1970) declared, the impression of being reduced to a commodity for structural gain was, in fact, the very opposite of humanizing action as well. This finding provides a cautionary consideration for school systems, as rapid program growth can cause harm when cultural and linguistic aims are not centered in the decision-making.

Culturally sustaining practices in the MDLI teachers' school environments is not simply a beneficial side effect, but a vital need for the teachers to thrive in their roles. In situations when it was experienced, the expression of joy, fullness, and empowerment were abundant. Yet, in situations when it was not experienced, the teachers felt exploited, demoralized and dehumanized. MDLI programs and school communities demonstrate a significant potential to act as linguistic and cultural lifeways for the teachers, and students and families of heritage within them, but districts and schools must reckon with the fulfillment of these intents so that the vestiges of outsiderness and objectification are no longer a hand-in-hand accompaniment.

Places of Impact within the Ecological System

Finally, recognizing that the school community in which MDLI teachers find themselves is only a portion of the educational system that encompasses and influences it, this study applied Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory to consider the places of impact for humanizing and culturally sustaining interaction. With respect to human development, it is the collective interplay of all contexts that affect an individual, and therefore, interactions,

experiences and influences from each of these levels have an impact on the individual's reality (Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017). The study findings reveal the uplifting, rejuvenating, and protective effects of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices for MDLI teachers, so it is worthwhile to consider where these practices most productively occur in their workplace ecosystem. Two salient themes arose from the data in response to this inquiry.

Firstly, the closer to the teacher's microsystem level, the more humanizing and culturally sustaining were the MDLI teachers' felt experiences. The data included very few responses that addressed the meso- or exosystems, and so this study discusses findings with regard to micro- and macrosystem interactions only. Secondly, the data indicated that leadership actions at any level could be a lever for humanization, as descriptions of leadership decisions and actions at both micro- and macrosystem levels revealed promising patterns. For the purposes of this study, the microsystem was viewed as the MDLI teacher's classroom and school community of students and parents, which also included colleagues, staff, and administrators at their school with whom they had frequent or regular interaction. The macrosystem was composed of structures and organizational entities that were not directly involved in their daily experiences, and individuals or institutions with whom they interacted rarely, such as district or county level personnel or external advisors. While the macrosystem was also defined by the researcher as inclusive of a broader climate of policy makers and state and federal government, the resultant data from the MDLI teachers primarily focused on district-level actions or decisions.

Impactful Microsystems. The study data revealed that the microsystem is where MDLI teachers spent most of their time and energy, and accordingly, where their lived experience and encounters with humanizing and culturally sustaining practices was the most impactful. This is consistent with Bronfenbrenner's (1977) position that the microsystem bears the primary impact

in a person's development. Thus, when actions in the microsystem were respectful and edifying, they were met with emotions as strong as joy and pride. Similarly, when actions in the microsystem were offensive or dismissive, they were met with keen frustration and hurt. MDLI teachers also noted that their microsystems operated as places of trust, belongingness, and reassurance, a protective factor when dehumanizing experiences were imposed. This indicates that multiple avenues for humanizing interaction exist within the microsystem, and therefore would be a pivotal environment to cultivate. Notably, the humanizing and culturally sustaining experiences within the teacher's microsystem included interactions with the entire school community of colleagues and parents, not just within the MDLI program alone. This suggests that a broader circle of trusted partners and allies at the microsystem level makes a difference in the felt support and collegiality, similar to the idea of drawing larger scale resources into the closer-knit communities already found at school sites (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Allen-Meares, 2002).

Impersonal Macrosystems. Though the influence and negative impact of the lack of humanizing care from the macrosystem was present in the teachers' interview responses, the MDLI teachers felt more detached from such actions. In other words, it was easier for the MDLI teachers to dissociate their personal worth and humanity from negative experiences imposed by the macrosystem, as they felt distant and impersonal. These mostly pertained to actions taken by the school district or a governmental process. Even policies that resulted in abjectly dehumanizing consequences, such as the humiliation felt by one MDLI teacher in being publicly announced as "not highly qualified" per state credentialing policy, were able to be recovered from if the teacher felt support and safety at the microsystem level. This latter point illuminates the protective factors within teachers' immediate environments. Interestingly, it was also easier

for decisions and actions taken at the macrosystem level to feel impersonal even when they had positive results, such as the employment of "skipping criteria" to secure MDLI teacher positions. Instead, MDLI teachers were more concerned with the personal impact of such policies on their microsystem colleagues and teaching partners. This resonates with the research of Vélez-Agosto et al. (2017), noting that the complex role of culture in human development indicates that it is best attended to in the microsystem, and pushes schools to consider how to nurture closeness in this environment. Likewise, with MDLI teachers who experienced a sense of outsiderness and dehumanization from macrosystem decisions or policies, it is critical to consider how to draw the macro- into the microsystem experience. It was promising to see in the data that macrosystem actions were indeed viewed in a humanizing way when the impersonal distance was closed, with interview responses noting relational visits and conversations with people coming from the macrosystem into the MDLI teacher's microsystem. In such moments, teachers felt respected, valued, and understood in their worth.

Leadership at all Levels. This parlays into the final prominent theme rising from the data, that leadership actions and decisions at any level of their ecological system have the power to lift MDLI teachers up in acts of humanization. Leaders have been evidenced to be pivotal actors in several ways; not only with the positional authority to create structures and systems that affect a workplace experience (Robbins & Judge, 2014), but in the relational impact they have power to create or deny (George, 2003; Northouse, 2016). From a culturally conscious perspective, Mercado and Trumbull (2018) note that international Chinese teachers may arrive with more collectivist expectations for respect for authority and hierarchical relationships, and thus the leader's response in humanizing the workplace and cultivating cultural sustainment has an additional necessity for some MDLI teachers. Essentially, leaders described in the data had

the ability to foster humanizing and culturally sustaining interactions, or be a barrier to their actualization, as has resonated in the field of education for some time (Giancola & Hutchison, 2005; Hattori, 2016; Hsieh, 2023; Marshall & Khalifa, 2018). MDLI teachers frequently noted expectations and hopes for humanizing and culturally sustaining leadership, particularly in the climate created, and in the formal procedures and structures provided, or not provided, to harness fair and inclusive teacher voice. It is important to note that this study identified that this impact applies not just to closer microsystem interactions, but can also be applied with equivalent impact in macrosystem decisions and interactions. While the microsystem holds a stronger sense of community and connection, the findings indicate that humanizing leadership practices are well received and provide positive impact from every level.

Implications for Practice

The data that emerged from the study were able to answer the three research questions, and contribute to the existing body of literature regarding the experiences of CLD teachers, with promising theoretical and pedagogical implications for those in immersion settings. The study established a particular focus on Mandarin language teachers in the unique setting of dual language immersion environments, and the conclusions reveal opportunities for humanization and cultural sustainment that can be applied in MDLI settings and potentially related environments.

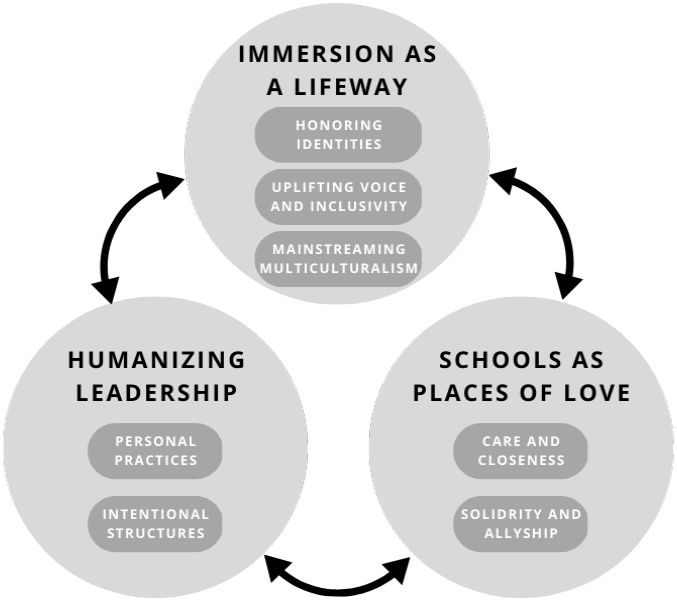
In brief, the researcher discerned that humanizing practices elevate the MDLI teacher experience from transactional to transformational, moving beyond the normal daily function of teacher duty, and instead to a sense of community strength and shared responsibility for their students and each other. Prominent dimensions of humanization that appeared in their workplace settings were pivotal in establishing community closeness and unifying solidarity. Secondly,

culturally sustaining practices were joyfully uplifting and unifying when present, but glaringly diminishing and dehumanizing when not present. Dual language immersion environments were found to be exceptionally well suited to operating as lifeways and spaces of solidarity and allyship for MDLI teachers, with careful intentionality needed to realize that potential. The deep interconnectedness between humanization and cultural sustainment was also evidenced. Finally, it was discerned that within the MDLI teachers' microsystem level, the impact of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices was felt strongly, while macrosystem inputs felt more detached, despite still having influence on the teachers' workplace experiences. However, a key finding was that even interactions or influences from the macrosystem could become humanizing if there was attentiveness to bridging the distance through relationships and personal connection.

The researcher draws three main conclusions from the study that have implications for practice in schools and districts: for humanizing leadership to be developed and prioritized; for the cultivation of closeness in school systems, so that they operate as places of love for those within them; and for MDLI communities to be attended to as soul-reviving lifeways. Collectively, these implications can operate as a guide for practitioners to center the cultural and linguistic diversity inherent in DLI programs, and authentically value and position the people within them. Figure 3 presents a model for school and district application. This model displays the interplay between all three components, with critical sub-components designated for guidance. By design, these components are not linear nor sequential, as this study finds their interconnectedness to be key to their actualization.

Figure 3

Chan Hill's Model Toward Immersion as a Lifeway



Humanizing Leadership

Schools must commit to developing humanizing leadership. With an abundance of leadership models highlighted for educators, it is time to acknowledge that leadership is more than a set of managerial skills or traits, and instead must be deeply connected to relationship, context and human identity (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2015). In acknowledging this, schools open the pathway for humanizing leaders who can transform climate and culture in ways that nurture the entire community (Giancola & Hutchison, 2005). As Sellars and Imig (2023) note in their research on the state of education in the post-COVID 19 pandemic era, there is a growing recognition of inadequacy of the institutional structures that have composed the Western schooling system. Their call is to shift away from the constraints of commerce, competitiveness and conformity, and instead to a prioritization of community, compassion, and care, among other meaningful changes that can create a more humanized education system, capable of fostering

consciousness and criticality for the betterment of all (Sellars & Imig, 2023). This is resonant with this study's findings that leadership is a powerful lever in establishing the climate of a school or district, which are essentially the micro- and macro-systems within which the MDLI teachers experience their professional lives. This is critically important for teachers from CLD communities, as the findings indicate that the risk of marginalization is higher for such teachers. Leaders who humanize others can remove the objectification or commodification of teachers as employees, and instead position them as respected and whole beings, valued for their full spectrum of contribution to the educational community. For example, the centering of the MDLI teachers' agency and voices in decision making was found to be best cultivated by thoughtful and inclusive structures, and leaders have the power to open these avenues, as well as keep them closed. The oft-implied concern of teachers was that things were often done "to" them, rather than "with" them, and leaders have the power to change this notion by way of humanizing action that considers the individual as a capable contributor. Leaders often are seen as principals and administrators, and while they do hold positional and legitimate power (Robbins & Judge, 2014), other less formal roles such as teacher leaders, mentors and respected influencers at schools are also considered in this request for humanizing leadership, as actions and decisions that impact others are well within each of their scope. This is particularly important for teachers providing high demand skills, such as language instruction, as the prioritization of their skillset can easily eclipse the prioritization of their humanity. Especially for the MDLI teachers in this study who indicated frequent reminders of being outsiders in their school system, it is essential that schools and districts leverage leadership that prioritizes humanization over standardization, in order to create a system that centers its people first.

Schools as Places of Love

Schools and educational ecosystems must work to intentionally operate as places of love. A strengthening focus should be on the microsystem of the school community itself, which was frequently described as the place best positioned to feel like home and foster a sense of belongingness. Much like community schools and homplace models (R. Heller, 2022; Kelly, 2020) have understood that the school community is the place of greatest impact, the data unearthed in this study indicate that the most positive expressions of care, togetherness, and solidarity, were cultivated in this same community setting. The school community was very much where MDLI teachers described they had the greatest potential to be known and seen. The people and interactions among people taking place in that environment, inclusive of fellow MDLI teachers, other teaching and school colleagues, families, students, and leaders, comprised the expression of love and care that reinforced agency and strength in the role, and shelter from negative experiences. Both MDLI teachers who were thriving in their school environments, as well as those who were in situations of isolation, pointed to the authentic care and connection within their daily interactions as factors in their joy as teachers. In fact, for those experiencing negative interactions, protective humanization in their school community rendered the impact of dehumanizing moments or impositions as less impactful. Schools should be intentional about the relationships among those in the school community. Simultaneously, this places an additional charge to schools and districts to draw the macrosystem into the school community; a focus on change should be on the humanization of leadership at the macrosystem level, as these individuals are best positioned to create a humanizing impact by attending to personal interaction within school communities. The findings reveal the ability for humanizing leadership and structures to guide the interactions and decisions from the macrosystem level, and it is

imperative to build this intentionally, so that the macrosystem and microsystem work synchronously, with a transparent centering of care for people first. Schools and districts must prioritize the cultivation of closeness among those within the school community, as well as across levels of the educational ecosystem.

Immersion as a Lifeway

Most critically, schools and districts must prioritize the fostering of culturally sustaining lifeways in MDLI programs and school communities as a means of not only honoring and maintaining the MDLI teachers' ways of being, but also humanizing their workplace experiences. The act of humanization includes the recognition and appreciation of a person's full being, which for MDLI teachers, is inclusive of their full cultural and linguistic identities. To focus on humanizing practices separately from the provision of cultural sustainment is to address the teacher's identity incompletely. Accordingly, when authentic cultural sustainment is present, the experience is fundamentally humanizing. DLI settings, in particular, are well positioned to be hubs for cultural sustainment, due to their inherent design of language content and cultural integration, with goals that address both multilingualism and multiculturalism (Sung & Tsai, 2019). With the full immersion of the student experience into a lifestyle, rather than simply curriculum progression, the design can shift the ways of being and knowing of non-dominant communities into a normalized setting, essentially establishing multiculturalism as a mainstream way of being. Schools must attend to ways that connect language acquisition with applicative opportunities; in some cases, these may include cultural celebrations, but schools should look beyond simply events to create connections for MDLI teachers. As Principal Wilson was noted in the data, selecting to include pop songs from current Chinese musical artists in their staff meetings and training contributed to a new cultural mainstream that allowed the cultural lifeway

to not only be sustained, but be seen by all in the community. A promising area shared by the MDLI teachers themselves note the edification of being able to support Mandarin-speaking families with understanding school functions, learning expectations, and general school questions; formalized positioning of this type of communication as valued and welcomed can create cultural and linguistic reinforcement for both teachers and parents, which can add richness and togetherness in the community. Another area to note was that regardless of Asian diasporic heritage, the teachers themselves felt a strong connection in having places of solidarity and belonging in their schools with one another. Inclusive of the distinctions and uniqueness many of them proudly noted across MDLI teachers' social, cultural, and linguistic ways of being, there was unity in shared beliefs and commonalities that created a sense of allyship, and soul-touching connection. Ensuring that there are opportunities to interact in these personal and emotional ways should be positioned as important as the collaboration time typically provided for instructional tasks. In short, to harness the potential of dual language immersion programs as culturally sustaining lifeways, schools should acknowledge that the immersion is more than curricular, and seek to immerse teachers, students, and families alike in the richness of the people and their ways of being that accompany the language.

These implications for the development of humanizing leadership, cultivating schools as places of love, and immersion as a lifeway itself, may be effectively used by schools and school districts to help cultivate humanization and cultural sustainment for MDLI teachers, and potentially for others who will also benefit within their school communities. These implications can make use of the great potential of immersion programs to operate as humanizing lifeways for the people within them, and further create a closeness in an otherwise impersonal macrosystem. These factors may help remove potential barriers to retention of MDLI teachers, and increase the

likelihood that they will not only remain in the field but moreover, thrive in their professional roles. The implications of this study address the need for schools and districts to shift the operations of their micro- and macrosystems toward a collective care for those within the system, with acknowledgement and respect of their full identities.

Study Limitations

While this study has the potential for application in other MDLI language contexts, some limitations caution against generalizing. The nature of phenomenological design itself must be noted as one such limitation, as the interviews were meant to draw out individual experiences. As this study prioritized the ability to capture these detailed, personal perspectives, this accordingly means that no two interviews could be characterized as typical or the same. However, phenomenological interviews provided rich and detailed stories of individual truth that included the unique voice of each teacher interviewed.

The majority of interviews occurred virtually on Google Meet, which may not have provided the same conditions for organic interaction and connection as the in-person interviews. However, the virtual option provided the researcher access to more teachers than would have been possible without the option, given various health and distance considerations. Additionally, the prior relationship that the researcher had honed with the teachers enabled virtual interviews to still be conducted in a caring and comfortable setting.

Further, the sample size itself was relatively small, with 13 teachers interviewed, out of a sampling frame of 45 teachers in the population under study. Ten of the 13 participants had experience only in elementary school settings, which come with class and school structures that differ from MDLI structures in secondary, middle or high schools. While there were three teachers with middle school MDLI experience, there were no high school teachers in the study.

However, this concentrated knowledge of elementary school structures also allowed for clear patterns and implications to arise for MDLI teachers in elementary schools, which currently represent the majority of MDLI programs in the U.S.

The bounded location of teaching in southern California is a limitation to scope. Several teachers noted differences in population, political climate, and access to cultural resources in this region that were different from other states where they taught in MDLI programs, such as Colorado, Michigan, and Utah. The sense of community that was felt by many of the teachers in this study also included families, parents, and students who were of Asian heritage and had similar cultural lifeways. This potentially contributed to a richness that would vary in regions with different demographics.

Relatedly, there was a lack of addressing mesosystem and exosystem interactions in the findings of this study. While MDLI teachers spoke in passing of family or non-work community activities, connections or influences on their workplace experience were not clear enough in the data. Thus, this study was limited in addressing the full ecosystem of MDLI teacher interactions. However, the focus on the macrosystem and microsystem provided a useful dichotomy in the current data that guided more specific implications.

Recommendations for Future Research

This phenomenological study sought to discern the impact of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices on the lived experiences of MDLI teachers in MDLI programs. Furthermore, the study aimed to distinguish where in the workplace ecosystem did MDLI teachers experience the most impact, to determine the factors or structures most critical in the construction of their workplace wellbeing. The intent was to ascertain how CLD teachers experience the U.S. school system, particularly when their diversity is core to the instruction they are asked to design and

deliver. During the course of the data collection, additional related research opportunities emerged. To further build upon the scholarly literature regarding humanization and cultural sustainment for CLD teachers, the researcher provides recommendations for future study.

One area of interest would be an ethnographic study of the MDLI teachers included in this study, to include additional interviews, observations, and data sampling in action that allow for a better understanding of the holistic impact of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices at all levels of their ecological system. Because this study included individual interviews at one point in time, data was only collected by way of teacher perception and responses. An ethnographic study would allow for meso- and exosystem impacts to be considered, as well as provide multiple forms of longitudinal data to further the findings of this phenomenological study.

Another area for future research that could expand upon the findings of this study would be an examination of leaders within MDLI or DLI programs to better understand what decisions and considerations lead to the actualization of lifeways in immersion communities. Leadership was identified as a key lever for humanization, and the related impact on the cultivation of culturally sustaining lifeways in their school communities is critical to understand. Examining leadership practices and moves toward building up cultural and linguistic lifeways would provide insight into application of this research.

Based on the number of responses in this study that compared experiences within wall-to-wall MDLI models and program-within-a-school models, it may be worthwhile to consider a study focused on the same research questions, but with a distinction between MDLI teachers in either model. The researcher remains curious about the potential of one model over the other to foster humanization and cultural sustainment due to variations in structure and community

climate. Additionally, implications may vary for the two different models, such as possible differences in community engagement and colleague connection when the MDLI is a minority program.

Finally, to understand the incorporation of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices in additional settings for language learning, it would be beneficial to study the experience of Mandarin teachers specifically in secondary schools, where they may teach language as one course, or potentially an additional subject in Mandarin as well. As the findings of this study indicate, the immersion model itself is structured to address multilingualism and multiculturalism, yet, teachers in secondary schools are limited by schedule structures, voice by numbers, and family engagement. A study may be warranted to consider the experience of cultural sustainment and immersion as a lifeway when programs are structured differently for students, families, and teachers alike.

In Closing

The study concludes with newfound insight into the professional lived experiences of Mandarin dual language immersion teachers, with a lens on their humanizing and culturally sustaining interactions in the workplace. The participating teachers were collectively strong in identity, agency, and community, despite acknowledgements of frustrations and the existence of reminders of their outsiderness. Yet, the pervading feeling rising from their stories was that of hope and potential. With these findings, implications were put forth: for MDLI communities to be attended to as soul-reviving lifeways; for humanizing leadership to be developed and prioritized; and for the cultivation of closeness in school systems, so that they operate as places of love for those within them.

At the time of this study, the teaching profession had suffered and continues to suffer many blows. From the pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, as student needs and motivations shifted, to the politicization of teacher agency as the nation weighed in on what teachers should and should not do in their classrooms, a strong message has been sent that teachers are responsible for much, but not respected for much. Even more dehumanizing for teachers of Asian heritage, growing anti-Asian sentiment in this same time period strengthened the "forever foreigner" bias (Takaki, 1998) that marginalizes Asian and Asian American teachers as outsiders in schools and in this country. Amid all of this, the U.S. educational system grapples with the inequities it exacerbates within an industrialized system built for standardized judgment, when those who teach know that no child or person is designed to fit into a standard box. Teaching is both an intricately tactical and deeply emotional labor, requiring knowledge and skill that spans beyond content and pedagogy and into relationship and connection. The MDLI teachers participating in this study were clear about embracing these aspects of their role, and their stories speak to a greater responsibility for the educational system to attend to their experiences, and to uplift them in their efforts.

In closing, a study founded on the constructs of humanization would do well to close with the words of Paolo Freire. In his seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he states that "As individuals or as peoples, by fighting for the restoration of our humanity, we will be attempting the restoration of true generosity… And this fight, because of the purpose given it, will actually constitute an act of love…" (Freire, 1970, p. 45).

REFERENCES

Achinstein, B., Ogawa, R. T., Sexton, D., & Freitas, C. (2010). Retaining teachers of color: A pressing problem and a potential strategy for "Hard-to-Staff" schools. *Review of Educational Research*, *80*(1), 71–107. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.3102/0034654309355994

Agirdag, O. (2014). The literal cost of language assimilation for the children of immigration: The effects of bilingualism on labor market outcomes. In Callahan, R.M. & Gándara, P.C. (Eds.). *The Bilingual Advantage: Language, Literacy, and the Labor Market,* 160-181. Multilingual Matters.

Aguilar, E. (2021). The Healing We Need to Stay: To retain teachers of color, consider their layers of challenge. *Educational Leadership*, *78*(6), 84–85.

Ainsworth, S., & Oldfield, J. (2019). Quantifying teacher resilience: Context matters. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, *82*, 117–128. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1016/j.tate.2019.03.012

Alanís, I., & Rodríguez, M. A. (2008). Sustaining a dual language immersion program: Features of success. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 7*(4), 305–319. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348430802143378

Alim, H. S., Paris, D., & Wong, C. P. (2020). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A critical framework for centering communities. In *Handbook of the cultural foundations of learning* (pp. 261-276). Routledge.

Alim, H. S., & Reyes, A. (2011). Introduction: Complicating race: Articulating race across multiple social dimensions. *Discourse & Society*, *22*(4), 379–384. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0957926510395831

Andrews, D. J. C., Brown, T., Castillo, B. M., Jackson, D., & Vellanki, V. (2019). Beyond damage-centered teacher education: Humanizing pedagogy for teacher educators and preservice teachers. *Teachers College Record*, *121*(6), 1–28. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/016146811912100605

Ang, S. & Van Dyne, L. (2008). Conceptualization of cultural intelligence: Definition, distinctiveness, and nomological network. *Handbook of Cultural Intelligence: Theory, Measurement, and Applications.* M. E. Sharpe.

Arroyo-Romano, J. E. (2016). Bilingual education candidates' challenges meeting the Spanish language/Bilingual certification exam and the impact on teacher shortages in the state of Texas, USA. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, *15*(4), 275-286. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2015.1134539

Au, W. (2009). *Unequal by design: High-stakes testing and the standardization of inequality*. Routledge.

Avni, S., & Menken, K. (2019). The expansion of dual language bilingual education into new communities and languages: The case of Hebrew in a New York City public middle school. *Theory Into Practice*, *58*(2), 154–163. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/00405841.2019.1569378

Baker, C., & Jones, S. P. (1998). *Encyclopedia of bilingualism and bilingual education.* Multilingual Matters.

Baker, C., & Wright, W. E. (2021). Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism. *Multilingual Matters*.

Balderrama, M. V. (2001). The (mis) preparation of teachers in the Proposition 227 era: Humanizing teacher roles and their practice. *The Urban Review*, *33*, 255-267.

Bao, M., Ren, W., & Wang, D. (2020). Understanding the professional practice of teachers of Chinese as an additional language through the lens of teacher agency. *Sustainability*, *12*(18), 7493. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12187493

Bartolomé, L. I. (1994). Beyond the methods fetish: Toward a humanizing pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review*, *64*(2), 173–194.

Beauchamp, C., & Thomas, L. (2009). Understanding teacher identity: An overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *39*(2), 175-189.

Bernstein, K.A., Álvarez, A., Chaparro, S., Henderson, K. (2021). "We live in the age of choice": School administrators, school choice policies, and the shaping of dual language bilingual education. *Language Policy, 20*(3), 383-412.

Bettini, E., Cormier, C. J., Ragunathan, M., & Stark, K. (2022). Navigating the double bind: A systematic literature review of the experiences of novice teachers of color in K–12

schools. *Review of Educational Research*, *92*(4), 495–542. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.3102/00346543211060873

Bourdieu, P. (1977). The economics of linguistic exchanges. *Social Science Information, 16*(6), 645-668.

Braden, E. G., & Gibson, V. (2021). A framework for supporting Preservice Teachers (PSTs) in culturally sustaining nonfiction writing. *Theory Into Practice*, *60*(3), 242–253. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/00405841.2021.1911579

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2014). What can "thematic analysis" offer health and wellbeing researchers?. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, *9*(1), 26152.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist, 32*(7), 513e531. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003- 066X.32.7.513

Brown, K. D. (2014). Teaching in color: A critical race theory in education analysis of the literature on preservice teachers of color and teacher education in the US. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 17*(3), 326–345.

Bryner, L. (2021). The teacher shortage in the United States. *Education and Society, 39*(1), 69-80. https://doi.org/10.7459/es/39.1.05

Budiman, A., Cilluffo, A., & Ruiz, N. G. (2021). Key facts about Asian origin groups in the US. *Pew Research Center*.

Cardenas, J. (1993). Current problems in bilingual education: Part II. *Intercultural Development Research Association.*

CCTC. (2022). *California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.* https://www.ctc.ca.gov/

Cervantes-Soon, C. G., Dorner, L., Palmer, D., Heiman, D., Schwerdtfeger, R., & Choi, J. (2017). Combating inequalities in two-way language immersion programs: Toward critical consciousness in bilingual education spaces. *Review of Research in Education*, *41*(1), 403-427. https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732x17690120

Chang, S. (2020). Multicultural educators as cultural brokers and language mediators. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *22*(3), 146–152. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15210960.2020.1792300

Chang, S. (2022). Chinese bilingual preservice teachers' reflections on translanguaging pedagogy: The need for critical language curricularization. *Foreign Language Annals, 55*(4), 1086-1108. https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12654

Chávez-Moreno, L.C. (2022). Racist and raciolinguistic teacher ideologies: When bilingual education is "Inherently Culturally Relevant" for Latinxs. *Urban Rev, 54*, 554–575. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-021-00628-9

Chen, H. A., Trinh, J., & Yang, G. P. (2020). Anti-Asian sentiment in the United States–COVID-19 and history. *The American Journal of Surgery*, *220*(3), 556-557.

Chen, J. (2017). The core of oppression: Why is it wrong? *Social Theory and Practice, 43*(2), 421-441. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26381169

Chen, S. H., Zhou, Q., & Uchikoshi, Y. (2021). Heritage language socialization in Chinese American immigrant families: Prospective links to children's heritage language proficiency. *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism*, *24*(8), 1193–1209. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13670050.2018.1547680

Cheung, A. C. K., & Slavin, R. E. (2012). Effective reading programs for Spanish-dominant English language learners in the elementary grades: A synthesis of research. *Review of Educational Research*, *82*(4), 351–395. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.3102/0034654312465472

Chiswick, B. R., & Miller, P. W. (2016). Does bilingualism among the native born pay? *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2750274.

Chow, C. J. (2018). Faith and pedagogy: Intersections of Asian American teachers' identities and practice. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching, 15(1)*, 1–12.

Clarke, V., Braun, V., & Hayfield, N. (2015). Thematic analysis. *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*, *222*(2015), 248.

Codó, E., & Sunyol, A. (2019). "A plus for our students": The construction of Mandarin Chinese as an elite language in an international school in Barcelona. *Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development*, *40*(5), 436–452. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/01434632.2018.1543694

Conklin, T. A. (2007). Method or madness: Phenomenology as knowledge creator. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *16*(3), 275-287.

Crawford, J. (1999). *Bilingual Education: History, Politics, Theory, and Practice*. 4th ed. Bilingual Educational Services.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.

Cronk, L. (2017). Culture's influence on behavior: Steps toward a theory. *Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences, 11*, 36–52. https://doi.org/10.1037/ebs0000069

Cross, T. L. (1989). *Towards a culturally competent system of care: A monograph on effective services for minority children who are severely emotionally disturbed.* Georgetown University.

Danzig, A., & Harris, K. C. (1996). Building competence by writing and reflecting on stories of practice. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, *7*(2), 193-204.

del Carmen Salazar, M. (2008). English or nothing: The impact of rigid language policies on the inclusion of humanizing practices in a high school ESL program. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *41*(3), 341-356.

Dellinger, A. B., & Leech, N. L. (2007). Toward a unified validation framework in mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *1*(4), 309-332.

Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New Press.

Demirkol-Orak, S. & İnözü, J. (2021). Teachers' awareness and actual practices of 21st century learning and innovation skills. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET), 8*(2). 975-997.

de Oliveira, L. C. (2021). The intersections of culturally sustaining pedagogies and systemic functional linguistics: Affordances for the education of multilingual learners. *Language & Education: An International Journal*, *35*(2), 180–185. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/09500782.2021.1893743

Destin, M., Silverman, D. M., & Rogers, L. O. (2022). Expanding the social psychological study of educators through humanizing principles. *Social & Personality Psychology Compass*, *16*(6), 1–13. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1111/spc3.12668

Dietrich, S., & Hernandez, E. (2022). *Language Use in the United States: 2019*. U.S. Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2022/acs/acs-50.pdf

Duffy, M., & Chenail, R. J. (2009). Values in qualitative and quantitative research. *Counseling and Values*, *53*(1), 22-38.

Duncan-Andrade, J. M. R., & Morrell, E. (2008). *The art of critical pedagogy: Possibilities for moving from theory to practice in urban schools*. Peter Lang.

Dunn, A. H. (2015). Searching for the "American dream": International teachers in the United States. *Bildung und Erziehung*, *68*(4), 431-444.

Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998). What is agency? *American Journal of Sociology*, *103*(4), 962-1023.

Endo, R. (2015). How Asian American female teachers experience racial microaggressions from pre-service preparation to their professional careers. *Urban Review*, *47*(4), 601–625. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1007/s11256-015-0326-9

Espinet, I., & Chapman, S. C. (2022). "When people don't know me, they think...": Fostering a multimodal translanguaging space that leverages students' voices. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *66*(2), 91–99. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1002/jaal.1256

Feinman, J.M. (2018), *Law 101: Everything you need to know about the American legal system*, (5th Ed). Oxford University Press.

Fickel, L. H., & Abbiss, J. (2019). Supporting secondary preservice teacher identity development as culturally responsive and sustaining teachers. *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education*, *5*(2), 138–158. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.32865/fire201952152

Fitts, S., & Weisman, E. M. (2009). Exploring questions of social justice in bilingual/bicultural teacher education: Towards a parity of participation. *The Urban Review*, *42*(5), 373-393. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-009-0139-9

Flint, A. S., & Jaggers, W. (2021). You matter here: The impact of asset-based pedagogies on learning. *Theory Into Practice*, *60*(3), 254–264. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/00405841.2021.1911483

Flores, N. (2019). *Leveling the playing field in dual-language programs*. University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education | Penn GSE. https://www.gse.upenn.edu/news/leveling-playing-field-dual-language-programs

Flores, N., & García, O. (2017). A critical review of bilingual education in the United States: From basements and pride to boutiques and profit. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 37*, 14-29. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190517000162

Flores, N., & Rosa, J. (2015). Undoing appropriateness: Raciolinguistic ideologies and language diversity in education. *Harvard Educational Review*, *85*(2), 149–171. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.17763/0017-8055.85.2.149

Fránquiz, M., & del Carmen Salazar, M. (2004). The transformative potential of humanizing pedagogy: Addressing the diverse needs of Chicano/Mexicano students. *The High School Journal*, *87*(4), 36–53.

Fránquiz, M. E., Leija, M. G., & Salinas, C. S. (2019a). Challenging damaging ideologies: Are dual language education practices addressing learners' linguistic rights? *Theory Into Practice*, *58*(2), 134–144. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/00405841.2019.1569379

Fránquiz, M. E., Ortiz, A. A., & Lara, G. (2019b). Co-editor's introduction: Humanizing pedagogy, research and learning. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *42*(4), 381–386. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15235882.2019.1704579

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.

Freire, P. (1987). "Letters to North-American teachers". In Shor, I. (Ed.), *Freire for the classroom: A source book for laboratory teaching*, 211–214. Boynton & Cook.

Fuller Jr., N. (2010). *The united-independent compensatory code/system/ concept: A compensatory counter–racist codified word guide*. NFJ Productions.

Gan, L., Gao, Y., & Wu, J. (2022). Toward measuring Chinese EFL teachers' resilience: The role of teachers' enjoyment, anger, and anxiety. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.853201

Gándara, P. (2015). Is there really a labor market advantage to being bilingual in the U.S.?. *ETS Research Report Series*, 2015, 1-34. https://doi.org/10.1002/ets2.12054

Gándara, P., & Escamilla, K. (2016). Bilingual education in the United States. *Bilingual and Multilingual Education*, 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02324-3_33-1

Gándara, P., & Orfield, G. (2012). Why Arizona matters: The historical, legal and political contexts of Arizona's instructional policies and linguistic hegemony. *Language Policy, 11*, 7–19. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-011-9227-2

Garbett, D. (2018). I teach. What's your superpower? *Teachers & Teaching*, *24*(8), 871–873. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13540602.2018.1514812

García, E. E., & Curry-Rodríguez, J. (2000). The education of limited English proficient students in California schools: An assessment of the influence of Proposition 227 in selected districts and schools. *Bilingual Research Journal, 24*(1-2), 15-35. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2000.10162749

García, O., & Kleifgen, J. A. (2020). Translanguaging and literacies. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *55*(4), 553–571. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1002/rrq.286

García, O., & Otheguy, R. (2020). Plurilingualism and translanguaging: commonalities and divergences. *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism*, *23*(1), 17–35. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13670050.2019.1598932

Gardner, R. P., Osorio, S. L., & McCormack, S. (2021). Creating spaces for emotional justice in culturally sustaining literacy education: Implications for policy & practice. *Theory Into Practice*, *60*(3), 301–311. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/00405841.2021.1911578

Gauna, L. M., Beaudry, C., & Cooper, J. (2022). The leaking Spanish bilingual education teacher pipeline: Stories of PK-20 challenges told by Latinx becoming bilingual teachers in the U.S. *Journal of Latinos & Education*, 1–15. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15348431.2022.2057989

Gay, G. (1993). Building cultural bridges. *Education and Urban Society, 25*(3), 285–299. https://doi.org/10.1177/ 0013124593025003006

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research and practice.* Teachers College Press.

Genesee, F., Lindholm-Leary, K., Saunders, W., & Christian, D. (2006). *Educating English language learners: A synthesis of empirical evidence*. Cambridge University Press. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511499913

George, B. (2003). *Authentic leadership: Rediscovering the secrets to creating lasting value*. John Wiley & Sons.

Giancola, J. M., & Hutchison, J. K. (2005). *Transforming the culture of school leadership: Humanizing our practice*. Corwin Press.

Goldhaber, D., Lavery, L., & Theobald, R. (2015). Uneven playing field? Assessing the teacher quality gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. *Educational Researcher, 44*(5), 293–307. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X15592622

Goldhaber, D., Theobald, R., & Tien, C. (2019). Why we need a diverse teacher workforce. *Phi Delta Kappan, 100*(5), 25–30.

Gonzalez, J. E., Liew, J., Zou, Y., Curtis, G., & Li, D. (2022). "They're Going to Forget About Their Mother Tongue": Influence of Chinese beliefs in child home language and literacy development. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *50*(7), 1109-1120.

Grant, D. E., & Hill, J. B. (2020). Activating culturally empathic motivation in diverse students. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *9*(5), 45-58. https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v9n5p45

Grier-Reed, T., & Williams-Wengerd, A. (2018). Integrating universal design, culturally sustaining practices, and constructivism to advance inclusive pedagogy in the undergraduate classroom. *Education Sciences*, *8*(4), 167.

Grohmann K. & Kambanaros, M. (2016). The gradience of multilingualism in typical and impaired language development: Positioning bilectalism within comparative bilingualism. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7*(37). https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00037

Gu, Q., & Day, C. (2007). Teachers resilience: A necessary condition for effectiveness. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, *23*(8), 1302–1316. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1016/j.tate.2006.06.006

Gullixson, K. (1999). California proposition 227: An examination of the legal, educational and practical issues surrounding the new law. *Law & Inequality: A Journal of Theory and Practice, 17*(2), 4.

Hascher, T., Beltman, S., & Mansfield, C. (2021). Teacher wellbeing and resilience: Towards an integrative model. *Educational Research*, *63*(4), 416–439. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/00131881.2021.1980416

Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Corwin.

Hattori, M. T. P. (2016). Culturally sustaining leadership: A Pacific Islander's perspective. *Education Sciences*, *6*(1), 4.

Heller, M. (2003). Globalization, the new economy, and the commodification of language and identity. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *7*(4), 473-492. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2003.00238.x

Heller, M. (2010). The commodification of language. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *39*(1), 101–114. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1146/annurev.anthro.012809.104951

Heller, R. (2022). The growing movement to create full-service community schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *103*(7), 28–32.

Hemingway, A. (2012). Can humanization theory contribute to the philosophical debate in public health? *Public Health, 126*(5), 448-53. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2012.01.014

Hernandez Garcia, M., Schleppegrell, M. J., & Monte, S. C. (2021). Culturally sustaining disciplinary literacy for bi/multilingual learners: Creating a translanguaging social studies classroom. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *64*(4), 449–454. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1002/jaal.1129

Hiver, P., and Dörnyei, Z. (2017). Language teacher immunity: A double-edged sword, *Applied Linguistics, (38)*3, pp. 405–423. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amv034

Howard, E. R., Christian, D. & Genesee, F. (2004). *The development of bilingualism and biliteracy from grade 3 to 5: A summary of findings from the CAL/CREDE study of two-way immersion education*. CREDE, University of California at Santa Cruz.

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, B., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). *Guiding principles for dual language education*. Center for Applied Linguistics.

Howard, T. C. (2003). Who receives the short end of the shortage? Implications of the U.S. teacher shortage on urban schools. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 18*(2), 142-160.

Hsieh, B. (2023, March 16). *Rehumanizing the teaching profession*. ASCD. https://www.ascd.org/blogs/rehumanizing-the-teaching-profession

Hsieh, B., & Kim, J. (2020). Challenging the invisibility of Asian Americans in education. *Review of Education, Pedagogy & Cultural Studies*, *42*(2), 95–103. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/10714413.2020.1760643

Hsieh, B., & Nguyen, H. T. (2021). Coalitional resistance: Challenging racialized and gendered oppression in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *72*(3), 355–367. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0022487120960371

Hsieh, B., Yu, J., Yeh, C., & Agarwal-Rangnath, R. (2022). Love on the front lines: Asian American motherscholars resisting dehumanizing contexts through humanizing collectivity. *Peabody Journal of Education (0161956X)*, *97*(2), 165–178. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/0161956X.2022.2055885

HUSD. (2017). *Dual Language Program Master Plan*. Hudson Unified School District.

Huerta, T. (2011). Humanizing pedagogy: Beliefs and practices on the teaching of Latino children. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *34*(1), 38–57. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15235882.2011.568826

Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology: An introduction to phenomenological philosophy*. Northwestern University Press.

Iftikar, J. S., & Museus, S. D. (2018). On the utility of Asian critical (AsianCrit) theory in the field of education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE)*, *31*(10), 935–949. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/09518398.2018.1522008

Ingersoll, R., & May, H. (2011). Recruitment, retention, and the minority teacher shortage. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*. https://doi.org/10.12698/cpre.2011.rr69

Jacobson-Lundeberg, V. (2016). Pedagogical implementation of 21st century skills. *Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development*, *27*, 82-100.

Jia, J. (2014). Intercultural adaptation of Chinese guest teachers in the U.S. *Cross-Cultural Communication, 10*, 27–43.

Jin, J., Mercer, S., Babic, S., Mairitsch, A. (2021). 'You just appreciate every little kindness': Chinese language teachers' wellbeing in the UK. *System*, *96*. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2003.00238.x

Jordan, W. J. (2010). Defining equity: Multiple perspectives to analyzing the performance of diverse learners. *Review of Research in Education, 34*, 142-178. https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X09352898

Jozefowicz-Simbeni, D. M. H., & Allen-Meares, P. (2002). Poverty and schools: Intervention and resource building through school-linked services. *Children & Schools*, *24*(2), 132. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1093/cs/24.2.123

Katznelson, N., & Bernstein, K. A. (2017). Rebranding bilingualism: The shifting discourses of language education policy in California's 2016 election. *Linguistics & Education*, *40*, 11–26. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1016/j.linged.2017.05.002

Kelly, L. L. (2020). "I Love Us for Real": Exploring homeplace as a site of healing and resistance for black girls in schools. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *53*(4), 450–465. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/10665684.2020.1791283

Kim, C. J. (1999). The racial triangulation of Asian Americans. *Politics & Society*, *27*(1), 105-138.

Kim, G. M., & Cooc, N. (2021). Recruiting and retaining Asian American and Pacific Islander teachers. *Urban Review*, *53*(2), 193–217. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1007/s11256-020-00571-1

Kim, J., & Hsieh, B. (2021). *The racialized experiences of Asian American Teachers in the US: Applications of Asian critical race theory to resist marginalization*. Routledge.

Kim, Y. K., Hutchison, L. A., & Winsler, A. (2015). Bilingual education in the United States: An historical overview and examination of two-way immersion. *Educational Review*, *67*(2), 236–252. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/00131911q.2013.865593

Koh, S. Y., Hoon, C.-Y., & Haji-Othman, N. A. (2021). "Mandarin Fever" and Chinese Language-learning in Brunei's middle schools: Discrepant discourses, multifaceted

realities and institutional barriers. *Asian Studies Review*, *45*(2), 325–344. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/10357823.2020.1801577

Kohli, R. (2009). Critical race reflections: Valuing the experiences of teachers of color in teacher education. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, *12*(2), 235–251. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13613320902995491

Kohli, R. (2018). Behind school doors: The impact of hostile racial climates on urban teachers of color. *Urban Education*, *53*(3), 307–333. https://doi.org/10.1177/004 2085916636653

Kohli, R. (2019). Lessons for teacher education: The role of critical professional development in teacher of color retention. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *70*(1), 39–50. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0022487118767645

Kohli, R., & Pizarro, M. (2016). Fighting to educate our own: Teachers of color, relational accountability, and the struggle for racial justice. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *49*(1), 72–84. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/10665684.2015.1121457

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995a). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory Into Practice*, *34*(3), 159–165.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995b). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465–491.

La Serna, J. J. (2020). Culturally relevant pedagogy in two-way immersion classrooms. *Bilingual Research Journal, 43*(4), 400-416.

Laster, B., Shargel, R., & Watson-Vandiver, M. (2020). Culturally sustaining pedagogy extended: Ethnic pedagogies. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *22*(2), 91–100. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15210960.2020.1741366

Lee, S. J. (2008). The model minority and the perpetual foreigner: Stereotypes of Asian Americans. In N. Tewari & A. N. Alvarez (Eds.), *Asian American psychology* (pp. 119-134). Psychology Press.

Letiche, H. (2006). Relationality and phenomenological organizational studies. *Tamara Journal, 5*(5.3), 7-18.

Leung, K., Ang, S., & Tan, M. L. (2014). Intercultural competence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *1*, 489–519. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091229

Li, L., & Ruppar, A. (2021). Conceptualizing teacher agency for inclusive education: A systematic and international review. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, *44*(1), 42-59.

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2001). *Dual Language Education*. Multilingual Matters.

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2012). Success and challenges in dual language education. *Theory Into Practice*, *51*(4), 256-262. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2012.726053

Lindholm-Leary, K., & Genesee, F. (2014). Student outcomes in one-way, two-way, and indigenous language immersion education. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education, 2*(2), 165–180.

Lopez, G., Ruiz, N. G., & Patten, E. (2017). *Key facts about Asian Americans, a growing and diverse population.* Pew Research Center

MacIntyre, P., Mercer, S., Gregersen, T., & Hay, A. (2022). The role of hope in language teachers' changing stress, coping, and well-being. *System*, *109*, 102881. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102881

MacIntyre, P. D., Ross, J., Talbot, K., Mercer, S., Gregersen, T., & Banga, C. A. (2019). Stressors, personality and wellbeing among language teachers. *System*, *82*, 26–38. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1016/j.system.2019.02.013

Maddamsetti, J. (Kang), Flennaugh, T. K., & Rosaen, C. L. (2018). Who should teach? A Chinese teacher candidate's understanding of a good teacher and racialised experiences. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, *46*(2), 148–166. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/1359866X.2017.1399983

Magrini, J. (2012). Phenomenology for educators: Max van Manen and" human science" research. *Philosophy Scholarship.*

Malarz, L. (2015). *Bilingual education: Effective programming for language minority students.* Curriculum Handbook. ASCD.

Marom, L. (2018). Eastern/Western conceptions of the "Good Teacher" and the construction of difference in teacher education. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, *46*(2), 167–182. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/1359866X.2017.1399982

Marshall, S. L., & Khalifa, M. A. (2018). Humanizing school communities: Culturally responsive leadership in the shaping of curriculum and instruction. *Journal of Educational Administration, 55*(5), 535-545. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-01-2018-0018.

McCann, T. M., Salas, S., & Kissau, S. (2012). Mentoring matters: It's just like Dido said: Improving the experiences of international teaching colleagues. *The English Journal*, *101*(6), 97–99. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23269418

Mercado, G., & Trumbull, E. (2018). Mentoring beginning immigrant teachers: How culture may impact the message. *International Journal of Psychology*, *53*, 44–53. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1002/ijop.12555

Mertens, D. M. (2010). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods*. Sage Publications.

Milner, H. R., & Hoy, A. W. (2003). A case study of an African American Teacher's self-efficacy, stereotype threat, and persistence. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, *19*(2), 263. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1016/S0742-051X(02)00099-9

Moeller, A., & Koubek, E. (2015). Foreign language teaching and learning. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 327-333. https://doi.org/10.1016/b0-08-043076-7/02423-2

Mohamed, N. (2020). First language loss and negative attitudes towards Dhivehi among young Maldivians: Is the English-first educational policy to blame? *TESOL Quarterly*, *54*(3), 743-772. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.591

Moll, L. C., & Diaz, S. (1985). Ethnographic pedagogy: Promoting effective bilingual instruction. In E. Garcia & R. Padilla (Eds.), *Advances in bilingual education* (pp. 127-149). University of Arizona Press.

Morita-Mullaney, T., Chesnut, C. (2022). Equity traps in the deselection of English learners in dual language education: A collective case study of school principals. *NABE Journal of Research and Practice*, *12*(2), 49-68.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Sage Publications

Murphy, A. F. (2014). The effect of dual-language and transitional-bilingual education instructional models on Spanish proficiency for English language learners. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *37*(2), 182–194. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15235882.2014.934971

Nayo, L. N. (2022). *A case study: How the use of funds of knowledge with mathematically gifted Black and Latinx students is influenced by people, policies and curriculum* (Publication No. 28963678) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Louisiana Monroe]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

Neville, M., & Johnson, S. I. (2022). "My literacies expand over two languages": Language and literacy autobiographies as justice-oriented teacher education. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *66*(2), 111–121. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1002/jaal.1258

Ngai, P. B.Y. (2002). Bilingual education for all: A benefits model for small towns. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *26*(2), 269–294. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15235882.2002.10668711

Nguyen, H. T. (2012). What role do race, ethnicity, language and gender play in the teaching profession? *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, *15*(5), 653–681. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13613324.2011.624504

Nissim-Sabat, M. (1995). Towards a phenomenology of empathy. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, *49*(2), 163-170.

Noguera, P. (2008). Creating schools where race does not predict achievement: The role and significance of race in the racial achievement gap. *The Journal of Negro Education, 77*(2), 90-103. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25608673

Nordstrom, J. (2022). Students' reasons for community language schooling: links to a heritage or capital for the future? *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism*, *25*(2), 389–400. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13670050.2019.1688248

Northouse, P.G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (7th ed.). Sage Publications

O'Brien, M. L., & Eger, M. A. (2021). Suppression, spikes, and stigma: How COVID-19 will shape international migration and hostilities toward it. *International Migration Review*, *55*(3), 640–659.

Omodan, B. I. (2020). The trajectory of transformative research as an inclusive qualitative research approach to social issues. *Multicultural Education, 6*(3), 34. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4071952.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Collins, K. M., & Frels, R. K. (2013). Foreword: Using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to frame quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, *7*(1), 2-8.

Osajima, K. (1988). Asian Americans as the model minority: An analysis of the popular press image in the 1960s and 1980s. *Reflections on Shattered Windows: Promises and Prospects for Asian American Studies.* Pullman: Washington State University Press, 165-174.

Osorio, S. L. (2018). Toward a humanizing pedagogy: Using Latinx children's literature with early childhood students. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *41*(1), 5–22. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15235882.2018.1425165

O'Sullivan, S., & Jiang, Y. H. (2002). Determining the efficacy of the California reading instruction competence assessment (RICA). *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *29*(3), 61–72. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23478390

Paat, Y. F. (2013). Working with immigrant children and their families: An application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 23*(8), 954-966, https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2013.800007

Palmer, D. K., Cervantes-Soon, C., Dorner, L., & Heiman, D. (2019). Bilingualism, biliteracy, biculturalism, and critical consciousness for all: Proposing a fourth fundamental goal for two-way dual language education. *Theory Into Practice*, *58*(2), 121-133. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2019.1569376

Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy. *Educational Researcher*, *41*(3), 93-97. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x12441244

Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (2014). What are we seeking to sustain through culturally sustaining pedagogy? A loving critique forward. *Harvard Educational Review*, *84*(1), 85–100. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.17763/haer.84.1.982l873k2ht16m77

Paris, D., & Alim, S.H. (Eds.). (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world.* Teachers College Press.

Parrish, T. B., Merickel, A., Perez, M., Linquanti, R., Socias, M., Spain, A., Speroni, C., Esra, P., Brock, L., & Delancey, D. (2006). Effects of the implementation of proposition 227 on the education of English learners, K-12: Findings from a five-year evaluation: Final report for AB 56 and AB 1116. *PsycEXTRA Dataset*. https://doi.org/10.1037/e539652012-001

Peercy, M. M., Tigert, J., Fredricks, D., Kidwell, T., Feagin, K., Hall, W., Himmel, J., & DeStefano Lawyer, M. (2022). From humanizing principles to humanizing practices: Exploring core practices as a bridge to enacting humanizing pedagogy with multilingual students. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, *113*, N.PAG. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103653

Petriglieri, G., & Petriglieri, J. L. (2015). Can business schools humanize leadership? *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *14*(4), 625-647.

Ponterotto, J. G., Mathew, J. T., & Raughley, B. (2013). The value of mixed methods designs to social justice research in counseling and psychology. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling & Psychology*, *5*(2), 42-68.

Poon, O., Squire, D., Kodama, C., Byrd, A., Chan, J., Manzano, L., Furr, S., & Bishundat, D. (2016). A critical review of the model minority myth in selected literature on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education. *Review of Educational Research*, *86*(2), 469–502. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.3102/0034654315612205

Portes, A., & Hao, L. (2002). The price of uniformity: Language, family and personality adjustment in the immigrant second generation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 25*, 889-912.

Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigrant second generation.* University of California Press.

Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2019). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. Sage Publications.

Reimann, M. (2018). Bilingual legal education in the United States: The deficient status quo and a call for more action. *American Journal of Comparative Law*, *66*, 67–89. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1093/ajcl/avy024

Robbins, S.P., Judge, T.A. (2014). *Essentials of organizational behavior* (12th ed.). Pearson.

Roffey, S. (2012). Pupil wellbeing – Teacher wellbeing: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational & Child Psychology*, *29*(4), 8-17.

Rogers-Ard, R., Knaus, C.B., Bianco, M., Brandehoff, R., & Gist, C. (2019). The grow your own collective: A critical race movement to transform education. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 46*(1), 23-34. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26558180

Rogers-Ard, R., Knaus, C. B., Epstein, K. K., & Mayfield, K. (2012). Racial diversity sounds nice; Systems transformation? Not so much. *Urban Education*, *48*(3), 451-479. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085912454441

Roorda, D. L., Koomen, H. M. Y., Spilt, J. L., & Oort, F. J. (2011). The influence of affective teacher–student relationships on students' school engagement and achievement: A meta-analytic approach. *Review of Educational Research*, *81*(4), 493–529. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654311421793

Ruiz, N. G., Horowitz, J., & Tami, C. (2020). *Many Black and Asian Americans say they have experienced discrimination amid the COVID-19 outbreak*. Pew Research Center.

Rumbaut, R. G., Massey, D. S., & Bean, F. D. (2006). Linguistic life expectancies: Immigrant language retention in Southern California. *Population & Development Review*, *32*(3), 447–460. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2006.00132.x

Sabharwal, M., Becerra, A., & Oh, S. (2022). From the Chinese Exclusion Act to the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Historical Analysis of "Otherness" Experienced by Asian Americans in the United States. *Public Integrity*, *24*(6), 535-549.

Sánchez, M. T., García, O., & Solorza, C. (2018). "Reframing language allocation policy in dual language bilingual education." *Bilingual Research Journal, 41*(1), 37–51.

Schaeffer, R. K. (2009). *Understanding globalization: The social consequences of political, economic, and environmental change*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Sellars, M., & Imig, S. (2023). The real cost of neoliberalism for educators and students. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, *26*(1), 172–184. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13603124.2020.1823488

Serafini, E. J., Rozell, N., & Winsler, A. (2022). Academic and English language outcomes for DLLs as a function of school bilingual education model: the role of two-way immersion and home language support. *International Journal of Bilingual Education &*

Bilingualism, *25*(2), 552–570. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13670050.2019.1707477

Shen, Y., Wang, R., Zhang. F., Barbieri, C. A., & Pasquarella, A. (2022). The effect of early enrollment in dual-language immersion programs on children's English reading development: findings from a 5-year longitudinal study. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 25*(10), 3773-3790. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2022.2079373

Singleton, C., Roark, S., Ainsworth, B., Aguila, V., & Fajardo, E. (2018). *Global California 2030*. California Department of Education.

Smeyers, P. (2008). Qualitative and quantitative research methods: Old wine in new bottles? On understanding and interpreting educational phenomena. *Paedagogica Historica*, *44*(6), 691-705.

Smith, P. (2020). "Mr. Wang Doesn't Really Care How We Speak!": Responsiveness in the practice of an exemplary Asian-American teacher. *Urban Review*, *52*(2), 351–375. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1007/s11256-019-00531-4

Steketee, A., Williams, M. T., Valencia, B. T., Printz, D., & Hooper, L. M. (2021). Racial and language microaggressions in the school ecology. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *16*(5), 1075–1098. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/1745691621995740

Strekalova-Hughes, E., & Wang, X. C. (2019). Perspectives of children from refugee backgrounds on their family storytelling as a culturally sustaining practice. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, *33*(1), 6-21.

Subedi, B. (2008). Contesting racialization: Asian immigrant teachers' critiques and claims of teacher authenticity. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, *11*(1), 57–70. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13613320701845814

Sung, K. Y., & Tsai, H. M. (2019). Mandarin Chinese dual language immersion programs. *Mandarin Chinese Dual Language Immersion Programs*. Multilingual Matters.

Tajrobehkar, B. (2021). Orientalism and linguicism: How language marks Iranian-Canadians as a Racial 'other', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *36*(4), 655-671. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2021.1885069

Takaki, R. T. (1998). *Strangers from a different shore*. Little, Brown and Company.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2010). Putting the human back in ‘‘human research methodology’’: The researcher in mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *4*(4), 271-277.

Tessler, H., Choi, M., & Kao, G. (2020). The anxiety of being Asian American: Hate crimes and negative biases during the COVID-19 pandemic. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, *45*(4), 636-646.

Thomas, W. P. & Collier, V. (2000). Accelerated schooling for all students: Research findings on education in multilingual communities. In Shaw, S. (Ed.) *Intercultural Education in European Classrooms: Intercultural Education Partnership*, 15–35. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham

Tian, Z. (2022). Challenging the “Dual”: designing translanguaging spaces in a Mandarin-English dual language bilingual education program. *Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development*, *43*(6), 534–553. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/01434632.2022.2085732

Todres, L., Galvin, K. T. & Holloway, I. (2009). The humanization of healthcare: A value framework for qualitative research, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being, 4*(2), 68-77, https://doi.org/10.1080/17482620802646204

Tyler, N. C., Yzquierdo, Z., Lopez-Reyna, N., & Flippin, S. S. (2004). Cultural and linguistic diversity and the special education workforce: A critical overview. *Journal of Special Education*, *38*(1), 22–38. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/00224669040380010301

Valdes, G. (2011). Dual-language immersion programs: A cautionary note concerning the education of language-minority students. *Harvard Educational Review*, *67*(3), 391-430.

Valdez, V., Freire, J. A., & Delavan, G. (2016). The gentrification of dual language education. *Educational Policy, 48*, 601–627. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-016-0370-0

van Manen, M. (1990). Beyond assumptions: Shifting the limits of action research. *Theory Into Practice*, *29*(3), 152-157.

van Manen, M. (2017). Phenomenology in its original sense. *Qualitative Health Research*, *27*(6), 810-825.

Varghese, M., Morgan, B., Johnston, B., & Johnson, K. A. (2005). Theorizing language teacher identity: Three perspectives and beyond. *Journal of language, Identity, and Education*, *4*(1), 21-44.

Vélez-Agosto, N. M., Soto-Crespo, J. G., Vizcarrondo-Oppenheimer, M., Vega-Molina, S., & García Coll, C. (2017). Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory revision: Moving culture from the macro into the micro. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *12*(5), 900-910.

Venkatraman, S. (2023). *Is the umbrella term 'Asian American' even accurate anymore?* NBC News. https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/umbrella-term-asian-american-even-accurate-anymore-rcna60956

Voogt, J., & Roblin, N. P. (2010). 21st century skills discussion paper. *University of Twente*, *10*.

Wang, D. (2015). From English-only to multilingualism: English in the language policy of the United States. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, *3*(1). https://doi.org/10.5430/ijelt.v3n1p32

Wang, I. (2022). Toward an ecological understanding of transnational Chinese language teachers' professional wellbeing in the United Kingdom. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.877289

Wang, X., & Yu, L. (2021). Living in an anti-globalization era: A call for promoting critical multiculturalism and multicultural education for immigrant teachers and students in secondary education. *High School Journal*, *104*(2), 79–83. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1353/hsj.2021.0002

Wei, L., & García, O. (2022). Not a first language but one repertoire: Translanguaging as a decolonizing project. *RELC Journal*, *53*(2), 313–324. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/00336882221092841

Wiley, T. G. (2007). Accessing language rights in education: A brief history of the U.S. context. In O. García & C. Baker (Eds.), *Bilingual education: An introductory reader*, 89–107. Multilingual Matters.

Williams III, J. A., Hart, L. C., & Algozzine, B. (2019). Perception vs. reality: edTPA perceptions and performance for teacher candidates of color and White candidates. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, *83*, 120–133. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1016/j.tate.2019.04.006

Wong, K. M., & Benson, C. (2019). Policy and Practice in L1-Based Multilingual Education: Challenges and Steps Forward. *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education*, *5*(3), 1–11. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.32865/fire201953202

Wong, K. M. 黃浩文 & Tian, Z. 田中锋 (2022). Chinese-English dual language bilingual education in the United States 美国中英双语沉浸式教学, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 43*(6), 477-486, DOI: 10.1080/01434632.2022.2092627

Wright, S. (2004). *Language policy and language planning: From nationalism to globalization*. Palgrave Macmillan

Wu, M.H., & Leung, G. (2022). "It's not my Chinese": a teacher and her students disrupting and dismantling conventional notions of "Chinese" through translanguaging in a heritage language classroom. *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism*, *25*(5), 1811–1824. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/13670050.2020.1804524

Wu, Z (2020). Why multilingual, and how to keep it—An evolutionary dynamics perspective. *PLoS ONE, 15*(11). https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0241980

Xu, N. (2021). Mandarin Chinese dual language immersion programs. In Sung, K.-Y. and Tsai, H.-M. (Eds.), Multilingual Matters, *Bilingual Research Journal*, *44*(1), 144–149. Bristol. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15235882.2021.1923587

Yanniris, C. (2021). Education for sustainability, peace, and global citizenship: An integrative approach. *Education Sciences*, *11*, 430. https://doi.org/10.3390/ educsci11080430

Zelin, L. (2017). The choice of a progressive bilingual education model. *Chinese Education & Society*, *50*(1), 25–32. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/10611932.2016.1262184

Zhou, M. (1997). Segmented assimilation: Issues, controversies, and recent research on the new second generation. *International Migration Review*, *31*(4), 975-1008.

Zhou, W., & Li, G. (2017). Pedagogical challenges in cross-cultural Chinese language teaching. *Educational Leadership and Administration*, 1656-1681. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-1624-8.ch076

Zisselsberger, M. (2016). Toward a humanizing pedagogy: Leveling the cultural and linguistic capital in a fifth-grade writing classroom. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *39*(2), 121–137. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/15235882.2016.1167137

APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Notice

Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: February 23, 2023

Protocol Investigator Name: Helen Hill

Protocol #: 23-01-2080

Project Title: Examining the Experiences of Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Teachers Through a Culturally

Sustaining and Humanizing Lens School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Helen Hill:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Mrs. Katy Carr, Assistant Provost for Research

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form

PEPPERDINE | GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & PSYCHOLOGY

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

IRB #: 23-01-2080

Study Title: Examining the Experiences of Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Teachers Through a Culturally Sustaining and Humanizing Lens

Authorized Study Personnel:

Principal Investigator: Helen Chan Hill, M.A.
Email: helen.hill@pepperdine.edu

Key Information:
If you agree to participate in this study, the project will involve:

- MDLIP teachers between the ages of 18-65.
- Participation will include one interview session (either in-person or virtual, based on your preference).
- One visit/interview is required.
- This visit/interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes in total.
- The interview will be audio-recorded only; there will be no video recording.
- There are possible risks associated with this study (emotional stress), and you may choose to end the interview at any time. Strict confidentiality procedures will be in place during and after the study, and personal information that could identify you will be removed.
- You will not be paid for your participation.
- You will be provided a copy of this consent form.
- Participation in this study is voluntary. This study will not have any impact on your evaluation, or involve time away from your standard role and responsibilities as a teacher. You will not experience any adverse or negative impact on employment as a result of participating in this study.

Invitation:
Dear MDLIP Teacher,

My name is Helen Chan Hill. I am conducting a study on the experiences of Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program (MDLIP) teachers through the lens of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices. You are invited to take part in this research study. The information in this form is meant to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Why are you being asked to be in this research study?
You are invited to participate in this research study because you are a current or former teacher of Mandarin in a MDLIP school setting, who has taught in-person for one full school year or more in a Southern California public school.

What is the reason for doing this research study?
With a rising need for multilingual education, the support and retention of multilingual educators must be prioritized. This research study aims to understand the experiences of teachers of Mandarin within the unique structure of MDLI programs.

What will be done during this research study?
- You will be asked to participate in one interview, which will take approximately 45-60 minutes.
- This interview can take place in-person or online, based on your preference. In both cases, there will only be an audio recording; there will be no video recording.

How will my data be used?
Your perspective and insights may be included in summaries of a research study. Any personal information that could identify you will be removed before the study is published.

What are the possible risks of being in this research study?
This research presents the risk of emotional or psychological distress because the interviews involve questions about your perceptions or experiences with culturally sustaining or humanizing interactions in the workplace, including the impact of race or language, during your time as a MDLIP teacher.

What are the possible benefits to you?
You may have the opportunity to share challenges and experiences that can be addressed or improved by changes in the school's or district's mechanisms for support, or implementation of the MDLIP. However, it is possible you may not experience a direct benefit from being in this research study.

What are the possible benefits to other people?
The benefits to other people may include a better understanding of how to systematically improve the school's or district's support for culturally and linguistically diverse teachers with respect to recruitment, hiring, and retention. Your insights and ideas may also inform future areas that should be studied.

What are the alternatives to being in this research study?

The alternative to being in this research study is non-participation.

What will being in this research study cost you?

There is no financial cost to you for being a participant in this research study.

Will you be compensated for being in this research study?

You will not be compensated for your participation in this study.

What should you do if you have a problem during this research study?

Your welfare is the primary concern of every member of the research team. If you have a problem as a direct result of being in this study, you should immediately contact one of the people listed at the beginning of this consent form.

How will information about you be protected?

Reasonable steps will be taken to protect your privacy and the confidentiality of your study data. The data will be stored electronically through a secure server and will only be seen by the research team during the study and for 3 years after the study is complete. The only persons who will have access to your research records are the study personnel, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Pepperdine University, and any other person, agency, or sponsor as required by law. The information from this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings, but the data will be reported as group or as summarized data, and your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

What are your rights as a research subject?

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. For study-related questions, please contact the investigator(s) listed at the beginning of this form. For questions concerning your rights or complaints about the research, contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB):

Phone: 1(310)568-2305

Email: gpsirb@pepperdine.edu

What will happen if you decide not to be in this research study or decide to stop participating once you start?

You can decide not to be in this research study, or you can stop being in this research study ("withdraw') at any time before, during, or after the research begins for any reason. Deciding not to be in this research study or deciding to withdraw will not affect your relationship with the investigator, with Pepperdine University, or with your employer. You will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

Documentation of informed consent

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to be in this research study. Signed consent to this form means that (1) you have read and understood this consent form, (2) you have had the consent form explained to you, (3) you have had your questions answered, and (4) you have decided to be in the research study. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

Participant Feedback Survey

To meet Pepperdine University's ongoing accreditation efforts and to meet the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs (AAHRPP) standards, an online feedback survey is included below:

https://forms.gle/nnRgRwLgajYzBq5t7

Participant Signature:

_____ _____

Signature of Research Participant Date

Investigator Certification:

Investigator signature certifies that all elements of informed consent described on this consent form have been explained fully to the subject. In my judgment, the participant possesses the capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research and is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent to participate.

_____ _____

Signature of Investigator Obtaining Consent Date

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Script

PEPPERDINE | GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & PSYCHOLOGY

Dear MDLIP Teacher,

My name is Helen Chan Hill, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am conducting a research study to understand the experiences of Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program (MDLIP) teachers through the lens of humanizing and culturally sustaining practices, and I am interested in your perspective as a valued teacher in such a program!

I am seeking volunteer study participants for an individual interview to learn about your experiences as an MDLIP teacher. Your interview can be in-person or virtual, and is anticipated to take no more than 60 minutes. Participation in this study is voluntary, and strict confidentiality procedures will be in place during and after the study: pseudonyms will be used in place of names, schools, and any identifiable places or events. Your identity as a participant will be protected before, during, and after the time that study data is collected. Interviews will be audio-recorded for data collection purposes only, and all records will be stored in a password-protected drive. Further, these recordings and associated notes will be de-identified so they are not able to be attributed to any individual participant.

I hope you will allow me this opportunity to include your insight and perspective in this study. If you have any questions or would like to participate in this study, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your consideration,

Helen Chan Hill
Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Doctoral Candidate
helen.hill@pepperdine.edu

APPENDIX D

Thematic Cluster Map

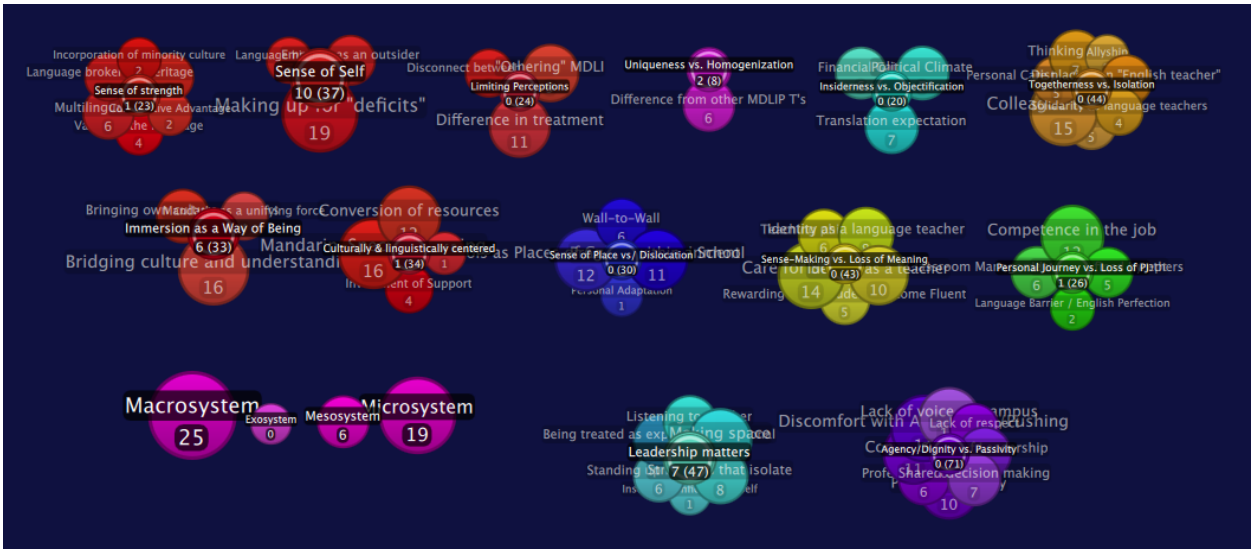


Image of initial codes and emerging themes, generated by Quirkos Software 2.5.3

APPENDIX E

Summary of Themes and Contributing Codes by Subtheme

Theme	Contributing Codes
Agency via structure, not nature (56)	Professional agency with content and options (17) Teacher leadership and decision making (14) Discomfort with advocating (14) Unseen or unheard in the minority (11)
Teacher identity as core to personal journey (54)	Care for students (18) Identity as a teacher (17) Questioned competence (9) Empathy as an outsider (5) Identity defined by others (5)
Colleague care creating togetherness (44)	Colleague network (25) Solidarity and allyship (7) Concern for colleague displacement (6) Thinking alone (6)
Immersion as a lifeway (65)	Schools as culturally sustaining hubs (18) Integrating cultures and understanding (15) Cultural mainstreaming (11) Part, but apart (10) Mandarin as a unifying force (7) Bridging one's own culture to others (4)
Non-centering as reminders of outsiderness (61)	Making up for "deficits" (21) Training incompatibility (12) "Othering" (10) Conversion burden (10) Objectification (8)
Microsystems as humanizing hubs (59)	Colleague community (24) Parent pressure or support (10) Personal stability (10) State, district are impersonal (8) Investment of support (7)
Leadership as a lever for humanization (47)	Professional respect (12) Making space (12) Listening (8) Structures that isolate (8) Instilling confidence in self (7)