

"MAESTRES QUE TIENEN LA VOZ Y EL CORAJE:"

CULTIVATING BILINGUAL TEACHERS LINGUISTIC
CAPITAL THROUGH A RACIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH
@ EL INSTITUTO

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Abstract

Traditional teacher learning is mostly conceptualized through prescribed curriculum in school-based and district-sponsored professional development opportunities, that are often race-evasive (Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2014) and framed through dominant, neoliberal, and deficit ideologies that foster linguistic hegemony and privilege English language learning. For bilingual teachers, critical professional development can provide a space to engage in critical dialogical learning. Drawing on Critical Professional Development and Raciolinguistics, this paper addresses the critical needs of K-12 Spanish bilingual educators teaching in multilingual contexts. This paper explores a case study of *El Instituto*, a critical professional development for bilingual teachers in Southern California, conducted entirely in Spanish.

Guided by the strands of community building and leadership development, *El Instituto* aims to center critical teacher agency (Freire, 1974) and community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) by focusing on their linguistic capital and deepening their Spanish-language knowledge, while also developing their critical consciousness and supporting their understandings of racialized languages, pedagogies, ideologies,

and actions in the K-12 classroom. The findings suggest that the *El Instituto*, not only disrupted the normalization of English-only professional development, but also exposed bilingual teachers to critical theory and research while centering their linguistic repertoires to engage in collective action towards transformed ideologies, critical pedagogies, and critical teacher agency.

Key Words: *Critical Professional Development, Raciolinguistics, Bilingual Teachers, Linguistic Capital*

INTRODUCTION

“Me identifico como Valenzuela (2016) define a las personas críticamente conscientes, que son aquellos maestros que tienen la voz y el coraje necesario para hacer frente a la injusticia y las inequidades/ I identify as Valenzuela (2016) defines critically conscious people, who are those teachers who have the voice and courage needed to confront injustices and inequalities”

-Karla (3rd year bilingual teacher/ DLL graduate student)

Karla was a first-generation Chicana and 3rd year in-service Spanish bilingual teacher serving at a school district in the greater Los Angeles area. She taught 4th grade at a Spanish-English dual immersion school. She enrolled in the Dual Language Learning certificate graduate program at a Hispanic Serving Institution in Southern California in order to obtain a bilingual authorization in Spanish to add to her existing multiple subject (elementary) teaching credential. Many bilingual in-service teachers often make the choice to return to graduate school in order to keep their classroom positions when they are required to get an added authorization. For Karla, however, her interest in advancing her knowledge about dual language bilingual education went beyond a request from her school administration. Karla was really invested in continuing to nurture and develop her critical consciousness as a social justice educator, which she felt was lacking from the professional development offered at her school district. Karla began her Dual Language Learning certificate program during a summer session that began with a critical professional development week called *El Instituto* (*The Institute*) that was facilitated entirely in Spanish for in-service and pre-service bilingual teachers.

In combination with graduate courses in Dual Language Learning and *El Instituto*, Karla was able to engage, analyze, and discuss readings to facilitate her growth and understanding of her purpose and role as a social justice educator. In connecting with course readings (Valenzuela, 2016), Karla was quickly able to identify her purpose as a critically conscious bilingual educator willing to use her voice and courage to confront educational injustices and inequalities (Valenzuela, 2016). The opening quote of this paper was a direct statement Karla made

during a small-group discussion where Karla went on to describe how her racial identity as a Chicana was just as imperative to interrogate as her purpose as a bilingual teacher. Clearly, Karla was aligning the intersections between race, language, and culture (Alim et al., 2016) in a manner that demonstrated the development of her linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005). These are the types of connections and reflections that *El Instituto* aimed for in the preparation of all critical bilingual teachers.

TRADITIONAL TEACHER LEARNING

For Spanish bilingual teachers like Karla, *El Instituto*, was a critical professional development opportunity that provided a space to engage in critical and dialogical learning completely facilitated in Spanish. This type of professional development opportunity, however, remains nearly non-existent for most bilingual teachers. In traditional teacher learning, bilingual teachers are not receiving adequate training to support the language programs in which they are required to teach (Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015). Most professional development that teachers receive that might slightly acknowledge the realities of today's multilingualism (Plurilingüe, C. C., 2024), is still guided by a linguistic hegemony that caters to the learning of English. Despite the recent growth and interest in dual language bilingual education and the multiplied expansion of dual language programs, there remains a lack of proper funding and investment in critical dual language professional development (Stavely & Marquez Rosales, 2021). Aside from teacher education programs, traditional teacher learning is conceptualized through prescribed curriculum in school-based and district-sponsored professional development opportunities, that are often race-evasive (Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2014) and framed through dominant, neoliberal, and deficit ideologies that foster linguistic hegemony and privilege English language learning. Excluded from traditional teacher learning is the necessary preparation for bilingual educators to counter oppressive inequities held under monolithic, English-only policies and practices that continue to marginalize their students' multilingual, cultural, and racial identities (Stacy et al., 2020; Alfaro, 2018).

As a result of lack of critical professional development in traditional teacher learning that centers the complexities of dual language bilingual education, new programs are starting with unprepared educators to teach in them. The fast growth of DL programs with little investment in teachers' understanding leads to the oppressive institutionalized conditions that affect the interests of multilingual students of color being denied access into these spaces. In recent years, bilingual education as a whole has been gentrified in ways that privilege mainstream white students from affluent communities, while replacing multilingual students of color in dual language bilingual educational spaces and policies (Valdez et al., 2016). As such, an interest convergence (Kelly, 2018; Milner, 2008; Bell, 1980) is constructed by allowing dual language programs to be formed and new classrooms opened for the advantage of white mainstream English (WME)-speaking students (Plurilingüe, C. C., 2024). In the context of dual language bilingual education, interest convergence refers to the degree in which the interests of students of color are forced to be accommodated only when they align with interests of white students and families (Morales & Maravilla, 2019). Oftentimes these accommodations leave students of color in the community completely neglected and ignored from bilingual and dual language classrooms, even when they already have rich multilingual language repertoires. Yet, in the midst of the quick gentrification of bilingual education, (Valdez et al., 2016), it is the bilingual teachers who serve in the programs that have the potential and hope to confront, challenge, and transfer these spaces.

CENTERING THE NEEDS OF BILINGUAL TEACHERS

In order to re-imagine dual language bilingual education, critical teacher agency must be at the center. As a component of critical pedagogy, critical teacher agency aims to challenge and transform schooling conditions (Freire, 1972) from the perspective of the teachers.

Yet, Spanish bilingual teachers need direct training and support to develop biliteracy for social transformation and racial justice. This type of direct emphasis can help cultivate equity for multilingual students of color in bilingual and dual language classrooms by fostering teacher leader solidarity in like-minded activist networks (Stacy et

al., 2020). A deeper understanding of the racial, cultural, and linguistic harm embedded in traditional school systems needs to be unpacked for bilingual teachers to be able to challenge systemic institutional oppression. To begin this work, bilingual teachers need their schools' instructional programs to be aligned and include specialized training in philosophies of dual language bilingual education, culturally sustaining pedagogies, curriculum development, materials, and assessment (Plurilingüe, C. C., 2024). This type of curricular support and pedagogy must be aligned within frameworks of educational equity that match the realities and lives of the racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse demographics of students that these programs serve. As research in dual language bilingual education has noted, bilingual teachers are dissatisfied with monolingual traditional teacher learning that is not congruent to the demands of teaching in and about two languages (Bhattacharya, 2016; Capdevila-Gutiérrez et al., 2020; Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015; Jaar, 2017). Bilingual teachers specifically need professional development that targets partner-language growth and biliteracy instruction that is critically and creatively integrated with content subject matter. Significantly important, bilingual teachers also need time and space to critically reflect and analyze their practice

Authentic opportunities to practice and develop heritage language is another critical need for most Spanish bilingual teachers. Traditional teacher learning and teacher education programs rarely provide enough time and opportunities for bilingual teachers to build their linguistic capital while also centering issues of race, language, and culture. Deepening bilingual teachers' linguistic capital places value on the overall community cultural wealth that they have to offer in the classroom. In doing so, their linguistic capital identifies the intellectual and social skills honored through their communication, teaching, and praxis across more than one language or style (Yosso & Burciaga 2016). Teachers' linguistic capital can be evident in the classroom if they welcome students, families, and communities to participate and communicate using varieties of Spanish while sustaining critical dialogue (Stacy et al., 2020). Bilingual teachers can use their linguistic capital to encourage translanguaging values and skills reflected in the homes and communities in which they serve to amplify their students' cul-

tural and racial identities (García, et al., 2016; García & Kleyn, 2016). Overall, building on bilingual teachers' linguistic capital can deepen their Spanish-language knowledge while also developing agency and critical consciousness (Alfaro, 2019).

CRITICAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Drawing on the needs of Spanish bilingual teachers, this study is framed by two main theoretical perspectives to guide the case study, Critical Professional Development (Kohli et al., 2015) and Raciolinguistics (Alim et al., 2016). This study incorporates a Critical Professional Development (CPD) approach to the annual summer bilingual professional opportunity, *El Instituto*. Following a CPD approach allows for bilingual educators to be recognized as intellectually and politically engaged teachers who actively participate in shaping society (Kohli et al., 2015) and the lives of their multilingual students. CPD is meant to be dialogical amongst all involved participants in order to co-create knowledge through reflection and action-praxis (Kohli et al., 2015; Stacy et al., 2020). To cultivate teachers' critical praxis, *El Instituto* was designed intentionally using CPD for homegrown Spanish bilingual teachers of color to foster a sense of solidarity as they collaborated and networked to find ways to dismantle existing systems of oppression within dual language bilingual education (Valdez et al., 2016). To further cultivate teachers' critical praxis, critical reflection on the world is necessary to transform change (Freire, 1972). As a type of CPD, *El Instituto* was created as an intentional space for bilingual teachers to grapple with the process of learning and unlearning that supported their development of a critical consciousness. Through this approach, *El Instituto* aimed to center teachers' agencies to support ideological clarity as they engaged in critical pedagogies. To further advance justice in the field of bilingual education, CPD must invest time and support in the development of teachers' critical consciousness (Freire, 1972) while also including knowledge about linguistic trauma (Plurilingüe, C. C., 2024).

RACIOLINGUISTICS

Critical Professional Development for bilingual teachers requires that issues of race, language, and culture be central to their learning.

Guided by a raciolinguistic approach, this study examines the roles and relationships between race, language, and culture in maintaining and challenging structural, institutional, and individual forms of racism (Alim et al., 2016). Through an analysis of program structures, practices, and policies, bilingual teachers can begin to identify inequitable commonalities that exist across bilingual and dual language programs. At *El Instituto*, bilingual teachers dove into deep insights exploring the intersections of race, language, and culture to situate larger power structures that sustain systemic oppression in dual language education. Engaging in this analysis centered teachers' experiential knowledges (Delgado Bernal, 2002) and linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005) to challenge dominant ideologies about race, class, culture, and language. As a result, bilingual teachers came together in solidarity to develop new pedagogical frameworks to implement in their classrooms. In connection to the goals of *El Instituto*, a raciolinguistic approach helped establish teacher solidarity and activism missing from traditional professional development spaces. The possibilities for transformed ideologies that challenge racial and linguistic harm within dual language bilingual education can be realized through CPD that incorporates a raciolinguistic approach. Bridging these lenses, *El Instituto*, was a CPD space that cultivated equitable dual language bilingual education programs by centering bilingual teachers' linguistic capital and preparing them to challenge deficit and racist ideologies.

METHODS AND DATA SOURCES

This paper explores a case study of *El Instituto*, a week-long critical professional development for bilingual teachers in Southern California, conducted entirely in Spanish. Using a qualitative case study design (Stake, 1995), this study deeply examines a professional development program that has been ongoing for eight years. *El Instituto* can be understood as a case that seeks to uncover a unique approach to teacher professional development while also representing a case that aims to understand broader issues (Stake, 1995) faced by bilingual teachers.

Building from seven years of qualitative data collected from over 300 bilingual teachers, this paper uses observations, participant feed-

back, artifacts, surveys, and interviews to unpack how bilingual teachers used their critical consciousness to engage in collective action that challenged dominant, neoliberal ideologies in dual language education. While this research is part of an eight-year mixed-methods study of different summer institutes, this paper focuses only on a deeper examination on the qualitative case study component.

El Instituto was established by a team of scholars and educators at one Minority and Hispanic Serving Institution (MSI/ HSI) in the greater Los Angeles area from a need derived from local teachers and students who were seeking critical and dialogical learning in Spanish to better serve their bilingual and dual language classrooms. Yearly, participants, who are already connected to the host university in many ways, are invited to apply to the week-long critical professional development with overarching goals that emphasize: Bi-Literacy for Social Transformation and Racial Justice, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies, Re-imagining Classroom Spaces (online and in-person amid COVID-19), Activist Network Development, and inquiry curriculum creation. Under these centralized goals, the aim is to center critical pedagogy to upend the harm of decades of hegemonic English-only practices and to cultivate equity by fostering teacher leader solidarity and activist networks. Each summer, participants are also welcomed to invite other colleagues from their school community to attend the week-long critical professional development along with them in efforts to begin cultivating a collaborative team leadership approach in support of bilingual education.

This paper draws on the data collected from the qualitative methods approach from consented participants (Landerman, 2013). The participants ($n = 300$) were majority teachers of color who were also Spanish bilingual in-service and pre-service teachers. For this case study, qualitative data were collected from field observations, formal and informal interviews (Spradley, 1979), discussion prompt responses, surveys, questionnaires, participant feedback, class discussions, and participant-generated artifacts, such as blogs, podcasts, unit plans, vlogs, artwork, writers' workshop journals, etc. (Emerson et al., 2011). Data was collected in both English and Spanish or a mixture of the languages depending on the preferences of the participants. This data

was coded and analyzed thematically (Emerson et al., 2011) to point to preliminary findings. This paper presents a raciolinguistic analysis of these findings to understand how Spanish bilingual teachers are cultivating their linguistic capital.

FINDINGS

By incorporating a raciolinguistic approach to a CPD opportunity, two main qualitative themes emerged. The findings of this focus show that *El Instituto*: 1) disrupted the normalization of English-only professional development to cultivate bilingual teachers' linguistic capital through varying linguistic repertoires, experiences, and knowledges as they relate to critical praxis in bilingual/dual language classrooms, and 2) interrogated a raciolinguistic analysis through the intersectionality of race, language, and culture to foster critical consciousness to engage in collective action towards transformed ideologies and critical pedagogy, and teacher agency. The findings highlight the voices, experiences, and knowledges of some of the bilingual teachers participating at *El Instituto*. Direct dialogue is presented in the language in which the teachers spoke (Spanish/Spanglish/other varieties of Spanish) and includes English translations.

CULTIVATING BILINGUAL TEACHERS' LINGUISTIC CAPITAL

El Instituto was created from a need to provide critical professional development that could disrupt the normalization of English-only traditional professional development. After eight years of *El Instituto*, the CPD continued to be facilitated entirely in Spanish by faculty to provide a space to engage in critical and dialogical learning in Spanish for bilingual teachers. Evident in the experiences of teachers in this space were the decades of harm from hegemonic English-only policies and practices. Teresa, a veteran bilingual teacher with over 10 years of practice reflected on her experience with professional development. She stated:

“He sido maestra durante casi 10 años, puedo contar con una mano la cantidad de veces que he asistido a desarrollo profesional relacionado con la educación bilingüe. Ahora pedir este tipo de capacitación completamente en español, bueno, eso

es simplemente imposible. Me siento afortunada de estar en comunidad con otros educadores bilingües en el mismo espacio/ I've been a teacher for almost 10 years, I can count with one hand the amount of times I've attended professional development that related to bilingual education. Now to ask for this type of training entirely in Spanish, well that is simply impossible. I feel fortunate to be in community with other bilingual educators in the same space.” -Teresa

What Teresa described mimicked the tensions that many of the participants shared: they do not receive any training provided by their school districts in Spanish. Instead, they must seek these opportunities elsewhere if they want to continue to develop their linguistic capital and grow their Spanish-language knowledge. Many of them felt completely discouraged from attending any professional development for fear that it would not relate to their roles in the bilingual/ dual language classrooms. As Teresa recalled, for as long as she had been in the bilingual education field, she has not participated in a training facilitated entirely in Spanish. Yet, for most of our participants, this was a characteristic of the CPD that draws them to participate in *El Instituto* each summer. Many teachers attended *El Instituto* seeking opportunities to challenge and advance their linguistic repertoires. Anabel, a second-year teacher confided:

“¿Puedo decirlo en spanglish? Como nueva maestra bilingue, una de mis mayores inseguridades es mi uso adecuado del español. Crecí hablando español; Siempre ha sido mi primer idioma, sin embargo, a veces realmente dudo de mis habilidades / Can I say it in Spanglish? As a newer dual language teacher, one of my biggest insecurities is my proper usage of Spanish. I grew up speaking Spanish; it has always been my first language, yet, I really do doubt my abilities sometimes” -Anabel

Anabel shared with honesty her beliefs about her own linguistic abilities which many bilingual teachers in the space also resonated with. The pressure to feel comfortable in their biliteracy as Spanish and English speakers is part of the decades of harm instilled by hegemonic English-only ideologies. Teachers like Anabel need brave spaces like *El Instituto* to learn, process, and reflect on linguistic

traumas. By encouraging their participation in Spanish, Spanglish, or other varieties of Spanish, *El Instituto* cultivated their linguistic capital by focusing on partner-language development, biliteracy instruction, and reflective practice. At the same time, by participating in reflection in confidence about their linguistic experiences with one another, teachers were building a sense of solidarity. To advance principles of justice and equity, bilingual teachers related this understanding of their linguistic capital in their own classrooms through critical praxis.

Clearly, the work of *El Instituto*'s critical professional development approach, embodied and helped sustain critical bilingual teachers' agency. Teachers repeatedly return to this CPD every summer because it allows them to be in a space that acknowledges, accepts, and challenges their linguistic repertoires. It is their critical teacher agency that supports their choice to enroll and participate in the work of this CPD. Unlike district or other mandated professional development, bilingual teachers do not have to attend *El Instituto*. They return every summer for their own love, care, and agency for the program, and all the like-minded participants they get to be in community with.

INTERROGATION OF RACIOLINGUISTICS TO FOSTER CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS & AGENCY

Encouraging bilingual teachers to advance justice and equity through their praxis requires that CPD help foster their critical consciousness and critical agency through knowledge about linguistic trauma and critical content-language integration (Alfaro, 2018). At *El Instituto*, one of the overarching goals was to develop biliteracy for social transformation and racial justice. Interrogating a raciolinguistic approach (Alim et al., 2016) in dual language bilingual education can support teachers in challenging systemic institutional oppression. Bilingual teachers must recognize the intersectionality of race, language, and culture to foster their critical consciousness to better engage in collective action towards transformed ideologies and critical pedagogy in their classrooms. At *El Instituto*, teachers were asked to reflect on the intersectionality of their racial, cultural, and linguistic identities and the impact those roles have in their teaching and practice. Maria, a Spanish dual language teacher remembered:

“Cuando llegué a Estados Unidos a la edad de 8 años, sin saber inglés y sin conocer a nadie en mi clase, fue traumante y llegué a odiar estar aquí. Lloré por varios días y le pedía mucho a mis padres que regresáramos a México, ya que no me podía acoplar a mi nueva clase y tampoco a la escuela. Creo que, como educadores, nos olvidamos de nuestras propias experiencias, pero es igual de importante incluir nuestras propias narrativas en el desarrollo profesional/ When I came to the United States at the age of 8, not knowing English and not knowing anyone in my class, it was traumatizing and I came to hate being here. I cried for several days and asked my parents many times to return to Mexico, since I couldn’t adjust to my new class or to school. I think as educators we forget about our own experiences, but it is just as important to include our own narratives in professional development.” -Maria

In this narrative, Maria highlighted the relationship between race, language, and culture that informed her own experiences and ideologies about bilingual education. Maria described the importance in relating and incorporating personal racial, language, and cultural narratives into her own practice as a way to never forget their own language trajectories and histories of harm within the same school systems. Maria described a need for this to also occur during professional development opportunities.

Bilingual teachers at *El Instituto* also collaborated to interrogate a raciolinguistic analysis of their dual language/ bilingual programs at their own school sites. This goal of the CPD aimed to foster bilingual teachers’ critical consciousness and agency. As a result, Glenda, a middle school bilingual/ ELD teacher provided context about her school, she shared:

“La mayoría de mis estudiantes son provenientes de El Salvador (8), México (6), Guatemala (5), y Honduras (3). Los estudiantes están en un salón de clases llamado ‘Self Contained classroom’... además de poner una etiqueta más en ellos, es opresión, segregación, pone marcos marginales, y connotaciones negativas a mis estudiantes. Ellos están siendo aislados del resto de la comunidad estudiantil y mis estudiantes

sienten la desigualdad en un plantel educativo que les debería de brindar un ambiente positivo/ Most of my students are from El Salvador (8), Mexico (6), Guatemala (5), and Honduras (3). The students are in a classroom called ‘Self Contained classroom’... in addition to putting another label on them, it is a type of oppression and segregation that puts marginal frames, and negative connotations to my students. They are being isolated from the rest of the student community and my students feel the inequality from the institution that should provide them with a positive environment.” -Glenda

In this excerpt, Glenda demonstrated a critical consciousness that recognized the inequitable racial injustices practiced at her school. Glenda was challenging the labeling, marginalization, segregation, and oppressive conditions that govern majority Latinx students at her school. In this example, Glenda described the manifestation of the relationships between race, language, and culture and how these positioned Latinx students at a disadvantage. This acknowledgement is a first step that will lead Glenda into critical teacher agency by pursuing transformative change at her school. By engaging in collective action that is unified, bilingual teachers can find the support they need by participating in activist networks. It is this type of critical teacher agency that can directly shape the lives of students and communities.

Other teachers at *El Instituto* were already working to engage their critical teacher agency in collective action towards transformed ideologies and critical pedagogy. By interrogating a raciolinguistic analysis, bilingual teachers were able to problematize the state of dual language bilingual education with hopes to enact transformative change in policy and practice. Pedro, another dual immersion teacher at *El Instituto*, described:

“La población estudiantil en programas bilingüe esta cambiando e incluyendo a mas estudiantxs afroamericanos. Ahora, la inclusión en estos espacios educativos también tiene que tomar en cuenta la cultura y lenguaje de casa de los alumnxs afroamericanos. Este reto presenta la desigualdad social entre la intersección de la escolarización y la lengua/ The student

population in such programs is changing and including more African American students. Now, inclusion in these educational spaces also has to take into account the home culture and language of African American students. This challenge presents the social inequality between the intersection of schooling and language” -Pedro

In this raciolinguistic analysis, Pedro asserted the need to account for Black/African American students and other minoritized multilingual student populations that are often ignored in the context of dual language bilingual education. His analysis helped bridge the relationship between race, language, and culture that expands beyond Spanish-English discourse. This raciolinguistic analysis not only highlights teacher agency but calls for a shift in focus to include other minoritized multilingual students of color besides Latinx students. Through this lens of critical consciousness and approach in teacher agency, Pedro was able to seek engagement in towards collective action for transformed ideologies and critical pedagogy amongst other bilingual teachers in community.

CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

As highlighted in the overarching goals of *El Instituto*, the CPD has presented counter-hegemonic bilingual teacher critical professional development for the past eight years. During this time, *El Instituto* has practiced critical professional development with over 300 bilingual teachers, all of whom have participated in hopes of a space to enact critical teacher agency. As a result of ongoing CPD, bilingual teachers have demonstrated growth in transformed ideologies. Across the years, *El Instituto*, has been and will continue to be a space to engage in critical and dialogical learning facilitated entirely in Spanish. Despite the challenges, *El Instituto*’s determined focus on a raciolinguistic approach to CPD nurtured critical teacher agency to be able to support teachers in challenging systemic institutional oppression within the context of dual language bilingual education. As evidenced in the excerpts collected, the program has fostered teacher solidarity and activism by building on teachers’ linguistic capital and agency.

To build on the work of *El Instituto*, it is necessary for other communities, organizations, and programs to make intentional space for bilingual teacher critical professional development. Bilingual education must be complicit in a commitment to advance the knowledge and skills of both pre-service and in-service bilingual teachers with CPD. To move towards critical professional development approaches, brave spaces of learning must be developed alongside bilingual teachers and their needs to unpack and reflect on decades of linguistic trauma. It is under this model of CPD, that other spaces can also begin to interrogate and analyze examples of raciolinguistics to foster critical consciousness. These spaces need to be created for bilingual teachers by conducting learning opportunities in the partnered language that will help rediscover their linguistic repertoires. A goal of centering critical teacher agency and linguistic capital must be utilized to uplift language development without fear of judgement.

Implications of *El Instituto* also call on teacher education programs across the nation to build stronger pathways that support the growth and expansion of bilingual teacher candidates that will be ready for the K-12 classroom. Despite an interest in bilingual education, very few teacher candidates are pursuing bilingual authorizations that are required according to state regulations to teach and support a range of multilingual students and their families. Teacher education programs aiming to sustain bilingual teachers must mirror examples of critical pedagogy and praxis found in CPD so that teachers have models and guidance to follow. Teachers cannot be left alone in this work; it is necessary to follow generative frameworks that reflect teachers' localized realities in the communities they serve. Modeling after *El Instituto*, other spaces can facilitate network building amongst like-minded critical bilingual teachers to encourage leadership, collegiality, and activism. Furthermore, carefully created CPD can support teacher agency by establishing a pipeline of critical guiding teachers to partner with bilingual teacher candidates. These aspects of *El Instituto* are what truly embody equitable praxis in bilingual education.

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