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Voices of Bilingualism: A Linguistic Ethnography in a Paraguayan Urban School

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Voices of Bilingualism: A Linguistic Ethnography in a Paraguayan Urban School

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An abstract of
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James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
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Abstract

Voices of Bilingualism: A Linguistic Ethnography in in a Paraguayan Urban School
by Guilherme Von Streber

This dissertation analyzes the dynamics of bilingualism and language policies (LPs) in contexts influenced by nationalism and globalization. Weaving through six chapters that span from theoretical frameworks to practical implications, I argue that unrealistic expectations for a language variety to be implemented in all domains and for all purposes—as outlined by traditional conceptions of bilingualism between named languages—paradoxically delegitimizes a language and the *de facto* language practices of its speakers. The first chapter serves as an introduction to all topics that I cover, providing a roadmap for the subsequent chapters. The second chapter delves into my research approach and methodologies, with special emphasis on describing my linguistic ethnography and data analysis procedures. Theoretical justifications for the chosen methods are articulated, alongside a detailed account of data collection and interpretation practices. At the heart of the study, chapters three and four address the complex status of the Guarani language in Paraguayan society and its implications for national identity and bilingualism. Chapter three explores the paradox of Guarani as both central to identity and problematic in its indexicality, influencing language practices and ideologies. Chapter four transitions to the realm of Language Policies (LPs), examining the translation of macro-LPs into everyday practices and highlighting the discrepancies between *de jure* and *de facto* policies. The fifth chapter extends the analysis to the linguistic landscapes of hybrid educational spaces, particularly under the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. This section synthesizes data from both physical and virtual learning environments, providing a nuanced understanding of language choice and practices. The concluding chapter synthesizes the findings, positioning this project as a pioneering post-COVID-19 study that bridges academic and participant perspectives on bilingualism. It calls for a more situated, participant-informed approach to language policy formulation, emphasizing the divergence between global language influences and vernacular realities. This dissertation contributes to the academic discourse on bilingualism in post-colonial contexts and highlights the need for LPs that are responsive to the lived experiences of language users in a globalized world.

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Dedication

To Alexander Steffanell, my intellectual, professional, and life-long mentor and friend. Thank you.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Languages and Globalization

Language plays a central role in the diffusion of pro-globalization and neoliberal discourses. Globalization and the discourses that promote it posit that, much like the neo-liberal market's invisible hand, the languages that facilitate the most economic progress will be the ones to prevail. Globalization consists of the fluid interplay between a unified global market, systems of mass communication, technological advancement, circulating ideologies, and movement of people across the world (Appadurai, 1996). This idea is rooted in the "inevitable nature" of globalization: "The globalist discourse on the inevitability and progressive nature of globalization is not new…the goal of imperial powers has always been to increase control over markets and to protect the wealth of the monarch or corporation" (Ricento, 2010: 125). Such narratives seek to present globalization and neoliberalism as a naturally occurring phenomenon. Yet ultimately, they naturalize the dominance of imperialistic nation-states, corporations, and their languages—such as English, Spanish, and Portuguese—worldwide.

Language is then a device that serves the interests of imperial powers and corporations, and minoritized communities do not immediately benefit from using globalized languages. Pro-globalization discourses—disguised under the message of progress for everyone—have real effects on societies and their languages. These effects can be measured by analyzing metalinguistic commentaries on language, which, in turn, affects language practices and the crafting of language policies (LPs). While globalist discourses present certain languages, such as English, as a neutral, accessible-to-everyone language that brings economic progress, this is not applicable to all. For example, in South Africa, the Apartheid policies that began in the mid-twentieth century contributed to creating clear-cut and intentional language hierarchies where

English enjoyed power and prestige over local African languages. Currently, in the post-Apartheid era, speakers of African languages have access to English instruction at different public schools. However, the mere knowledge of English does not grant minority communities access to economic mobility, particularly when their home languages are seen as defective (Ricento, 2010: 135). Language alone does not promote equality, otherwise, the simple fact that L2 speakers know a language like English would automatically take vulnerable populations out of poverty.

Spain is one nation-state that similarly seeks to promote and profit from the use of a global language, in this case, Spanish. One of the main proponents for the use of Spanish as a global language is the Real Academia Española (RAE). Whereas RAE claims to merely notice and report on the state and evolution of the Spanish language worldwide, some have strongly challenged their claims:

> RAE promotes and naturalizes the idea of a disembedded global norm as if this were somehow not linked to or "owned" by any particular authority, but merely "noticed" as a linguistic reality by the Academies and described in their publications. Yet, on the other hand this is not merely described but is instead prescribed and determined by the specific, identifiable, nationally embedded language guardians of Spain. (Paffey, 2012: 176)

This language institution conveys the message that Spanish is a pluricentric language that has many prestige varieties around the world to assert that the Spanish from nowhere can become the Spanish for everywhere and everyone (Paffey, 2012, 153). However, far from simply noticing, the academy relies on language standardization, a process that involves interventions that are far from "natural."

Language standardization enhances the authority and dominance of institutions such as RAE. Standardization involves high degrees of intervention and language curation: it starts with the selection of a certain language variety, which in most cases corresponds to what elite groups of society use. Then, academies establish linguistic parameters by creating an orthography, establishing a grammar, and selecting a lexicon. Lastly, institutions promote the curated language variety and aim for speakers to use it, disseminate it, and in this way reassert its legitimacy (Paffey, 2012: 52). These standardization efforts result in creating hierarchies of languages, which grants power to some and excludes minoritized languages and their speakers.

Such language hierarchies have expanded well beyond Spanish. The existence and success of these standardization agents have also led to the creation of language academies of other languages. Within the Spanish-speaking world, Guatemala has the Guatemalan Academy of Mayan Languages, which also seeks to select and promote certain language varieties that it considers adequate and even superior. In South America, language academies have attempted to disseminate the use of standardized languages, as in Paraguay. These processes—which have consequences and a concrete impact on the lives of multilingual speakers—are generally studied under the rubric of Language Policy and Planning Studies.

1.2. Dissertation Overview

This dissertation is an in-depth analysis of bilingualism and language policies (LPs). I focus on three core elements in the study of LPs as primarily defined by Spolsky (2004, 2019): language ideologies (Chapter 3), language legislation (Chapter 4), and language practices (Chapter 5). Throughout my analysis, I look at the inevitable influence that language hierarchies within the spectrum of global narratives have on language practices and their speakers. Although

these hierarchies are shifting and specific to the context in which they occur, they tend to serve the interest of economically dominant nation-states.

The main question that guides this project is: How do shared understandings of bilingualism—or metacommentaries about language—affect language practices and language policies? I argue that unrealistic expectations for a language variety to be implemented in all domains and for all purposes—as outlined by traditional conceptions of named languages—paradoxically delegitimizes a language and the language practices of its speakers.

To analyze the objects of this study in the context where they occur, I conducted a linguistic ethnography in Asuncion, Paraguay at an educational institution that I refer to by the pseudonym Paulo Freire School (PFS). I worked with the members of this educational community to analyze their role as translators of LPs from legislation (*de jure*) to practices (*de facto*).[1] I chose Asuncion as the locus of this linguistic ethnography to analyze the influence of the overlapping effects of globalization forces on language practices at a predominantly bilingual site (see 1.3.1 for site description). PFS then serves as a microcosm of globalized Asuncion vis-à-vis the world.

My linguistic ethnography entailed a process of semi-participant observation at the selected institution. The primary elements of language practices that I analyzed were language choice, language attitudes, and talk about language at the institution. These instances of practice further provided data to analyze language ideologies, which I understand as circulating discourses, power relations, and hierarchies of language (Irvine, 1989; Kroskrity, 2008; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). In addition, I conducted one-on-one interviews with social actors involved

[1] Throughout this manuscript, I signal words in languages other than English in italics. The exception for this rule is when I use established proper nouns such as "Asuncion" or "Guarani." In these cases, I omit accent marks in alignment with English orthography.

and, lastly, document analysis of various class elements, school LPs, and some clauses of Paraguay's national legislation about language LPs.[2]

I approach bilingualism as defined by the target community while avoiding isolated instances of language use. I understand bilingualism as a localized and collectively constructed phenomenon that defies affiliation to two or more named languages. Affiliation to a language goes beyond mere competency in a code and encompasses social positioning, interaction, and allegiance to it (García, 2011; Wei, 2018). Ultimately, I aim to provide a representative picture of the social meaning of language in Paraguay. In doing so, I grapple with themes that include—yet are not limited to—language ideologies, language and identity, LPs, language practices, and language and globalization. To thoroughly analyze these issues, I combine macro- and microanalytical approaches into this project.

This dissertation responds to gaps in understanding of bilingualism and LPs. It does so by challenging the idea of named languages, implementing an ethnography, and focusing on community understandings of language. First, despite the significant advancements that general linguistic scholarship on Paraguayan bilingualism has achieved to date, virtually all of this work has been carried out by describing language practices in the country according to a notion of clear divisions between named languages, or an understanding of language as a static set of codes, bounded by specific norms without the interference of "foreign" codes. To address this gap, I implement a translanguaging framework throughout the dissertation (see section 1.3). Moreover, in Paraguay there is an imminent need to approach bilingualism ethnographically and from the lens of a community (Penner, 2014). This implies studying bilingualism in context and

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[2] This section is intended to briefly introduce the reader to my methods. In Chapter 2 "Approaches and Methods," I provide detailed explanations and justifications for the methods I use in this dissertation.

through an ethnographic approach, avoiding resorting to isolated instances of language use. This dissertation thus addresses gaps in the field literature by carefully situating the analysis in the context where they occur.

1.3. Situating Research

1.3.1. Research Locus: Paraguay is a "bilingual nation" where Spanish and Guarani are co-official languages (Fishman, 1967; Rubin, 1968; Zajícová, 2009). Compared to other countries—especially its neighbors such as Bolivia, Argentina, or Brazil—it stands out for its high levels of bilingualism among the general population, which are approximately two-thirds bilingual, and because of the official status of the indigenous language Guarani (Paraguay, 2004). Most of the country's history and a series of national narratives about language contribute to positioning Guarani as one of the most valued elements in the collective identity of the country. Yet, paradoxically, while Guarani is arguably the maximum expression of national identity, the language is stigmatized by the same people who claim strong ties with it, which creates a complex indexical field and analytical scenario.

Unlike other previously colonized bilingual countries such as Mexico or Bolivia, a significant part of the population who does not identify as indigenous descendants speaks the Guarani language as well as Spanish. This is due to other factors such as the region's geographical isolation as well as lower rates of mestizaje—or mixing between the indigenous peoples and the Spanish colonizers—than other Latin American countries. Historically, geographical isolation in relation to other settlements during the colonial period and lack of natural resources contributed to the isolation of the Paraguayan population and continued use of the local language Guarani. In fact, as indicated by census data, the country has long been predominantly Guarani-speaking (Paraguay, 2004). Currently, the number of primary speakers of

Guarani is experiencing a slow yet steady decrease, mostly due to higher Internet connectivity and other changes associated with globalization. Nonetheless, Guarani seemingly continues to index belonging and collective identity in the country.

Asuncion, the capital city, is a representation of Paraguay's urban scenario. Home to more than a fifth of the Paraguayan population, Asuncion serves as a cultural and linguistic model for the rest of the country, from which beliefs and styles emanate to smaller urban centers and rural regions. Thus, the current speech patterns of urban youth in the capital city can be indicative of future linguistic tendencies for the rest of the country (Solé, 1996). Paulo Freire School (PFS), a school built by the Brazilian government and currently maintained by the Paraguayan government, is a representative site that demonstrates how middle-class, urban, educated populations deal with different languages in Asuncion. Language instruction is especially salient at PFS given that, in addition to offering Spanish and Guarani courses, the school also emphasizes Portuguese instruction, honoring its historic ties to Brazil.

Understanding bilingualism and the social meaning of languages in Paraguay requires a multifaceted approach. Particularly, the Guarani language raises questions that go beyond language practice and into areas such as identity, belonging, ethnicity, and nation. A careful look at language ideologies, language practices, and LPs is imperative to have a better understanding of individual and collective conceptualizations of language.

1.3.2. Paraguay and the Social Meaning of Languages: In March of 2021, while I was conducting ethnographic fieldwork in Paraguay, a leaked WhatsApp voice clip brought the topic of language to the forefront of public debates in the country. In the rural town of Curuguaty, a wealthy Brazilian landowner of German ancestry attempted to ban her Paraguayan employees from using Guarani, a national indigenous language, on her farm. In the voice clip—sent to a

private messaging group on WhatsApp—the landowner explicitly prohibited the use of the Guarani language at work. The message had a reproachful undertone towards Guarani speakers. She expressed that she and her husband found the use of Guarani in front of them to be disrespectful, likely reinforcing the stigma that Guarani can have among the population. She justified the measure by noting that the couple refrained from speaking either Portuguese or German in front of the employees. The voice clip ended with a warning that whoever was not happy with the new rules could quit the job. Even though this message was sent privately, it was rapidly forwarded to members of the local community and soon to the entire country, provoking general condemnation.

This workplace controversy in the private sector made its way to the mainstream media, and bilingualism became a central theme of debate. National newspapers, such as *ABC Color* and *La Nación* reported on the incident, including the message of condemnation issued by *Secretaría de Políticas Lingüísticas* (National Language Policies Agency) (Duarte, 2021). Similarly, the *Ateneo de la Lengua Guaraní* (Guarani Language Academy) also manifested its reproach of the act (*Mediante comunicado*…, 2021). The landowner later apologized publicly, yet the follow-up responses to her apologies still showed outrage from the general public.

The local community in Curuguaty also responded with anger and reproach. Protesters gathered in front of the landowner's home to express their indignation. Newspaper's photos of the event show hundreds of people in front of the house (*Mediante comunicado*… 2021). This protest devolved into acts of vandalism, graffiti messages on the property's walls, heavy littering of the surroundings of the house, and the breaking of windows. Most protesters chanted messages of reproach in Guarani such as "*tereho ñande retã*" (leave our country), and in Spanish: "*Paraguay, tierra guaraní*" (Paraguay, a Guarani land), and "*Fuera del país*" (leave the

country). The crowds also featured a local musician singing *Guarania* and Paraguayan Polka songs in Guarani with a make-shift audio system at the location, elements that are emblematic of Paraguayan culture and folklore.

Multiple aspects of this controversy on language triggered a surge of nationalist sentiment. One of the most salient facts was that the landowner's Brazilian nationality accentuated the public's anger, as seen in one comment in the newspaper *La Nación*: "*…o se va a su país o aprende guaraní*" (…either she goes back to her country or she learns Guaraní) (*Mediante comunicado…* 2021). Additionally, the controversy erupted around *Día de los Héroes* (Heroes' Day), the March 1st national holiday that honors the martyrs of the fatherland, which evoked connections between language and nation even more. Lastly, members of the general public brought to light the links between language and national identity. Some of the messages read, "*esto es un insulto para la patria*" (this is an insult to the fatherland) and "*Paraguay es un país orgullosamente bilingüe*" (Paraguay is proudly a bilingual country). This controversy underscored the relevance of bilingualism, LPs, and the value of national identity and language in Paraguay, especially as related to the Guarani language. This incident serves to paint a partial picture of the sociopolitical moment in which I undertook my fieldwork.

1.4. Translanguaging: An Analytical Framework

My analysis aligns with the theoretical framework of translanguaging theory. The linguistics literature on bilingualism has advanced from understanding bilingualism in terms of fixed codes to understanding bilingual practices as fluid as seen through the lenses of translanguaging theory. Translanguaging consists of "…the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (Otheguy et al., 2015: 281).

This implies that a speaker may freely communicate without excessive regard for the norms and limits ascribed to any named language, such as Spanish, English, or Guaraní. In this way, translanguaging rejects traditional understandings of language based on the assumption that languages are separate entities or, similarly, that proficiency in one language comes at the expense of proficiency in another.

Translanguaging represents a shift away from traditional, monolingual models of language use towards a more dynamic and flexible understanding of language as social practice. It challenges traditional understandings of language use and learning that tend to prioritize individual languages over proficiency in multiple languages (Wei, 2018). Under translanguaging's lenses, language use is not a fixed or static practice, but dynamic and context-dependent, shaped by the social, cultural, and historical factors that stir language use and learning (Canagarajah, 2011: 2). Languages thus constitute fluid and interconnected communication practices free from bounded entities. By emphasizing language as a social practice, translanguaging highlights the importance of context in language use and its role in constructing social relationships and identities.

Bilinguals have an important degree of agency as seen when breaking the rules of the "standard" varieties of two different languages. In this light, translanguaging intersects with other understandings of language practices such as code-switching by highlighting this form of agency. Consequently, the concept challenges the misperception that bilingual linguistic competence includes mastery of two different codes. Suresh Canagarajah states that "Proficiency for multilinguals is focused on repertoire building—i.e., developing abilities in the different functions served by different languages—rather than total mastery of each and every language"

(Canagarajah, 2011: 1). All in all, communicative competence is a higher objective than traditional competence in some code.

Importantly, translanguaging theory questions the notion of "named languages" and recognizes them as ideological constructs with specific social and political consequences. Named languages impart hegemony and consequently delegitimize language varieties that are perceived as non-standard, such as the case of Jopara, a mixed set of language practices between Spanish and Guarani, which I explore in depth in Chapter 3. Perceiving one language as inferior to another has material consequences for its speakers, which are seen in areas such as general participation in the public sphere, social stigmatization, unequal access to education, or employment. We see this in the recent incident of the landowners threatening to fire their employees if they continued to use Guarani. Ultimately, these problematic conceptualizations of language underscore that linguists must work to promote more democratic understandings of language practices in general that better capture the richness of multilingual communication (Otheguy et al., 2015).

1.4.1. Translanguaging and Education: The implementation of translanguaging theory has major implications in the educational realm. Translanguaging's framework can be implemented to create more inclusive and equitable language education environments, as it allows multilingual speakers to use their complete linguistic repertoire to participate fully in classroom activities. Translanguaging further challenges traditional models of language use and language learning that tend to focus on individual languages and view multilingualism as a problem to be solved. Instead, it understands multilingualism as a resource that can be leveraged in order to promote more effective communication and learning (Wei, 2018). One of the biggest promises of translanguaging is its ability to bridge the gap between students' home language and the

language of instruction, as it allows students to draw on their full linguistic repertoire to access content and participate in classroom activities.

The implementation of translanguaging in education requires a deeper understanding of students' linguistic repertoires and how they use language in social contexts. Part of this effort must include promoting collaborative language learning activities that encourage students to draw on their full range of linguistic resources. Educators should be provided with training and support in multilingual pedagogy, as some challenges are likely to arise. For instance, allowing multiple languages in instruction can be challenging for teachers who are not familiar with their students' home languages or who lack training in multilingual pedagogy (Canagarajah, 2011). Another of the challenges is the issue of language ideologies and attitudes, particularly in settings where certain languages are seen as more prestigious or desirable than others. Canagarajah notes that teachers and students may have internalized these language ideologies, which can lead to a devaluation of certain languages and hinder the implementation of translanguaging practices (Canagarajah, 2011). Yet, the potential of translanguaging to deconstruct the hegemony of named languages is far greater than the challenges that may arise.

In the context of Paraguay, a democratic approach to language practices can challenge the widespread perception that certain language varieties must be fixed. Specifically, translanguaging may further mitigate the idea that Guarani must fulfill every communicative function (professional, academic, legal, and others) to be considered a "legitimate" language in Paraguay. To recap, this view holds that Guarani is an inadequate language since it cannot be used in technology, social media, and as a medium of instruction for higher education (just to name a few fields). Speakers echo this belief when they talk about how language can be perceived as fixed. Guarani is historically an oral language, and top-down attempts to curate the

language by ridding it of Spanish lexical borrowings have never succeeded in the country. This calls for the need to explore ground-up translingual practices, and the full meaning-making potential—semantic, pragmatic, and social—that they enable.

In an effort to dialogue and build on this study's participants' understandings of language, I make use of the labels associated with named languages. For instance, participants refer to their practices in Jopara simply as Guarani. Similarly, the local variety of Spanish differs from varieties spoken in other countries. Therefore, for the sake of clarity, I will be using the terms Guarani and Spanish to refer to the language varieties used by the speakers. This, however, does not invalidate my application of translanguaging as a language theory throughout the dissertation.

1.5. COVID-19 and Fieldwork Research

In this section, I describe the influence of COVID-19 on the fieldwork and overall structure of my research.[3] The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to my dissertation project, yet it also yielded results that better respond to the post-pandemic world. I experienced such challenges especially in the data collection component. I designed this research project in early 2020, months before COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. The ethnographic component took place between September of 2020 and July of 2021. Social distancing measures and the shift to remote online work brought much uncertainty and general confusion, as there were no indications of what the future of social-science research would look like.

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[3] For an in-depth description of my research methods, see Chapter 2 "Approaches and Methods."

One of the biggest challenges I had was dealing with physical and virtual spaces. PFS called this "*modalidad híbrida*" or hybrid spaces. My project involved participating in in-person and virtual environments. Yet, due to sanitary measures in Paraguay, most of the time research occurred online. This hybridity challenged me to expand my notion of spaces (for more information, see Chapter 2 "Approaches and Methods"). Despite having results that were different from what I anticipated, these were relevant for that period and beyond, as hybrid work and educational environments were poised to become the new norm.

In this light, I mostly interacted with participants via electronic devices and screens. Electronic communication facilitated connections whenever access to technology was available. This was quite useful with PFS participants, but it represented a major challenge when working with the rural Nueva Esperanza School (NES), which is another institution that I worked with during fieldwork. I initially intended to conduct a comparative study between these two institutions: PFS located in the capital and NES located in a semi-rural area. In comparison to PFS, Nueva Esperanza has limited economic resources, especially the student body. According to some faculty members at NES, the realities of some of their students during the pandemic forced them to pause their education indefinitely. Despite circumstances differing considerably from how I initially conceptualized them, these challenges yielded results that are a vivid representation of the social contexts that participants lived in at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this way, this study offers novel understandings pertaining to bilingualism in hybrid spaces, the local participants' responses to LPs, and new practices in education in the post-global pandemic context.

1.6. Research Positionality

I combine the theoretical and empirical approaches in linguistics with my insider's perspective on bilingualism in Paraguay. I am a US-based scholar at a highly endowed Research 1 private university. Most of my academic formation is rooted in Western, and North American traditions and universities. While I aim to establish an intellectual dialogue with scholars from around the world, most of them belong to Western institutions too. This trend results in the tendency to prioritize hegemonic voices over those of the global south in my research. To address this gap, throughout this dissertation, I give prominence to bottom-up approaches and voice the community's forms of knowledge. Particularly, I seek to co-construct understanding with the participants in my ethnography.

My professional and personal connections to Paraguay inevitably inform my analysis. I bring both an insider's and outsider's perspective to my analysis. I grew up and attended primary and secondary school in Paraguay. The issues that I analyze surrounded me while I was growing up, as attending school in Paraguay involved learning and speaking Guarani and in many ways being a part of that community of practice. I am proficient in the languages that I study (Spanish, Guarani, Portuguese), as well as being a speaker of the local language varieties. In addition, my training in a US-based academic context allows me to approach my objects of study from an academic standpoint, which, combined with my experiences, offer results that bring in both top-down and bottom-up considerations.

My affiliation with a US university worked to my benefit when conducting research in Asuncion. US universities have a high reputation and academic prestige in my chosen research setting. I enjoyed the benefits of being someone who underwent most of my elementary education through high school in Paraguay and is currently studying abroad. In many instances, I was introduced as a scholar researching "*en el extranjero*" (studying abroad). This allowed me to

obtain access to the institution and to establish initial rapport with the participants involved in the study.

Finally, as an effort to take a constructivist approach, I acknowledge that research is not neutral.[4] My sociocultural background, gender identity, and life experiences contribute to shaping the conclusions that I draw alongside participants. These findings occur in conversation with the members of the community of practice that I work with. Like other scholars conducting critical research in sociolinguistics, I acknowledge that my work cannot be separated from my immediate sociocultural context: "…our work is the product of specific socio-historical conditions that affect what we study, why, how and how it is received by others" (Heller, 2018).

1.6.1. Dissertating multilingually: One of the challenges I faced with this project was that of language choice, both during data collection and the writing of the results. While doing fieldwork, I primarily used Spanish with participants as it was their preferred language. Nonetheless, in a few instances, I was able to communicate in Jopara, the mixed language variety that corresponds to the local linguistic practices, with some instructors and students if the occasion allowed for it. Additionally, there were opportunities that allowed for the use of Portuguese as well.

For a researcher conducting work in bilingualism, language choice can represent a conundrum. I consciously decided to write this project in English, which in turn implies that I prioritized it over other languages that I work with such as Spanish, Guarani, or even Portuguese. I acknowledge that in the writing of this text, I abide by the constraints of named languages as they follow norms and conventions of academia. I chose English because my primary

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[4] For an in-depth explanation of constructivist approach, see Chapter 2 "Approaches and Methods" section 2.3.1.

interlocutors and colleagues are mostly English speakers. While this decision may partially replicate the hegemony of this Western language, it also permits a broader audience, due to the global presence of English. I seek to contest dominant views of linguistic essentialism, especially those about named languages. However, I operate within an academic context where named languages and the reinforcement of their boundaries are the default. In these scenarios, to function and succeed at the institutional level, choosing English is preferable for its appeal to broad audiences and for being the preferred language of academic circles in the Western world.

Although not an answer to this conundrum, I view translanguaging as a theory that seeks to problematize named languages rather than invalidate or even eliminate them. I build on Wei Li's notion that:

> [Translanguaging] does not deny the existence of named languages, but stresses that languages are historically, politically, and ideologically defined entities. It defines the multilingual as someone who is aware of the existence of the political entities of named languages and has an ability to make use of the structural features of some of them that they have acquired. (Wei, 2018)

The concept of translanguaging highlights the agency of multilinguals in strategically abiding by or defying the boundaries of named languages situationally. Certainly, the participants in this study—whether aware of translanguaging theory or not—mixed languages to communicate their ideas, used Guarani symbolically to assert their collective identity as Paraguayans, and learned a foreign language such as Portuguese to obtain a job or scholarship abroad. Yet later in this dissertation (Chapter 3), I go over their negative perceptions of these translingual practices. Finally, part of my effort with this dissertation is to align my research with the constructivist

approach with bottom-up, on-the-ground view of languages imply using the same labels that my participants use. In this case, Spanish, Jopara, Guaraniete, Portuguese, English, and French.

1.7. Chapters Overview

The dissertation is organized into six chapters, with this introduction constituting the first. In this chapter, I have aimed to give a broad overview of my research and findings and provide a roadmap for the dissertation, with a careful description of its main parts. I introduce the reader to the fundamental topics that my project covers, offer a brief description of my research locus, and make general remarks about the project. In Chapter 2 "Approaches and Methods," I describe the general methodologies of my research and analysis. The chapter outlines and pays special attention to the methodology I used during the fieldwork and the data analytical phase. First, the chapter lays out the theoretical orientations and justifications for choosing a linguistic ethnography as the main research approach. Then, it focuses on the methods that I used for collecting data during the semi-participant observation. Additionally, it describes the process of analysis and interpretation of data. Finally, the chapter goes over the research site and social actors involved in the project in detail.

Chapter 3, "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language: National Identity and Pursuing "True" Bilingualism" explores the ambivalent condition of Guarani in the country. In this chapter, I analyze language, identity, and language ideologies in Paraguay. I approach these issues by looking at circulating discourses on national identity vis-à-vis metalinguistic discourse in the fieldwork data collected between September 2020 to July 2021. I further discuss the influence of language ideologies on language practices among Paraguayan speakers. I argue that tensions between highly valued collective identity and an ambivalent indexical value of Guarani create a language paradox. This paradox ultimately constrains speakers from freely

communicating, and instead reinforces adherence to hierarchically ordered named languages, favoring a shift to Spanish based on the assumption that language is in constant need of repair in the country.

The fourth chapter, "Translating Policy into Practice: Local Language Practices at Paulo Freire School" analyzes the transition from language policies to language practices and their recurring relationship. It focuses on analyzing educational Language Policies (LPs) at Paulo Freire School (PFS) based on ethnographic data that I collected from September 2020 to July 2021. While the focus is on local language practices at PFS, I contrast these to management-level, or *de jure* LPs as established by Paraguayan national legislation. I compare these language practices to the expected outcomes of *Ley de Lenguas* (Languages Law), which represents one of the biggest changes in macro, management-level policies in Paraguay. The main question that guides my analysis is: how does the PFS community translate macro-LPs into local language practices? To analyze this, I take into account language ideologies, contained in national narratives about languages, and their influence on the construction of language policies. I argue that PFS youths' translingual LP practices challenge the expected outcomes of management-level LP projects, such as *Ley de Lenguas*, by rejecting notions of linguistic purity and redefining language use according to their own orientations. My findings point out that regardless of the current and upcoming effects of *Ley de Lenguas*—especially after the last phase of its effectuation in 2021—PFS' local language practices better respond to the urban, globalized reality surrounding them: a Spanish-dominant society aspiring to academic, scholarly, and economic success by favoring global languages over the vernacular one. This mainly manifests in three areas: the nature of local linguistic culture, language ideologies, and the symbolic value of language in Paraguay. This process of redefining language use is seen in the community's

symbolic ties with the Guarani language in terms of language use and identity. These findings call for more situated, bottom-up approaches in the crafting of national LPs in Paraguay.

In Chapter 5 “Linguistic Landscapes in Hybrid Educational Spaces” I describe the findings of a Linguistic Landscape project that aimed to understand the meaning-making process behind language choice and language practices at PFS. In my analysis, I combined the data collected during the initial visits to the school site with an analysis of the online environment that educators and students were a part of for most of the 2020 and 2021 school years. I combine LL methods that are conventionally focused on physical spaces (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Gorter, 2006; Spolsky, 2012) with an additional expanded understanding of what constitutes space during COVID-19 lockdown protocols, drawing inspiration from language ecology, schoolscapes, and definitions of space beyond physical contexts (Brown, 2012; Canagarajah, 2018; Kramsch, 2018). I argue that, despite an apparent predominance of Spanish in written elements of PFS,’ educators’ and students’ language practices surpass affiliation to a single named language across domains. Finally, in the sixth chapter “Conclusion,” I provide holistic remarks on this project and its findings. I conclude by outlining future lines of inquiry and research on the topics I cover.

This dissertation advances understandings of bilingualism and language policies in post-colonial societies by looking at the case of Paraguay. I aim to privilege participants’ voices and bridge gaps between academic understandings of bilingualism and those of the participants. This dissertation is among the first on this topic to emerge in the post-COVID-19 period. Although this constituted a significant challenge, it is a privilege to be among the first scholars to grapple with questions pertinent to bilingualism, language and globalization, and hybrid spaces.

Chapter 2 Approaches and Methods

2.0. Chapter Introduction

This chapter outlines the approaches and methods that I implement in this dissertation, specifically the methodology used during the fieldwork and the data analytical phase. First, this chapter goes over the theoretical orientations and justifications for choosing a linguistic ethnography as the main research approach. Next, it focuses on the methods that I used for collecting data during fieldwork. Then, it describes the process of analysis and interpretation of my data. Finally, it describes the research site and social actors involved in the project in detail. The chapter concludes with a recapitulation of my methodological approaches.

2.1. Methodological orientations

2.1.1. Linguistic Ethnography: To explore the fine-grain aspects and implications of Language Policy (LP) practices in a multilingual educational context, I chose to conduct a linguistic ethnography primarily at Paulo Freire School (PFS), in Asuncion, Paraguay (for a detailed description of this institution, see "2.4.1. Physical Site-Paulo Freire School"). In addition, I interviewed members of Nueva Esperanza School (NES), located in a semi-rural area of the country. A linguistic ethnography, as opposed to other oral methods, allowed me to immerse myself and become a part of this community—through long-term involvement and daily interactions—and analyze the lived experiences of the people who are affected by macro-, meso-, and micro-LPs in Paraguay.[5] I chose a linguistic ethnographic approach to analyze each of these components of LP phenomena that Spolsky outlines (2004). According to this author, the

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[5] See section 4.2.1. of Chapter 4 "Translating Policy Into Practice…" for an explanation of macro, meso, and micro Language Policies.

study of LP is divided into management, practices, and ideologies, yet the author does not clearly propose methods to analyze these.

One of the reasons why the *Ley de Lenguas* project—a key, large-scale piece of linguistic legislation that inspired me to conduct this project—struggles to attain its goals is due to the text's disregard for Paraguayans' ground LP practices.[6] This implies taking a close look at translanguaging practices seen in the use of language without watchful adherence to the boundaries of named languages and standardized norms, which are some aspects that macro-LP management approaches tend to overlook. Specifically, an ethnographic approach allows me to analyze these topics on the ground rather than simply impose external, or etic, understandings of Paraguayan social and linguistic practices.

Ethnographies—and linguistic ethnographies—are a canonical methodology in the social sciences that seek to explore ways in which meaning is socially constructed and collectively situated (Rosa, 2019, Mendoza-Denton, 2018, Eckert, 1989, Heller et. al., 2018, Mendes, 2023). The process of participant observation in a target community constitutes the central component of this methodology. It involves the insertion of the researcher within a given context for an extended period. Such effort allows researchers to delve deeply into the object of study while making familiar things strange and strange things familiar (Heller et. al., 2018: 78).

Linguistic ethnographies have been utilized to illuminate the intersection of class background and language (Eckert, 1989); to understand the link between language and group affiliation/ ideologies (Mendoza-Denton, 2018); to analyze the influence of national discourses of race in light of educators' perceptions of their students (Carter, 2014); and to examine the

[6] For more information and a thorough analysis of *Ley de Lenguas* LP project in Paraguay, see Chapter 4 "Translating Policy Into Practice" of this dissertation.

racialization of language (Rosa, 2019). Ethnographies have also been a core component in exploring the social meaning and collectively constructed value of language in what scholars call the “third wave” in sociolinguistics studies (Eckert, 2018). Moreover, linguistic ethnographies that study Language Policy and Planning (LPP) have proven to illuminate not only the micro aspects of LPP but also the macro-ones. They shed light on the way individuals and institutions deal with policy and power, as well as individual agencies and the influence of negotiation in this process (Johnson, 2013). For example, McCarty et. al. explored the effects of local LPs of North American Navajo youth through community participation (2011). This approach allowed the authors to arrive at a grounded and nuanced understanding of LPs and language and identity within this community, rather than reinforcing preconceived notions of language that were imposed on these youth.

My work is in direct dialogue and builds on the work and methods of linguistic ethnographies and globalization phenomena by Mendes (2018, 2021, 2023). Mendes’ work scrutinizes the impact of globalization on LP and multilingualism in Corsica. Where my dissertation emphasizes the complexities of Guarani’s status and its implications for national identity and bilingualism, Mendes’ work intricately dissects the tension between French national and Corsican regional curricular policies, examining their teleological orientations towards language study and the resulting ideologies. Both studies reveal discrepancies between *de jure* and *de facto* policies, shedding light on the gap between global language influences and local contexts. Additionally, while my research focuses on linguistic landscapes in hybrid educational spaces, particularly under the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mendes’ work examines linguistic multiplicity in Corsican public spaces through an analysis of language representations and the experiences of vulnerable populations, specifically unaccompanied foreign minors in a

French as a Second Language class. These parallel investigations demonstrate a shared interest in the interplay between globalization, LPs, and the lived experiences of language users, offering complementary insights into the complexities and challenges faced by multilingual communities within distinct socio-cultural contexts.

In my own linguistic ethnography, I analyzed how participants translate LP into practices and explored the larger theme of shared understandings of language within this community. This process entailed semi-participant observations, interviews, and document analysis. The fieldwork component of this project lasted ten months, from September of 2020 to July of 2021. I primarily conducted semi-participant observation, being an observer while having no responsibilities in the classroom setting, both in person and online at PFS in Asuncion, Paraguay (Bonacina, 2011: 138). I additionally conducted online interviews with faculty at Nueva Esperanza School (NES), a rural school located an hour and a half away east of downtown Asuncion, to contrast urban with rural perspectives. During preparation for the fieldwork, I intended to conduct in-person semi-participant observation and all subsequent activities in person in Paraguay. However, by April 2020, it became evident that such an enterprise would not be possible in light of the public health conditions at the global level. Specifically, the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to my initial plans and thus I adapted my methodology to the pandemic context.

2.1.2. COVID-19 and Online Participation: Like many other educational institutions, PFS and NES chose to conduct classes in a virtual format as early as March 2020. As a result, I delayed my initial plan of traveling to Paraguay in August 2020 and instead carried out online data collection. In January 2021, after restrictions for incoming international travelers in the country were eased, I was able to travel to Paraguay. Before classes started, I visited the PFS school site on three occasions to collect linguistic landscape (LL) data in the form of

photographs and to meet some of the educators in person. PFS planned on introducing a gradual return to in-person education in early 2021, however, this was not possible until May of 2021 because of the sudden deterioration of public health conditions in the country. Specifically, Paraguay experienced a sudden increase in COVID-19 infections after reopening its borders with neighboring countries such as Brazil. This caused the saturation of the public and private hospitals, and as a result, PFS and NES delayed the start of classes. Therefore, most of this ethnographic project was carried out in a virtual format.

From September 2020 to July 2021, I mainly worked with PFS's educators and students of *Tercero A*, or the equivalent of 12th grade in the United States whose approximate age was from 16 to 18 years old. This class was divided into two groups that would attend school in person bi-weekly, every other Friday. During this period, I was able to visit the institution on five occasions and meet the participants of this project—students and some educators—in person for the first time. Although I intended to conduct semi-participant observations in person, I was not able to do so because the school operated in a "bubbles" system, in which each bubble or class could not exceed 15 people. Nonetheless, I was able to conduct in-person group interviews with students after classes were over.

To the best of my knowledge, there are no other ethnographic studies on educational LP practices and their influences in an online environment. Although most of the time this posed an additional challenge to my research project, the hybrid nature of the study yielded fruitful results. This project sheds light on educational LP practices in a multimodal format in hybrid spaces. More generally, this research project contributes to current understandings of LP practices and the social significance of language in post-colonial societies and language pedagogies.

2.1.3. Research Site Access: The process of obtaining access to PFS, my primary research site, involved contacting the academic director a year prior to this project and meeting with some of the faculty during that period. I obtained formal permissions to conduct fieldwork at the institution in the Spring semester of 2020. PFS emphasizes pedagogical research and makes it a part of its identity as an institution, which helped me gain access to the school. PFS is an experimental school, and allowing researchers to work with the student body is a common practice, as their website states:

> *El [Colegio Paulo Freire] será un establecimiento de nivel medio, que, además de los objetivos generales de la enseñanza secundaria, tendrá por finalidad posibilitar a los estudiantes de la facultad de filosofía la necesaria práctica de enseñanza. La dirección del [Colegio Paulo Freire] será ejercida por un profesor, de preferencia licenciado por la facultad de filosofía*[7] [8] (Fieldwork documents, Oct 2020).

Further, PFS is affiliated (and shares the very same building and classrooms) with one of Paraguay's most prestigious universities, Carlos Antonio López University. [9] The university's College of Philosophy—which includes the division of education—is housed in the same facility as PFS. This affiliation and shared spatial dynamics constantly allow university students to conduct pedagogical praxis and research at the school. For example, students in education careers conduct their teaching practicum at the school (see Figure 2 for a floor plan view),

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[7] Throughout this dissertation, I provide translations of passages in Spanish and/or Guarani in the footnotes. I mark these with the introductory term "Translation:" and this is followed by the relevant translation. These are always my translations unless otherwise indicated. Moreover, these are translations from Spanish to English unless other indicated. For instance, I indicate explicitly translations from Portuguese, Guarani, or mixed Guarani-Spanish passages.

[8] Translation: "PFS will be an establishment of high school level that, aside from the general goals of secondary education, will have the goal of providing the students from the College of Philosophy an opportunity for pedagogical praxis. PFS's principal shall be a faculty member who is preferably a graduate from the College of Philosophy". (Fieldwork documents, Oct 2020).

[9] This name is a pseudonym.

according to *Profesor* Antonio (see 2.5.1. for description). Further, obtaining participants consent for the process of semi-participant observation was primarily mediated by PFS, since this is a common practice that is a part of their curriculum and enrollment in the school. Additionally, I requested consent from the focal participants of this study, in accordance with Institutional Review Board's (IRB) norms at Emory University.

My affiliation with Emory University served as an additional credential that facilitated access to the institution due to perceptions of academic prestige in Paraguay. As a researcher, belonging to a top-tier, US-based research university placed me in a position of privilege that was inevitably hierarchical. My perception was that participants—educators and students—were aware that I, someone who studied in the same educational system as they did, am now conducting academic research "*en el extranjero*" (internationally), which is understood as prestigious. In addition to my qualifications as a researcher, I understand that this perceived privilege of US-based institutions helped me recruit participants and gain access to educational spaces and interactions. It even culminated in an invitation to present my preliminary results at a local university conference in Linguistics.

2.1.4. Researcher Background and Positionality: Having local linguistic and cultural fluency was also an important aspect of gaining access and trust with this community. Prior to undertaking this research project, I lived in Paraguay for nearly 15 years. I studied through high school in Paraguay and therefore am familiar with the educational context of the country. I am a native speaker of Portuguese and Spanish, and an advanced speaker of Guarani.[10] Indeed, such experiences have provided me with valuable insider cultural knowledge to immerse myself in the

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[10] See discussion of the concept of language and language varieties in subsequent chapters, especially Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language".

research context and interact with participants while inquiring about politicized issues relating to bilingualism and identity in Paraguay.

During fieldwork, I explored local understandings of language via observation, dialogue, and co-construction of knowledge. Most of the time, having emic knowledge of the educational system and language practices in Paraguay help me contextualize my observations. Yet at other times, this also constituted a challenge, given I had to distance myself from the topics that I analyze and question taken-for-granted understandings embedded in my life experiences. For example, while in Paraguay it is common for students to have a teacher's personal cellphone number—and even use it to turn in homework assignments—this would likely be understood as unprofessional or an invasion of someone's personal space by a general audience in the United States.

Prior to this research project, I had conducted a pilot study in Asuncion, Paraguay.[11] The initial findings of this project indicate that although urban, educated, middle-class youth in Asuncion largely favor bilingualism and support the promotion of the Guarani language, they are likely to prioritize using Spanish and other international languages, mainly in the public sphere. From a macro perspective, these results were not surprising, however, they beg the question of comparison with the State's imagined and expected outcomes with the *Ley de Lenguas* project. Because Guarani is perceived to have little or no applicability in the public sphere, the participants in this study, like others under a diglossic divide, are redefining the use of Guarani by relegating it to folklore and informal contexts alone, as well as emblematic use in formal and

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[11] In "Paraguay's *Ley De Lenguas* and Youth Language Attitudes in Asuncion" (Von Streber, 2018), I surveyed and interviewed middle-class, urban, educated youth in a language instruction context. My hypothesis was that although many claim a strong identity bond with the Guarani language, urban educated youth linguistic practices contradict this claim by redefining Guarani usage as symbolic use of the language alone.

informal contexts particularly when individuals wish to foreground indexical qualities associated with the Guarani language, such as national identity and belonging. The Guarani language has consequently gained increased importance as a symbolic object, sometimes even with a nationalist undertone in the country. Lastly, the dominance of Spanish in Paraguayan society is likely to displace Guarani even from the place where it was prevalent: the private sphere (Zajícová, 2012). This pilot project has both informed and served as a point of entry to this linguistic ethnography in the educational context.

2.2. Data Sources

2.2.1. Semi-Participant Observation: My primary data collection method was in-class, semi-participant observation during Spanish Language and Literature, Guarani, and Portuguese language classes. By semi-participant observation, I refer to in-class observation without having any formal leading role over students (Bonacina, 2011: 138). I understood the classes that I selected to represent the contexts where the impact of language policies would be most salient. I conducted structured observations (see below) of class behavior as well as unstructured observations of casual and informal interactions, such as conversations among students before teachers logged into virtual classes. During this time, I took hand-written notes of my observations, aiming to record as much detail as possible. I additionally saved recorded class time (on Google Meet) in some instances to have access to a more permanent instance of classroom interactions.

During these structured observations, I prioritized attention to three main elements. First, during participation in formal settings, I observed which national/institutional LP educators chose to enforce and which ones were left out in order to identify the translation of LP management into practice. For example, if the school mandates Guarani use only during a certain

class, I measured to what degree educators enforce that or not; whether students abide by those rules; and whether the class permits the negotiation of meaning via other languages. Second, with implications for unstructured observations as well, I analyzed instances of interactions such as educators to students and vice-versa, among educators alone, and students alone while noticing who they interact with the most, in which languages, using which registers, and/or other salient linguistic features. That is, in some instances, educators employ Guarani in talking to a student who is identified primarily as a Guarani speaker, whereas they use Spanish with most of the class. Third, I paid attention to educators' and students' language choices, language attitudes, and talk about language outside of the classroom environment. This was an important data source since contextual language choice is telling of notions of appropriateness in language use. For instance, Guarani tends to carry a strong indexical link—the social understanding based on a shared ideological concept of certain linguistic forms—that signals rurality and indigeneity, thus, any metacommentaries of Guarani in this regard constituted instances of reinforcing stereotypes and ideologies (Bucholtz, 2001).

2.2.2. Fieldnotes: Fieldnotes were a central element during the process of semi-participant observation. I took detailed handwritten notes of my observations during online classes. These notes were taken mostly in Spanish; however, I also incorporated the language of the classes I was observing. For example, I heavily incorporated Portuguese into my notes when I worked with *Profesora* Soledad in her Portuguese and Guarani during classes with *Profesora* Luisa (for a detailed description of participants, see 2.5.1 "Focal Participants"). I later organized my notes in a Word document and attempted immediately after class to create a cohesive narrative of events. Writing and recording of events during these observations was a translingual

process in which I mainly used Spanish but also incorporated Guarani or Portuguese if participants were using those languages.

2.2.3. Transcription: Immediately after class, I transcribed handwritten notes into a Microsoft Word document. I aimed to reconstruct the events that took place during each meeting. I organized the events in chronological order and recorded the approximate time at which each event took place. In addition, I started transcription entries for each class observed with a summary of the meeting followed by the most salient events. In total, I accumulated over 71 single-spaced pages and a word count of nearly 39,000 words in Word documents from my observations. I conceive of the transcription process as part of the data analysis, described in detail in the next section. Below, I provide an excerpt of transcribed field notes:

> *Lunes, 3 de mayo. Clase en Google Meets. Panorama: Día del examen. Todos tienen que tomarlo con sus cámaras encendidas y uniformados. Aproximadamente 10 alumnos parecen depender de celulares para tomar el examen. Lo toman en Google Forms. Realmente varios aparentan tener dificultades de conexión*
>
> *- 11:13 am: Soledad llama la lista de asistencia y pide que todos enciendan sus cámaras.*
>
> *- Uno a uno, todos las encienden aunque algunos con dificultades.*
>
> *- Se puede ver que algunos no tienen una conexión muy buena.*
>
> *- 11:17 (35/37 alumnos presentes) Todos necesitan tener la cámara encendida y así poder entrar a Google Forms y tomar el examen escrito*
>
> *-Steffano utiliza el celular de su mamá para hacer el examen* (Field notes, May 2021).[12]

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[12] Translation: Monday, May 3rd. Class on Google Meets. Overview: Exam Day. Everyone must take it with their cameras on and wear the school's uniform. Approximately 10 students seem to depend on a cellphone for taking the exam. They do it on Google Forms. Many of them seem to have connectivity issues.

- 11:13 am: Soledad calls roll and asks everyone to turn on their cameras.
- One by one, everyone turns their cameras on although some have issues with it.

2.2.4. Interviews: To obtain a complementary perspective with these observations, I conducted semi-scripted, individual and group interviews with educators and students at PFS and NES. During these interviews, I inquired about their language use, attitudes toward languages, and meta commentaries about language itself. I understand interviews as a key component of this study that allows me to co-construct knowledge alongside the social actors of this ethnography, rather than conceiving of them as mere informants from which knowledge can be extracted. (Heller et. al., 2018) Indeed, questions during these interviews were mostly oriented to elicitation of participants' views on language. Yet I also relied on the open-ended nature of these interviews to yield rich data that depicts the life experiences of these participants in this multilingual setting.

Although I anticipated that most interviews would be carried out either in person or by video conferences, many also took place via the messaging app WhatsApp (see 2.4.3. for a detailed description). For example, when I requested an interview with Belen, a *Tercero A* student, she agreed to do it via WhatsApp. This is an excerpt of the interview:

- GVS: *¿Cómo fue tu experiencia estudiando virtualmente este semestre? Ej: las dificultades, los desafíos, las ventajas, etc.*[13]
- Belén: *No creo que haya sido difícil pero si mucho más estresante y exigente, pero casi no fue tan relevante porque siento que no he aprendido casi nada a diferencia de si fuera presencialmente, la ventaja es que tuve mucho más tiempo para organizarme y ponerme al día con las tareas y exámenes* [sic]. (Fieldwork Interviews, November 2020).[14]

- It's noticeable that some don't have a reliable internet connection.
- 11:17 am (35/37 students): Everyone must have their camera on so they can go to Google Forms and take the written exam.
- Translation: Steffano uses his mother's cellphone to take the exam (Fieldnotes, May 2021).

[13] My initials Guilherme Von Streber

[14] Translation:

This messaging app is a highly popular messaging platform in the country as in many countries other than the United States, especially in Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking nations. Paraguayans use WhatsApp for person-to-person communication, to interact with businesses, and even for professional purposes. All participants in this study used WhatsApp and even the literature and Portuguese classes used it for class-related communication. As part of the research process, I understood that this required flexibility on my end and accepted the fact that the participant preferred a different medium of interaction. Belen ended up typing her answers and sending them back to me on the messaging app. In another instance, Angel responded similarly to my interview requests but instead, he chose to answer the questions by voice clips, a very popular feature of the messaging app among Paraguayans. I later transcribed the answers into a separate Word document. When compared to other interviews formats, this voice clip answer was much shorter, and it prevented me from further inquiring about certain aspects of their answers.

2.2.5. Field documents: I collected primary documents of various types mainly from the school site but also from official electronic archives owned by the Paraguayan government. First, although my primary focus is on LP practices, I aimed to collect documents that reflect some LP management policies, including Paraguay's National Constitution and documents of the *Ley de Lenguas* project. Then, at PFS, I looked for any explicit school mandates on language instruction and use, as in for example, any school-stated guidelines for language instruction. Other materials

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- GVS: How was your experience studying online this semester? For example: difficulties, challenges, advantages, etc.
- Belen: I don't think it was hard but it was way more stressful and demanding, but it almost wasn't relevant because I feel like I haven't learned anything unlike it being in-person, the advantage is that I had way more time to be organized and to catch up with homework and exams (Fieldwork Interviews, November 2020).

included textbooks, handouts, study guides, PowerPoint presentations, faculty reports, class schedules, and photographs of the research site (described in detail below).

TEMBIAPO GUARANI ÑE'Ẽ REHEGUA

MBO'EHÁRA: Lic. Ma. Antonia Coronel Cabrera
TEMIMBO'E:
MBO'ESYRY:
ARANGE:

Ahai che remimo'ã ko'ã mba'ére…
Escribo mi opinión respecto a estas interrogantes…

1- **Mba'ére pytaguakuéra ohecharamo ha omoba'eve, ñandehegui, ñande ypykuéra ñe'ẽ.**
¿Por qué los extranjeros admiran y valoran, más que nosotros, el idioma de nuestros ancestros?
2- **Mba'ére chupekuéra ndahasyiete oikuaa, oikũmby ha oñe'ẽ guaraní ñe'ẽ.**
¿Por qué a ellos les resulta fácil aprender, entender y hablar el guaraní?
3- **Mba'ére vaicha ñane retãguávape hasyve ohayhu, oikuaa ha oiporu ñane ñe'ẽ guaraní.**
¿Por qué parece que a los paraguayos les cuesta amar, conocer y utilizar nuestra lengua?
4- **Mba'e tekotevẽ ojejapo ñamoambue hag̃ua ko'ã mba'e.**
¿Qué es necesario para que cambien estos hechos?

Figure 1. Excerpt from a Guarani class worksheet. All Guarani content is translated into Spanish [15]

In these documents, I focused primarily on analyzing local LP meso policies that dictate how the school operates.[16] I additionally weigh in on the micro, in-class, teacher-student policies. For instance, I analyze Figure 3 in Chapter 5 of this dissertation. Additionally, in later chapters of this dissertation, I contrast them with the country's legislation (macro policies) to understand which aspects of them are enforced and which ones are disregarded.

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[15] Translation:
Guarani Language Worksheet. Teacher: Luisa | Student: | Class: | Date:
Answer these questions with my own opinions.
1. Why do foreigners admire and value our ancestors' language more than we do ourselves?
2. Why is it easy for them to learn, understand, and speak Guarani?
3. Why does it seem that Paraguayans struggle to love, know, and use our language?
4. What is necessary to change these facts? (Fieldwork Journal, April 2021).

[16] Meso policies are medium-scale LPs, such as those in local institutions like schools. See 4.2.1. of Chapter 4 "Translating Policy into Practice" for a discussion of meso LPs.

2.2.6 Photographs: I documented the written landscape of the school by taking photographs of various signs and other written elements within the physical space of the institution. I collected a total of 139 units of the written landscape, which constitute all the signs in the areas that I selected. I defined units as stand-alone elements in each of the photographs I took. I analyzed each unit in relation to its positional context and to other nearby units. Some of these images captured two or more flyers, in which case I counted each flyer as a separate unit. Similarly, images on cork boards often contained multiple units such as calendars, announcement documents, and COVID-19 guidelines, which I nevertheless counted as individual units as well.

Importantly, my linguistic landscape analysis also considers that PFS shares its facility with an academically prestigious university that I refer to as Carlos Antonio López University; the school students use the buildings during the morning and afternoon, while the university uses the building at night. Therefore, some elements captured in these photographs were not intended for nor produced by PFS participants. Nonetheless, the school's educators and students still inhabit the same space, thus being surrounded by these written elements of the university. I chose to include the university signs in my analysis, given that separating them can be an ambiguous or subjective process and that the presence of all the signs contributes to the notion of shared spaces in the institution. Generally, the reader may easily identify which institution authored these signs, yet it is virtually impossible to specify who reads or notices these signs (see Figure 2 for a sample photograph used in this project).

2.2.7. Surveys: I carried out a context-sensitive digital survey via Google Forms to collect qualitative and quantitative data on participants' backgrounds. I use this data to complement my analysis of local language policies, language use, and language attitudes. I collected basic demographic information such as socioeconomic background, age, and any other relevant

information to my investigation of language. This data allowed me to situate all the data on participants' LP practices collected via other methods with their reported background information. For example, Samir is a student from a lower-middle-class background who grew up in Asuncion and currently lives in the downtown area of the city. In the survey about language use, he stated knowing Spanish, English, and Portuguese. He reported using Guarani "*Solo en el colegio y para algunas expresiones*" (Fieldwork Survey, June 2021).[17] Considering patterns of language distribution in Asuncion, Samir conforms to the tendency of young (17 years old), middle-class, and urban individuals of being primary speakers of Spanish (Zajícová, 2009).

2.2.8. Research Journal: Over the course of my observations, I kept a research journal where I recorded reactions and impressions I had after conducting observations and interviews. The rough distinction I make between this journal and fieldnotes is that the journal was a space for capturing my reactions and analyses or interpretations whereas I attempted to report fieldnotes with the least amount of judgment possible. In addition, I incorporated narratives of events that reflected the social scenario of Asuncion into the journal. These entries were written in English anticipating that the dissertation would be in English:

> I'm finishing up another week of participant observation in an online format. The Easter Holiday (the equivalent of the American Spring Break in terms of calendar) is right around the corner. The class that I work with is supposed to gradually return to in-person education starting on April 9th. This will adopt the hybrid education (both online and in-person) model. However, the pandemic situation in the country is at its worst and this throws a shadow of doubt whether this will happen or not.

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[17] Translation: "Only in school and for some expressions."

I realized that it’s time to survey my participants regarding access to technology. This has become a key topic in my study since it directly affects the issue of space or digital spaces in this case. For example, if students access class from a cellphone, they will hardly be able to read a PPT presentation or an on-screen text projected by the instructor. Access to quality internet connection or lack of it, may also explain students’ hesitancy to participation, turn on their microphones or even cameras (Research Journal, March, 2021).

2.3. Data Analysis

The data collection and the initial phases of data analysis occurred simultaneously from the beginning of the research project in September of 2020. First, the transcription process consisted of two to three sessions a week right after semi-participant observation to organize my data. I transcribed these handwritten field notes into Microsoft Word documents while reconstructing events in chronological order. I understand the transcription process and reconstruction of events as a form of interpretation, as these can never be neutral and are subject to my perspective and interpretation. This process further involved choosing to translate notes into English, given that the dissertation would be written in English.

After the transcription process, I analyzed my observation notes, interviews, documents, photographs, and survey data. I created categories or codes and group themes accordingly. Once initial categories emerged out of the first rounds of analysis, I analyzed the data one more time under new criteria provided by codes. This iterative process of coding and grouping yielded the initial theoretical implications of my analysis. Lastly, I contrasted these findings with the existing literature in the field. In this process, I chose to prioritize and incorporate forms of local knowledge with the existing literature. In doing so, I took a constructivist approach.

2.3.1. Constructivism: I take a constructivist approach for my research and knowledge formulation components, which aligns with other scholars conducting critical research in sociolinguistics such as Heller, Pietikainen, and Pujolar (2018). Constructivism holds that any knowledge on how society works is socially constructed by researchers, interlocutors, as well as collaborators, such as the participants in this study. Under this view, the research process obliges researchers to: "…formulate a question that makes sense in the discipline, work out a strategy to answer it, negotiate access to the evidence needed, process the evidence, devise the best possible answers and explanations to our questions that make sense to the scientific community in which we are working" (Heller et. al., 2018: 8). In this way, the research process is based on experience and interaction between individuals that make up a collective experience. Constructivism contrasts with other research approaches such as positivism—and its claims of objectivity and the researcher's neutral position—as well as relativism, which holds that virtually anything is valid.

The constructivist approach views research as always situated at a certain context and time. This concept is known as situatedness and it assumes that any "social phenomenon is "located" i.e., any form of organization, idea, role, norm, conflict, text, must have been produced by people at some moment and at some particular place" (Heller et. al., 2018: 8). No object of study can be fully isolated from the context in which it occurs. In my study this translates to constructing a definition of bilingualism that brings together the linguistics literature with participants' view on language and language practices.

Taking a constructivist stance also implies relying on recursivity in all stages of the research process. Recursivity is the process of adjusting aspects of the research design along the way. This tradition acknowledges that conducting a situated study such as ethnography requires

adaptation and reconsideration in terms of research architecture and the plans that were set before undertaking the project. Recursivity further acknowledges that research does not follow a straight trajectory as those laid out in traditional ways of conceiving a project, such as formulating a research question, data collection, analysis and so forth (Heller et. al., 2018: 14). In my project, one instance of this process is that of analysis v. fieldwork collection. I understand that these two are intrinsically connected and cannot be separated.

Lastly, the metaphor of rhizome informs my process of knowledge production. This metaphor consists of: "…non-linear system of knowledge production, located in a multiplicity of connected processes….The rhizome is a representation of knowledge that can account for resilience, heterogeneity, interconnectivity and multiplicity among the nexus in a network" (Heller, 2018: 15). The concept of the Rhizome metaphor acknowledges that arguments and other claims do not follow linear process. Instead, as I revise ideas, consult the field literature, and dialogue with my interlocutors, ideas evolve. Far from following a linear process, these ideas grow in multiple directions and their progress influences other parts of my arguments.

2.3.2. Discourse Analysis: Another data analytical tool that I use is Discourse Analysis. Discourse analysis is a methodological and analytical framework used to reveal the intricate ways in which language is used to construct and negotiate social reality, power relations, ideologies, and identities (Johnstone, 2018). This analytical tool is a multidisciplinary approach to studying language and communication that seeks to uncover the underlying structures, patterns, and meanings in spoken and written texts within their socio-cultural contexts.

One of the basic premises of discourse analysis is that discourse shapes the world and the world shapes discourses. Discourse analysis acknowledges the importance of understanding the context in which communication occurs, including the physical setting, participants' identities,

relationships, and the broader socio-cultural environment. It highlights the role of language in constructing social reality and shaping our perceptions of events, issues, and identities. It acknowledges that reality is not objective but is influenced by discourse. Other components that the methodology takes into account are participants, ideologies, context, medium, and prior discourses. In this analytical tradition, the objects of study are texts in the broad sense of the word, which includes but is not limited to images, sounds, video.

2.3.3 Sample of Data Analysis: An instance of how the sum of the processes described above yielded theoretical findings can be found in Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language." Throughout this chapter, I relied heavily on interview data and participants' understandings of different languages. I coded answers from individual and group semi-structured interviews. After several iterations of coding and groupings, I created a code for language legitimacy based on data from instructors as well as individual and student group interviews, as observed in Steffano's remarks:

- Steffano: [20"]*: …no es un guaraní fluido. O sea, no es como… Es como un menonita por ahí te voy a decir...*[18] *Hablamos, por ejemplo, eh, yo te digo: "¿Mba'eteko, Guilherme?", te digo, ¿Verdad? Y después vos me decís: "y roiko porã, aha'í" por ejemplo me decís: "Ando bien, me estoy yendo, hina".*
- GVS: *Claro, claro. Ahaí hese.*
- Steffano: *Y después ya le preguntás: "¿Por qué? ¿Qué pio pasó? ¿Cómo rendiste? Y no sé que" ¿Entendés? Es ese tipo de conversaciones las que tenemos. Eso es lo que preservamos más que una charla común de un solo idioma. No es brutal el, el [guaraní]*

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[18] In Paraguay, the term "*menonita"* (Mennonite) refers to German immigrants who are known for language mixing. In many cases, these German immigrants mostly speak Guarani and German.

> *lo que hablamos. O sea, no es un 50/50 ni siquiera. Es ponele un 10/90; guaraní 10 y español 90.* (Fieldwork Interviews, December 2020).[19]

Much like his Guarani instructor, Steffano's perception of language was covertly informed by adherence to named languages and the idea of language purity.[20]

I use both hand-written notes and qualitative analytical software (Atlas.ti) to further code the data collected. This electronic tool offers resources such as manual and automatic coding; creating word clouds based on word frequency; tracking word collocation; simultaneously working with different formats of data (for example, text, images, and video); creating connecting threads across data, and generating organized report files. After exhaustive open and focused coding of the data, I look for new theoretical implications in the emerging conceptual patterns of coded data. For example, in Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language," the manual and automatic coding functions were fundamental in helping me draw emerging themes after recursive rounds of coding. Similarly, in Chapter 5 "Linguistic Landscapes in Hybrid Educational Spaces," the multimedia capabilities of this tool allowed me to seamlessly work with various data formats—images, video, and text—in one place and to better visualize and analyze the materials that I collected. After coming up with my initial findings, I draw from these findings to explain situated phenomena that my ethnography project analyzes.

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[19] Translation (translated from Spanish and Guarani):

> -Steffano: …it is not fluent Guarani. I mean, it's like… it's like menonite, so to speak. We say, for example: "How is it going, Guilherme?", I say, right? And then you say: "I'm doing well. I just keep going" you say, for example: "I am fine, I am just going".
> -GVS: Yeah, yeah. I just keep going.
> -Steffano: And then you just ask him: "Why? What happened? How did you do on the exam?" and all of that, get it? That's the type of conversations that we have. That is what we preserve more than a dialogue in just one language… The Guarani that we speak is not, is not brutal. I mean, it's not even 50/50. It is, say, 10/90; guarani 10 and Spanish 90 (Fieldwork Interviews, December, 2020).

[20] For an in-depth discussion of this passage, see Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language", section 3.5.2.

The last phase consists of situating and comparing my conceptual constructions to the existing literature on bilingualism and Language Policies. For example, I situate my findings in comparison to Critical Language Policy (CLP), a method used to analyze language policies that question apolitical and ahistorical approaches to Language Policy and planning. The CLP approach emphasizes a historical analysis of the socio-economic agents and contexts that shape the crafting of policies. This method is rooted in Discourse Analysis (Johnstone, 2018). This qualitative analytical method primarily analyzes how discourses shape and are shaped by social and sociocultural phenomena. A practical example of the Critical Language Policy method is David Johnson's analysis of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Ultimately, Johnson's careful analysis of the policies leads him to the conclusion that the NCLB act was intended to form English monolingual students rather than proficient bilinguals (Johnson, 2013). Through dialogue with other works, I aim to triangulate my findings and claims and situate them within the academic literature.

2.4. Research Setting

2.4.1. Physical Site-Paulo Freire School: Paulo Freire School (PFS) is a binational (Paraguay/Brazil), experimental, charter school situated near downtown Asuncion. The student population is composed of approximately 1,200 students, while the faculty body is nearly 100. Inaugurated on September 7th (Brazil's Independence Day) of 1964, it is a binational institution because its creation emerged out of cooperation between the Paraguayan and Brazilian governments.[21] Historically, the school had one representative designated by the Brazilian

[21] Collaborations between governments are common in Paraguay in the form of foreign monetary aid. Another relevant case of binational collaborations is the country's historical affiliation to Taiwan that dates back to the 1960s. For example, through a partnership and funds from Taiwan, the local government created the Taiwanese Polytechnical University in 2019. (*Universidad de Taiwán…* 2019).

Ministry of Education to advise on school administration, and currently, it operates independently. The "charter" label is an approximate equivalent to US terminology, given that the institution is publicly funded while being autonomous. That is, although it follows the National Curriculum, it has the flexibility of implementing experimental pedagogical methods of instruction. It additionally receives the title of "experimental" school given that it is partially under the administration of one of Paraguay's most prestigious universities and features a program in which university seniors conduct mini teaching practicums in some high school courses.

My decision to primarily conduct fieldwork at a high school, and specifically at PFS, lies in several factors that range from multilingual instruction, a socioeconomically diverse student body (described in detail below in section 2.5 "Participants"), to its reputation of academic prestige. First and foremost, schools are one of the most salient centers for the inculcation and diffusion of macro and micro LPs and ideologies (Spolsky, 2004). Second, PFS emphasizes language instruction in its curriculum; that is, aside from having Spanish (the general language of instruction) and Guarani (subject of instruction) languages, it also incorporates mandatory Portuguese classes, reflecting its historic affiliation with Brazil. Indeed, this makes it a valuable site to measure the results of the implementation of the 2010 *Ley de Lenguas* in the education domain. Third, PFS contrasts with other elite schools in Asuncion, given that, unlike most academically prestigious schools, it is public. This brings diversity to the socioeconomic profile of the student body (see "2.5.1. Focal Participants - Overview"), a factor that will allow me to analyze possible connections between language and a participant's socioeconomic identities. Lastly, one of the school objectives for graduating students is "*lograr una formación*

globalizadora que facilite su inserción [del estudiante] social,"[22] thus, its multinational orientation allows for a deeper analysis that explicitly situates itself at the nexus of the national and the global.

Figure 2. PFS School Map Layout. Photo by GVS [23] [24]

Located near Asuncion's downtown, the institution is in a traditionally middle-class, historic neighborhood of Paraguay's capital. The facility is home both to PFS and a social science division of Carlos Antonio López University. As detailed above (Figure 2), the physical space of the institution is made up of a series of buildings within a two-block area in the historic neighborhood. The main entrance is situated between areas A and F. The administrative offices and teacher lounges are located in block C. The educators and students of *Tercero A* had classes in block E. In Chapter 5 "Educational Spaces and Language Ecologies" I conducted a linguistic ecology project by primarily documenting written language with the intent of analyzing language use and choice at PFS. I document the written landscape of block C, the hallways of block D,

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[22] Translation: "Achieve a global formation that results in the [the student's] insertion in society"
[23] Translation: "You are here".
[24] For anonymity purposes, I renamed the streets that appeared in the original image.

block E, and all the areas between since these were where educators and students spent most of their time while at school.

PFS is an academically prestigious institution with a diverse socioeconomic student body, according to several instructors' (*Profesor* Antonio, *Profesora* Olga, and *Profesora* Luisa), descriptions of the student body, as well as survey data I collected from students of *Tercero* A.[25] This profile stands in sharp contrast with most of Asuncion's high-performing, private, and costly schools. PFS has a renowned pipeline program to the university that it is affiliated with, which is one of the top institutions of higher education in the country.[26] Aside from having a curriculum explicitly oriented to prepare students for the university admissions test, PFS also serves as an "experimental" research site, demonstrating that there is a concrete nexus between the two institutions. I chose to conduct this project at the given site because, in addition to its multilingual profile and bilingual educational LPs, it reflects the aspirations of many students—from Asuncion and beyond—who seek admission to this top university in Paraguay.[27]

Additionally, according to academic coordinator *Profesor* Antonio, PFS has an indirect influence on pedagogical practices in other schools across Paraguay. For instance, in an

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[25] Translation: *Profesor* Antonio: "*En general los estudiantes que concurren al colegio provienen de familias de clase media para abajo. Son hijos de profesionales que salen adelante con su trabajo y procuran dar la mejor educación a sus hijos".* (Translation: In general, students who attend our school come from families of middle to lower classes. They are the children of professionals who progress with their jobs and seek to give the best education to their children.".

[26] An academic institutional report at PFS details the institution's goals of tailoring its curriculum towards admission test primarily towards Paraguay's top university, Carlos Antonio López University: "4.29. *La Dirección Académica asumió el compromiso, de trabajar en equipo, para ofrecer a la sociedad una educación de calidad. Garantizar que los egresados de la institución, salgan con las habilidades y capacidades desarrolladas en las materias instrumentales, para el ingreso exitoso en la [Universidad Carlos Antonio López] u otras universidades de sus preferencias…*" (Translation: "The Principal's Office is committed to work collectively to offer society a high quality education. [It] guarantees that graduates from the institution leave with skills and developed abilities in core subjects for a successful admission to [Carlos Antonio Lopez University] or other universities of their choice."

[27] University admissions tests are a relevant element in education that influences curriculum as it is with PFS. In these tests, Spanish is hegemonical and it is yet another factor that pushes students to prioritize this language over others such as Guarani. For a more detailed discussion of this issue see 3.4.1 of Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language."

interview, *Profesor* Antonio stated that PFS practices inform policies instituted by the *Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias* (MEC) (Ministry of Education and Science) staff:

> *"En el año 2019, se tuvo la visita del Vice Ministro de Educación y Ciencias, Ing. Robert Cano acompañado de Directores Generales, que tuvo por objetivo recabar información acerca del sistema de trabajo realizado en el [PFS], teniendo en cuenta el alto resultado que obtuvo la institución, a nivel nacional, en comparación a otras, surgidas de la Evaluación "Prueba Pisa". En ese contexto se habló de los idiomas, pero sin profundizar en ello.* (Fieldwork Interview, February 2021)[28]

While the school is still under the Ministry of Education and Science, according to Antonio, some of the Ministry's decisions are informed by the pedagogy at PFS, given the close ties between the two institutions and PFS' academic performance. As mentioned above, the institution had outstanding scores on PISA exams, a national examination program to measure students' capabilities in language, mathematics, and science. This means that the curriculum—specifically the language instruction curriculum—can influence the practices of other schools in Asunción and beyond. While analyzing PFS's tangible impact on other institutions is beyond the scope of this dissertation project, it is worth noting that the significance of language use at PFS seems to transcend the walls of the institution and have an indirect influence on how other institutions operate.[29] Institutions with a perceived academic prestige then (re)produce language practices that act as *de facto* LPs.

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[28] Translation: "In the year 2019, we had the visit of the vice Ministry of Education and Science, engineer Robert Cano alongside general leaders of the institution. The visit had the goal of collecting data about the work carried out at PFS given the high achievements that the institution had at the national level in comparison to other institutions as evidence in the PISA test scores. In that context, languages were also discussed, although not in detail" (Translated from Spanish. Fieldwork Interview, February 2021).

[29] This is an anecdotal account based on Francisco's statements and I was unable to measure any tangible influences beyond PFS.

2.4.2 Nueva Esperanza School: Due to strict COVID-19 procedures and a lack of resources by the student body, I was not able to conduct ethnographic work at Nueva Esperanza School (NES). I managed to visit the school site on one occasion. Transportation to this location involved driving for approximately one hour and a half east of Asuncion, a distance that can easily last two hours depending on traffic conditions. The area had less infrastructure compared to PFS. The school was surrounded by open fields, and it was accessed via dirt roads. Despite being relatively close to the capital city, the area presented a sharp contrast with the urban infrastructure of the capital city, Asuncion.

To my surprise, this institution located in a semi-rural area implemented stricter health restrictions compared to the urban PFS. Whereas PFS implemented the hybrid model by May of 2021, *Nueva Esperanza* was still fully online during my time in Paraguay. They operated on an asynchronous model that involved recorded classes and sharing materials via WhatsApp. *Profesora* Marisa, NES's science teacher and academic coordinator told me that in some extreme cases, they had to make exceptions for students who had limited or no access to technology by printing materials out and having parents pick these up so their students might continue their education. Fortunately, I was able to conduct online interviews with some educators from NES, and I am able to draw comparisons between the two sites.

2.4.3. Online Environments: In light of the hybrid model of education, online or virtual environments are as relevant as physical spaces. In fact, students spent much more of their time in virtual environments than being physically present at the school site. Despite MEC's presumably good intentions to continue providing education despite COVID-19-related conditions, not all students had access to devices that mediated education such as computers,

tablets, or even cell phones. The two main platforms that facilitated classes and interactions were Google Meet and WhatsApp.[30]

Google Meet is a video call-based platform, like Zoom and others, was an essential resource for online education that emulated a space for a class meeting. This resource allows participants to see and communicate with one another via the computer's camera and microphone. Google Meet also has a chat function as well as file sharing, which are useful resources during class. The Ministry of Education and Science sponsored PFS to use this as the official medium of education that became the classroom space during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, government officials presumed that all educators and students had access to a laptop with access to the internet. This was not the case for all PFS students and even less so for NES students, according to faculty.

Similarly, WhatsApp is an instant messaging app was widely popular among my participants, to the extent that every person had access to it. The popularity of this messaging platform goes beyond the walls of this institution, and it extends to most cellphone owners in the country, and generally to the Spanish- and the Portuguese-speaking world. This makes WhatsApp the preferred medium for communicating via text, calls, and voice clips. Although the school and the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC, the acronym in Spanish) did not intend for educators and students to rely on this resource, WhatsApp ended up mediating interactions between them. For example, *Tercero* A had a group chat for the Spanish language and literature class where important information was exchanged and negotiated. Sometimes, *Profesora* Raquel sent the Google Meet link for the class meeting via WhatsApp. At other times, *Profesora*

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[30] I explore and describe the most salient environments that participants were a part of in Chapter 5 "Educational Spaces and Language Ecologies…"

Soledad, the Portuguese instructor, allowed students who could not join the meeting on Google Meet to send audio clips that were a part of the oral exam via her personal WhatsApp. The reliance that educators and students had on these mediums points out that online environments carry as much relevance as physical spaces can have.

2.5. Participants

2.5.1. Focal Participants - Overview: The social actors in this linguistic ethnography are educators (teachers and administrators, some of whom held both capacities simultaneously, such as Antonio), as well as students. At PFS, the focal participants are four faculty members (who teach the subjects of Spanish Language and literature, Guarani, and Portuguese), 12 students of *Tercero* A, and one school administrator. Additionally, I interviewed two faculty members from Nueva Esperanza School. I hoped to interview NES students, but it was not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions and the limited access they had to technology. During fieldwork, I also interacted with other faculty members at PFS as well as other students, however, interaction with them was either sporadic or they decided not to be a part of the research project.

The *Tercero* A class was made up of a total of 34 students, 14 males and 20 females. Their ages ranged from 16 to 18. In a group survey where 17 responded, in terms of socioeconomic status their responses ranged from lower-middle-class to higher-middle-class. Only four students had come from rural areas in Paraguay and the rest were either from Asuncion or its metropolitan area. Further, whereas all students stated they speak Spanish, only 6 said they could speak Guarani. This stands in sharp contrast with the fact that 10 of them reported speaking English and 7 Portuguese. For these surveys, I relied on emic distinctions based on named languages with the intent of analyzing how they perceive and operate on social distinction.

All social actors had at least a minimum knowledge of each of the named languages. The most common linguistic profile among them was Spanish-dominant with at least a receptive knowledge of colloquial Guarani. This receptive knowledge came from home and/or from the wider society. Indeed, as I found in my pilot project, I anticipated that these students would have limited proficiency in Guarani while having stronger proficiency in—or interest in—a foreign language such as Portuguese (Von Streber, 2018). This is one reason why I chose to conduct this study at PFS since it emphasizes instruction in languages such as Portuguese: In addition to the hegemony of Spanish in the capital, global influences of mass media and a highly competitive market encourage instruction in a global foreign language—e.g., Portuguese—more than Guarani. By focusing on a space where there is a visible influence of a foreign language and globalizing discourses, I am examining a context that illustrates the globalized profile of Asuncion. This analysis includes considering languages such as Portuguese, English, and French while excluding other prominent languages of the region such as Korean or Arabic, which are present in Asunción as a consequence of historical migration of populations from those respective countries.[31]

Lastly, an important note about high school education in Paraguay: especially when compared to the United States, students do not have the ability to choose in what classes to enroll. In the case of PFS, high school students have the option of choosing a specialization track such as Humanities, STEM, or Computer Science, yet each track has a predetermined set of classes for each year. This points out the relevance of analyzing high school-level education as a means of understanding language use at a broader scale in Paraguay. The school administration

[31] Analyzing the influence of these prominent immigrant groups in Asuncion is outside of my research scope. For reference, see Karam (2021), which provides historical accounts and analysis of Arab immigration to Paraguay and neighboring countries. Additionally, Yoon covers historical immigration from Korea to South America (Yoon, 2015).

has a major influence on where students should focus their attention. In the next section, I describe the participants of this research project in detail.

Below is a list of all focal participants in my ethnography—both from PFS and NES. All names used in this dissertation are pseudonyms. The description of each participant is organized according to the following criteria: pseudonym, role in the school, age (or approximate age when unknown), social background, linguistic profile, and a brief description that includes my perceptions of that person in terms of personality, attitudes, and aspirations when known.

Antonio: PFS' academic coordinator and instructor, elder, lower middle-class, lives in suburban Asuncion, speaks Spanish and Guarani. Like other staff members at PFS he seemed to me a generous and nice person, although at first glance he comes across as very formal and serious. He was supportive of the research project from the time of our initial conversations. Antonio emphasized that the institutional profile of PFS allows researchers to work at the school and advance pedagogical knowledge, as they frequently do with the students from the local university. Antonio is a former Catholic priest and other faculty speak highly of him as an intellectual. In one interview, he noted that he had been called by the Vatican to evaluate a thesis defense presented in Guarani in Rome, Italy. In an end-of-year report, Antonio included a mention of my research project at PFS:

> *Se recibió a docentes de otros países y de distintas áreas, patrocinados por organismos internacionales, cuyas solicitudes fueron satisfechas, al permitirles las prácticas pedagógicas en un contexto diferente. Recientemente, estuvo en el CEPB, un joven que*

estudia en Estados Unidos, que prepara la tesis doctoral sobre la enseñanza simultánea de idiomas en la institución (Fieldwork Interviews, July 2021)[32].

Olga: Instructor and administrator, middle-aged, middle-class, speaks Spanish and Guarani. Olga was one of the Guarani instructors in this project. She was also the first person I contacted to discuss this study. Olga is an educator who is highly active in the profession and works both at PFS and another private school in Asuncion. She shows enthusiasm and interest in teaching the Guarani language and culture beyond the classroom. For instance, over the course of a number of years, she created textbooks for each class that she teaches (roughly from middle to high school classes) and was filling in for the other Guarani faculty who had to retire from PFS due to health concerns associated with COVID-19. At the time we met, she had just finished a master's degree in education and consequently was excited about the prospect of my research project at PFS. She was *Tercero A's* Guarani instructor for the first semester of my project (September 2020-November 2020). After that, she remained a faculty advisor of *Tercero A*.

Raquel: Instructor, lower-middle class, middle-aged, speaks Spanish. Raquel was the Spanish language and literature instructor. She was also a professor at Carlos A. López University's College of Philosophy. Raquel is passionate about literature, and she frequently went overtime during classes with *Tercero* A, especially when talking about authors and works that she liked. She is academically active and participates in many events related to Paraguayan literature. When the public university invited me to present my research at a colloquium event, I realized that Raquel was one of the organizers and moderators. She was also part of the group

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[32] Translation: "We hosted educators from abroad and various research fields, sponsored by international organizations, whose requests were approved by allowing them to conduct pedagogical praxis in a different context. Recently, a young scholar who studies in the United States was at PFS working on a doctoral thesis on the simultaneous teaching of various languages at our institution."

who redesigned the university program in language and literature, and she kindly invited me to collaborate in the organization of linguistic-related events.

Luisa: Instructor, middle-aged, lower-middle class, speaks Spanish and Guarani. *Profesora* Luisa was *Tercero A's* Guarani instructor during 2021. Luisa, a proficient speaker of Guarani, was very involved with extracurricular activities related to the Guarani language. For example, she invited me—as well as another *Tercero A* student Marcos (see description below), as we were virtually the only ones to interact with her in Guarani—to be part of an online project to record contemporary registers of the language. She was the only faculty member who spoke of the relevance of *Ley de Lenguas* (see Chapters 1 "Introduction" and 4 "Translating Policy into Practices" for a detailed description of this legislation) and expected with eager anticipation to see the law being finally implemented and taking effect in June of 2021.

Soledad: Instructor, middle-aged, lower-middle-class background, speaks Spanish, Portuguese, and English. Soledad was PFS' Portuguese instructor, who unlike other language instructors was not a native speaker of Portuguese. She is Paraguayan and grew up in the city of Ciudad del Este, which is on the border with Brazil. She was always excited to be in class with students. She started class with a welcoming and upbeat song to set the tone for her class. Most of the time, she communicated with students in Portuguese during class, unlike Guarani instructors who frequently resorted to Spanish or translated Guarani utterances when communicating with students.[33] She was very flexible in terms of deadlines and would even let students send oral quizzes as voice clips to her personal WhatsApp. *Tercero A* students appeared

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[33] This discrepancy is a relevant finding of my work and I explore it in depth in Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Guarani".

to relate well to her, and this showed in the rates of participation during class, which were the highest of all classes that I observed.

Marcos: Student, 17 years old, middle-class background, lives in downtown Asuncion, speaks Spanish, Guarani, English, Portuguese. Marcos was a student who appeared to be hardworking and very dedicated. Aside from doing well in classes, teachers and classmates singled him out for being the best Guaraní-speaker in the class. He also said he knew French (although I was not able to observe any students using French) and could communicate proficiently and with ease in Portuguese. He was the only student who could use Guarani to interact with *Profesora* Luisa. He did very well in other classes and admitted to putting much effort into obtaining good grades.

Samir: Student, 18 years old, lower middle-class, grew up in an urban area, speaks Spanish, English, and Portuguese, and currently lives in the downtown area of Asuncion. Samir is an introverted student, especially during class. Yet, on my visits to PFS, he seemed to be well acquainted with his classmates and was happy to participate in interviews. Samir never volunteered to participate in online classes unless teachers called on him specifically.

Miguel: Student, 17 years old, lower-middle class, grew up in a rural area, speaks Spanish and English, and lives in the suburbs of Asuncion. Miguel is a very talkative student. He and his twin brother Angel would always participate in online classes and fill the gaps when there were long silences. He promptly responded to teachers when they requested feedback or spoke up if another classmate did not respond when teachers called them.

Angel: Student, 17 years old, lower-middle class, grew up in a rural area, speaks Spanish and English, and lives in the suburbs of Asuncion. Angel is Miguel’s twin brother. He was very artistically oriented and said he wanted to study art in college. He too was a very talkative

student who would fill in the silent gaps during class. He was the first one to respond even during Guarani classes, despite having difficulty in doing so. Later, in one interview Angel said he felt bad when teachers asked questions and no one responded, even if they thought it was the teacher's fault due to a lack of engagement with students.

David: Student, 17 years old, upper-middle class, grew up in an urban area, speaks Spanish, and currently lives in downtown Asuncion. David was a kind and extroverted student. I did not have the chance to interview him individually; however, he participated in group interviews. Initially, I thought he was introverted yet after my visits I realized that he was a popular student among his classmates. He was part of the group that I identified to be the "cool" kids of the class.

Steffano: Student, 17 years old, middle class, grew up in an urban area, currently lives in suburban Asunción, and speaks Spanish, Guarani, English, Portuguese, and French. He was the class president and class spokesperson. He was a dedicated student who seemed to be repeatedly trying to help the group of students. He voiced concerns to teachers on behalf of the group. For example, in one instance, he negotiated the amount of homework that *Profesora* Raquel was assigning during literature class. According to him, all students did from the moment they woke up to the time they went to bed was homework. Steffano had previously listened to his classmates' concerns and although during class no one else spoke, he achieved what the group wanted. In one interview, Steffano said that he could speak French, in addition to Spanish, Portuguese, and some Guarani.

Ricardo: Student, 17 years old, middle class, grew up in an urban area, currently lives in suburban Asuncion, and speaks Spanish and English. Ricardo can be characterized as one of the rowdy students of the class. He did not participate in class, however, during the hybrid meetings

he was always cracking jokes and making himself heard. He often struggled and complained about keeping up with the high academic demands at PFS. He was also among the group of "popular students" in class.

Carlos: Student, 18 years old, upper-middle class, grew up in an urban area, lives in suburban Asunción, and speaks Spanish, Guarani, and English. Carlos was an extroverted and loud student during class. However, teachers seemed to like him because he was good at keeping up with class demands. During a focus group interview, he said that when online education was implemented all he did was homework. His descriptions of the academic demands at PFS helped me to realize that even though some *Tercero A* students worked harder than others, all were held to a high standard.

Susana: Student, 18 years old, middle class, grew up in an urban area, currently lives in metropolitan Asuncion, speaks Spanish, English and Portuguese. Susana was a very quiet student. Nonetheless, she apparently did well across various subjects. For this reason, teachers seemed to like her, as suggested by the way Soledad spoke of her during my observations. When participating in focus interviews, she came across as shy but still responded to questions when she had the chance.

Bruno: Student, 18 years old, middle class, grew up in an urban area, currently resides in suburban Asuncion, speaks Spanish and English. Bruno was loud and funny. He was one of the oldest students in the class. When compared to his classmates, he was not one of the hard workers, however, by keeping up with PFS' academic demands, he still dedicated much time and effort to school. He told me he aspired to study at some university in the United States. During our focus interviews, he asked me extensive questions about life in the US and the logistics of getting a scholarship as an international student.

Belen: Student, 18 years old, upper-middle class, grew up in an urban area, currently lives in suburban Asuncion, speaks Spanish and Portuguese. Belén was a very dedicated student. She was prompt to answer teachers' questions and was always on time to submit homework. She was one of the first ones to volunteer for interviews during my fieldwork. She wanted to go to university in Brazil and therefore had many questions for me.

Arami: Student, 17 years old, lower-middle class, grew up in an urban zone, lives in suburban Asuncion, speaks Spanish and Portuguese. Arami was loud and funny. She was also direct and did not hesitate to say what she had on her mind. In a group interview with students in which *Profesora* Raquel also participated, Arami said she had a horrible experience studying online, shocking the *Profesora*. She also had plans to go to university in Brazil. In a focus group interview, she reported knowing "no Guarani" and being fluent in Portuguese.

Marisa: Teacher and administrator, middle-aged, lower-middle class, grew up in a rural zone, lives in a semi-rural area, speaks Spanish and Guarani. Marisa was NES's science teacher. Because NES was under more strict guidelines on in-person meetings concerning COVID, I only interacted with her via Google Meets. She was kind and always had a smile on her face during all of our conversations. She was very apologetic for the fact that her school was not meeting in person because of the pandemic. She spoke passionately about the school and the social role it has played in the lives of its students.

Mateo: Teacher, middle-aged, lower-middle class, grew up in a rural zone, lives in a rural area, speaks Spanish and Guarani. Mateo was NES's math teacher. As was the case with Marisa, we could not meet in person due to their local policies regarding COVID-19. He was very generous with his time as he worked at other schools other than Nueva Esperanza. During our interviews, he always underscored the importance of language practices when interacting with

his students. To him, the only way to connect with the NES students was by "talking like them" to gain students' trust. Specifically, Mateo referred to using Jopara, the mixed language variety perceived as impure by most participants (see Chapter 1 "Introduction" and Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Guarani" for a detailed description) to establish trust with his students.

2.6. Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has summarized the general approaches and specific methods that I implement in this dissertation. It has also provided information about the participants in and contexts for this study. Importantly, the chapter describes the transformations that the project underwent in light of COVID-19. These unforeseen changes opened up the possibility and need for a more explicitly multimodal perspective on LPs and practices in education, as I aim to demonstrate in subsequent chapters. Ultimately, these events yielded rich perspectives on multimodal LP practices in education. Despite the challenges involved, the results contribute novel knowledge regarding the challenges posed by online and hybrid education in the pandemic world.

This research project is qualitative in nature and its results were not predictable. As with other ethnographies, the results are also not immediately generalizable. This dissertation sheds light precisely on the aspects that macro-level and quantitative scholarship tend to overlook; it provides a nuanced analysis of the experiences and beliefs of those subject to LPs. In so doing, this study responds to the pressing need for an in-depth analysis of the challenges faced by programs of bilingual education and bilingual inclusion in Paraguayan society. The micro-processes in everyday language practice at the local level of my research site have the potential to elucidate our understanding of macro- and global processes of language shift and multilingual

dynamics more generally. Therefore, this study has broad theoretical implications for the growing scholarship in Language Policy studies.

Chapter 3 Paraguay and the Language Paradox: Language, National Identity and Stigma

3.0 Chapter Introduction

In June of 2021, almost a year after starting this ethnographic project, I met in person with the *Tercero A* student participants from Paulo Freire School (PFS) for the first time. Eager to learn from them, I decided to ask these students what the language represents to them based on local shared understandings of language in Paraguay. In a semi-structured focus group interview, I asked this group of 7 students “What does Guarani mean to you?” Their answers were as follows:

- *Bruno: Y es nuestro idioma natal… es un símbolo nacional y un idioma natal.*
- *Carlos: Nos representa como cultura a todos.*
- *Bruno: El paraguayo se representa primero por… por el guaraní.*
- *Ricardo: Por ejemplo, a nosotros nos preguntan por un idioma y que hablen guaraní.*
- *Bruno: Es algo que nos representa, quieras o no, a todos.*
- *Ricardo: Somos orgullosos por un lado, verdad… yo soy de ahí y yo sé, y yo tal cosa verdad, pero como te digo, es algo que yo creo que, el cual creo que…*
- *Bruno: El Paraguay… los paraguayos les podrían dar más énfasis al guaraní al cual le damos.*
- *Carlos: Eso pasa mucho. Vos acá en Paraguay no querés, si no te gusta el francés que tal cosa, no quiero hablar guaraní porque no me gusta. Vos te vas en otro país y orgullosísimo estás vos de tu idioma: ‘no, que yo hablo el guaraní; no que el guaraní es mi idioma y te apoyás’. Acá menospreciamos mucho nuestro idioma, menospreciamos mucho nuestra cultura. Nos vamos en otros lugares y queremos galardonar; queremos*

mostrar lo lindo que es nuestro país y las cosas buenas que tiene… (Fieldwork Interviews, June 2021).[34]

Generally, conversations about the Guarani language trigger topics of individual and collective identities, belonging, and history. These students signaled how this language is a pivotal element of their collective identities. Their answers suggest that they anchor the Guarani language to a part of what it means to be a Paraguayan. Yet these statements also suggest they share ambivalent views towards the language, as explored below. The linguistic literature as well as my own experience in Paraguay point out that this is a common theme among Paraguayans. In fact, historian Bartomeu Melia asserts that the tension-filled history of the Guarani language is the history of Paraguay (Meliá, 1992). However, the importance of the Guarani language stands in contrast with other shared ideas about language, or metalinguistic discourse and language practices of many Paraguayans, as is the case of these students at PFS. These students' statements reinforce the above-mentioned, deeply ambivalent views that Paraguayans can have towards the Guarani language, which ultimately indicates the connotations of pride and stigma attached to the language.

3.1 Chapter Overview

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[34] Translations:

- Bruno: It [Guarani] is our mother tongue… it is both a national symbol and a mother tongue.
- Carlos: It represents all of us culturally.
- Bruno: Paraguayans are primarily represented by… by Guarani.
- Ricardo: For instance, we are always asked about our languages and asked to speak in Guarani...
- Bruno: It is something that, whether you like or not, represents us all.
- Ricardo: On the one hand we are proud of it, right? I am from there and I know it [the Guarani language] and all those things. But, like I say, it is something that…
- Bruno: Paraguay… Paraguayans could emphasize it more than we do it.
- Carlos: That happens a lot. Here in Paraguay, you do not want to [speak Guarani] and such, if you like French, then you don't like to speak in Guarani because you don't like it. But whenever you go to another country you become extremely proud of your language: 'I speak Guarani; the Guarani language is my language'. Here [Paraguay], we highly undermine our language, we undermine our culture. But when we go to other places, we want to honor it, we want to show how pretty our country is and the good things it has" (Fieldwork focus group interview on June, 2021).

This chapter analyzes language, identity, and language ideologies in Paraguay. It approaches these issues by 1) analyzing local circulating discourses on national identity vis-à-vis metalinguistic discourse among members of PFS, collected between September 2020 to July 2021 and 2) discussing the influence of language ideologies in language practices among Paraguayan speakers. I argue that tensions between highly valued collective identity and an ambivalent indexical value of Guarani reinforce the paradox of language in Paraguay.[35] This paradox ultimately constrains speakers from freely communicating, and instead reinforces adherence to named languages, based on the assumption that the Guarani language is under restoration in the country.

It is my view that languages are ideologically constructed, which I repeatedly assert throughout this chapter. As stated in Chapter 1 “Introduction” of this dissertation, I analyze language practices mainly under the lens of translanguaging, a theory of language in which speakers draw from their full linguistic repertory without watchful adherence to the political constraints of named languages, or what is called English or Spanish within a nation-state. However, in an effort to align my analysis with the view of participants of this study as well as those outside of academic circles, I use bottom-up labels to name sets of language practices, for example, Jopara, easily imagined as fluid, or Guaraniete, imagined as fixed. These are fluid sets of practices and what one participant may understand as Jopara can differ from another. Nonetheless, these labels are useful for general categorization and approximation to a conventional local understanding when describing the local language practices that I analyze.

3.2 Official Languages and Nation

[35] My argument of the language paradox builds on a brief statement by Katherine Mortimer in which she expresses that Paraguay’s paradox consists of regarding the Guarani language with pride while simultaneously stigmatizing it (Mortimer, 2006: 69).

3.2.1 Overview of Named Languages: The Paraguayan constitution of 1992 recognizes Spanish and Guarani as the official languages of the nation. Paraguay stands out among other countries—especially its Latin American neighbors—due to the 1992 co-officialization of Guarani alongside Spanish. Historically, even though the Guarani language is the dominant language of a majority of the population, Spanish has been the language of the country's administration. Officially, the country has a high distribution of bilingualism (discussed in 3.2.2 of this chapter), as evidenced by the last available census (Paraguay, 2004; *El censo que no pudo ser*, 2018). Importantly, a significant part of the population who does not identify as indigenous descendants, reportedly speaks Guarani as well as Spanish.[36]

While the constitution names Guarani as an official language, there is no consensus among speakers or scholars on which specific language variety of Guarani the constitution is referring to, nor is there a single shared standardized register of the Guarani language. In general, Paraguayans distinguish between two varieties of Guarani: Guaraniete and Jopara. Generally, Guaraniete is perceived as a "pure" register of the language that is free from the lexical and morphosyntactic influence of Spanish. Jopara constitutes a language variety that heavily relies on the constant incorporation of words, expressions, and features of Spanish. It is virtually impossible to define Jopara since the level of Spanish incorporation varies from speaker to speaker. In this light, Heddy Penner calls Jopara a "reality that is almost impossible to name" (Penner, 2014: 73). This linguistic dichotomy between Guaraniete and Jopara is a frequent and relevant topic when discussing language practices in Paraguay.

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[36] For an explanation of implications race identifications and language in Paraguay, refer to Chapter 1 Introduction".

The differences between Jopara and Guaraniete are seen in two specific words that were the center of debate between purists and modernists within the Academia del Guarani. These were: "*jeporavo y vóto, o vakapipopo y pelota*" (Penner, 2016: 125).[37] In the first pair of words, *jeporavo* is the proposed Guaraniete word, and *vóto*, a lexical borrowing from the Spanish *voto,* is used in Jopara. Similarly, in the second pair *vakapipopo* is *Guaraniete* whereas *pelóta*, a lexical borrow from Spanish *pelota*, is used in Jopara. The latter pair constitutes a clear example of Guaraniete's use of curated and purist vocabulary proposed by grammarians. *Vakapipo* is a morphological compound of the combination of three words: *vaka* (cow), *pi* (skin), and *opo* (jump), or "jumping letter" to reference a ball. Based on this study's participants—described in the sections below—the reluctance of many speakers in using a language variety such as Guaraniete in part lies in avoiding the verbal gymnastics required to name an object such as a ball. Conversely, Jopara speakers simply borrow *pelota* from Spanish with slight phonetic influences from Guarani. Members of the *Academia del Guaraní* are caught between implementing the academic variety or the one that more closely resembles the linguistic practices of Paraguayans, which ultimately results in debates over which language variety to use. The following subsections provide a conceptualization for each language variety and the indexical field that corresponds to each.

3.2.2 Multiplicity of meanings of the term Guarani: At first glance, the participants in my study seem to hold a clear and consistent definition of what Guarani is. Yet, when asked to clarify this definition, speakers offered answers that varied significantly. In *Guaraní Aquí, Jopará Allá,* Penner explores the myriad meanings attached to Guarani. For some speakers, Guarani is a

[37] English Translation: "Vote and vote, or ball and ball…" (Penner, 2016: 125)

"pure" language variety that has remained intact ever since colonial times (Penner, 2014). Speakers believe that a significant part of the population still speaks this language variety. Namely, they allude to an imagined community of speakers in rural areas of the country who only speak Guarani and are incapable of understanding Spanish altogether. For other speakers, the concept of Guarani is more closely aligned with Jopara, a non-regulated variety that is the result of centuries of language contact between Spanish and Guarani. This assumption reflects that some speakers assume the existence of a rather clear division between the two languages.

What some, including Guarani grammarians, believe is that Guaraniete*,* literally meaning "pure Guarani," is an unattainable idea. Attempts to institute this variety in various domains in Paraguay are an effort by institutions such as the Academia del Guarani to attain authority and legitimacy. James Milroy holds that:

> The establishment of the idea of a standard variety, the diffusion of knowledge of this variety, its codification in widely used grammar books and dictionaries, and its promotion in a wide range of functions - all lead to the devaluing of other varieties. The standard form becomes the legitimate form, and other forms become, in the popular mind, illegitimate. (Milroy, 2001: 547).

The perceived legitimacy of a curated version of Guarani thus makes a mixed-language version be understood as illegitimate. This has material consequences in the way that certain people try to institute LP in the country: First, some language purists —that is, those who want to institute highly prescriptive and elitist standards on language use— aspire to rescue pre-colonial Guarani and implement it in different spheres of society. This implies an attempt to use a language variety that has had no influence from Spanish. Then, other language prescriptivist groups, such as the *Academia de la Lengua Guarani* (Guarani Language Academy) and *Ateneo de la Lengua*

(Language Association), push for the use of different varieties of academic and literary Guarani—also free of Spanish influence—in public domains such as government agencies and the educational system.[38] These prescriptivist ideas have made it all the way to the educational system in the past three major bilingual reforms by MEC or the Ministry of Education and Science. Ironically, the efforts of the 1983-1992 and 1994-1999 bilingual educational reforms were unsuccessful because they presented unreconcilable discrepancies between the codified language registers and linguistic practices of speakers (Hauck, 2014).

After centuries of language contact since the colonial period, no contemporary variety of Guarani is free from the lexical and morphosyntactic influence of Spanish. Nonetheless, this language dichotomy between Guaraniete and Jopara remains tangible in the minds of many Paraguayans, and ultimately language mixing is highly stigmatized. Understanding this difference is pivotal to comprehending both the social meaning of Guarani in contemporary urban Asuncion and the stigma attached to speakers of any of these language varieties, which lack social prestige to the same degree. The objective definition of each language variety, if these ever existed, becomes far less important than identifying how shared notions of language work *de facto* in Paraguay. Namely, it sheds light on the stigma associated with language mixing in the case of Jopara. Ultimately, this has material consequences for those who speak it, especially for those whose identity is deeply attached to the Guarani language.

3.3 National Identities

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[38] According to the organization's website, *Ateneo de la Lengua Guarani*'s main goal is to promote "la común labor de la investigación, recuperación, promoción, difusión, valoración, protección y jerarquización constante, efectiva y sistemática de la Lengua y Cultura Guarani, y de la Cultura Folklórica Paraguaya" (Translation: "the general task of research, recovery, promotion, dissemination, appreciation, protection, and constant hierarchization, effective and systemic related to the Guarani language and culture, as well as the Paraguayan folk culture" (Portal Guarani, date not available). https://www.portalguarani.com/museos.php?pormustytr=MjQ=

3.3.1 Shared Conceptions of Language: Conceptions of language and collective identity are inseparable for many Paraguayans. In May of 2021, athlete Fatima Amarilla competed in the South American Track and Field championship in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Shortly after finishing the 400-meter race, an Ecuadoran journalist approached Amarilla for an interview. In their interactions, she briefly talked about her performance and what was next in the competition. Towards the end, the journalist asked the Paraguayan athlete to say a few words in Guarani. Hesitating and visibly uncomfortable, the athlete said she was not able to answer in Guarani due to a mental block. Not satisfied, the journalist insisted that Amarilla say anything, even goodbye in the language, a request which was also met with no answer. The next question was if Amarilla spoke Guarani at all, and the answer was: "*Sí, entiendo. Si me hablás en guaraní yo te puedo responder en castellano*" (*Fátima Amarilla: de la Crítica*…, 2021).[39] Either taken by nerves or because, in fact, Amarilla did not know the language, the athlete was unable to say anything in Guarani.

Shortly after, the case made its way to national news, including an article by the national newspaper *ABC Color*, and became a subject of debate on social media. While the news article praised Amarilla's performance, online readers criticized what they perceived to be her lack of patriotism. Most critics stated that she was not a "true Paraguayan" and that she could not represent the country internationally. In response to these comments, journalist Carlos Martini defended Amarilla on Twitter by stating that he too, an intellectual and public figure, was unable to speak Guarani yet still was Paraguayan: "*No hablo ni entiendo guarani. Amo intensamente al*

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[39] Translation: "Yes, I do understand it. If you talk to me in Guarani, I can reply to you in Spanish" (*Fátima Amarilla: de la Crítica…* 2021).

Paraguay y confio que tendrá tiempos mejores" (*Fátima Amarilla: de la Crítica*…, 2021).[40] Martini also underwent heavy criticism across social media platforms for being a public figure who did not know the language.

During participant observations at PFS, this controversy emerged as one of the class discussion topics as well. *Profesora* Luisa prepared an entire Guarani class focusing on language and identity. She began by bringing up Martini's remarks and questioning his view on languages and the nation: "*la ley dice que sí, los paraguayos deben saber ambos idiomas*" (Fieldwork Journal, May 2021).[41] The law that Luisa was loosely referring to is the *Ley de Lenguas* project which states that Paraguayans should know both official languages in order to qualify for certain government positions in administration, education, and other sectors. However, Luisa was overgeneralizing what *Ley de Lenguas* states since the clause does not mandate citizens to know both languages beyond these particular contexts.[42] Luisa moved on to show videos with testimonials from several foreigners who had lived in Paraguay talking about the importance of Guarani to Paraguayans. These included an American Evangelical missionary and a Japanese exchange student stating how much they appreciated the Guarani language and how ubiquitous the language was in their experiences. During class, Luisa further stated: "*Decirle a un extranjero que no sé guaraní es decir que no me conozco, que conozco mi ser…; [los extranjeros] nos identifican c/ el idioma y nosotros no… [Incentivando a los alumnos a que aprendan el guaraní] Solo así podremos lograr un verdadero bilingüismo… ahí están nuestras*

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[40] Translation: "I do not speak, nor do I understand Guarani. I love Paraguay dearly and I trust that it will see better times" (2021).
[41] Translation: "the law asserts that yes, Paraguayans must know both languages" (Fieldwork Journal, April 2021).
[42] Specifically, *Ley de Lenguas* addresses topics such as language rights (Chapter 2, articles 9-13), language use in the national administration (Chapter 3, articles 14-25), and language in education (Chapter 4, articles 26-30)(Paraguay, 2010). For an in-depth analysis of Language Policies and *Ley de Lenguas*, see this dissertation's Chapter 4 "Translating Policy Into Practice".

raíces, en el idioma" (Fieldwork Journal, May 2022).[43] The critiques that athlete Fatima Amarilla received nationally and abroad, as well as Luisa's use of foreigners' testimonials, are indicative that many would like to impose a version of national identity where speaking Guarani and being Paraguayan are inseparable. Proponents of this idea often resort to foreigners' perceptions of Paraguayan bilingualism to assert that language and national identity are inseparable.

3.3.2 Language Paradox: The participants that I worked with during my fieldwork in 2020 and 2021 took part in the language paradox in Paraguay, defining their identity by using the Guarani language while holding competing and vague understandings of the language and ambivalent attitudes towards its speakers. People in this position do not have to identify as proficient speakers of Guarani. In fact, participants in this study stated they mainly communicate in Spanish across a range of domains, such as academic, workplace, and home. Only 3 out of the 6 faculty members and 1 out of the 34 senior class students at PFS described themselves as proficient in Guarani. As discussed in detail below, students framed Guarani lessons as foreign language classes, and in some cases felt more proficient in Portuguese or English. Paraguayan history from the 20th to the 21st century contributes to explaining how these paradoxical narratives of national identity emerged.

3.3.3. Historical Background of Shared Narratives: The roots of these dominant narratives on national identity became evident in the 1960s. At this time, a group of linguists, politicians, and, soon after, the broader population collectively took part in constructing the idea of Paraguayan bilingualism. A quick glance at census data from the 1950s to 2002 demonstrates

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[43] Translation: "To tell a foreigner that I do not know Guarani is to say that I do not know myself, that I do not know my being… [foreigners] identify us with the language, yet we do not do that… [encouraging students to learn Guarani] Only by doing this will we achieve true bilingualism… That is where our roots are; in the language*"* (Fieldwork Journal, May 2021).

language distribution in the country (Zajíková, 2009). As seen in Table 1, until the 1960s most Paraguayans primarily spoke a variety of Paraguayan Guarani. Primary speakers of Spanish concentrated in urban areas were outnumbered as the country was mostly rural. Yet rapid urbanization and political projects, paired with overgeneralizations of the level of bilingualism found in some linguistic studies, slowly changed perceptions of national bilingualism. Ultimately, Spanish and the bilingual label were imposed upon a majority Guarani-speaking population, and the work of some linguists contributed to this imposition effort.

	1950	1962	1982	1992	2002
Guarani	94.3%	93.7%	88.7%	88%	86.6%
Castellano	61.4%	54.7%	55.1%	56.1%	69.6%

Table 1. Rough Distribution of Languages in Paraguay from the last available census data (Paraguay 2002).

In the latter half of the 20th century, two pioneering linguistics studies mapped out language distribution in the country: Rona's "The Social and Cultural Status of Guarani in Paraguay" (Rona, 1964) and Rubin's *National Bilingualism in Paraguay* (Rubin, 1968). Rubin's study, the first major international work that placed Paraguay under the spotlight in the literature of bilingualism, reported elevated rates of bilingualism in the country (the author did not focus on language mixing or code-switching phenomena). Rubin conducted fieldwork in Paraguay in order to map the distribution of language use across domains in the country. While contributing important data, her study posed some limitations. It ignored the fact that, at the time, most Paraguayans spoke Jopara while some had limited proficiency in Spanish, and it imposed an analytical frame based on the use of two named languages. That is, after encountering Jopara, Rubin understood language practices in Paraguay as realizations of two separate codes seen in the categories of Spanish and Guarani, which culminated in the bilingual label (Penner, 2014).

As these two important works attracted international attention to Paraguay, multiple scholars embraced the idea of Paraguayan bilingualism until it slowly became accepted as factual. Fishman famously cites Paraguay as a prototypical example of a country with bilingualism with diglossia.[44] These and other studies contributed to the reification of bilingualism in Paraguay. Thus, the construction of bilingualism was in full swing in Paraguay. Politicians immediately saw value in this and embraced bilingualism as a core aspect of a shared national identity.

In the political realm, the biggest political force that prevails in the country to date is the Colorado Party, the conservative party that has ruled almost uninterruptedly since the 1950s, except for four years between 2008 and 2012. This party disseminated the idea of "rich and poor, we all speak Guarani," an effective motto that cemented itself in the minds of Paraguayans. Nonetheless, this unifying rhetorical tool masked the social inequality and linguistic barriers that most Guarani-dominant speakers faced at the time, given that the administration of the country functioned solely in Spanish throughout history (Nickson, 2009). Ultimately, the concept of bilingualism served to foreground national loyalty and downplay the social realities of primary Guarani speakers in the country.

Paraguay's dictatorship lasted nearly three decades under Alfredo Stroessner, a military officer and member of the Colorado party, in office from 1954 to 1989. During this regime, Stroessner monopolized political power, used force and violence against the general population, and allowed a corrupt elite to accumulate wealth at the cost of the extreme poverty of parts of the

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[44] Fishman's conceptualization of diglossia holds that it "exists not only in multilingual societies which officially recognize several "languages" but, also, in societies which are multilingual in the sense that they employ separate dialects, registers or functionally differentiated language varieties of whatever kind" (1967: 30). This is one of Fishman's major contributions to the existent concept of the term.

population. The son of German immigrants, Stroessner was indifferent to the use of Guarani in his public addresses. Yet, his party was known for the symbolic use of Guarani in political speech as a means of gaining the populace's trust, an almost unprecedented practice by politicians until then. This symbolic use of Guarani by the administration contributed to its recognition in 1960 as "*lengua de la nación*," or language of the nation. Guarani thus became an important rhetorical political tool for the regime to reach out to and influence rural and poor sectors of the country (Nickson, 2009).

Further, while Brazil had Gilberto Freyre and Mexico had José Vasconcellos, Paraguay had its own intellectual champion of nationalism, Natalicio González: "a Colorado ideologue who exalted the *Raza Paraguaya* (Paraguayan race) as a superior race that synthesized all that was best in the indigenous and Spanish traditions" (Nickson, 2009). Whereas in Mexico mestizaje and the use of Spanish were mechanisms to assimilate traits of indigeneity, in Paraguay the use of Guarani as a political tool was more complex. Gonzalez's speeches were fundamental in solidifying the link between language and nation in the country. They helped to merge ideas of nation, language, and cultural heritage by bringing together the Guarani language, the ethnic ancestry of the Guarani peoples, and the idea of the modern nation. This discourse circulates among most Paraguayans to the present.

As linguists and politicians disseminated the idea of national bilingualism, the population also embraced it. By the 1990s, the general population came to accept that Paraguay was in fact bilingual. In 1992, Guarani became a co-official language of the nation-state. From there on, some scholars name Paraguay as a country with "par excellence linguistic policies", since theoretically and at the management level, linguistic legislation was inclusive and beneficial to speakers of both Spanish and Guarani (Mar-Molinero, 2000). At this point, the administration

had an ongoing mission to achieve the notion of "coordinated bilingualism" as coined by Uriel Weinrich (Weinreich, 1953). Such a notion promoted the idea of working with primary speakers of either national language to eventually make them equally proficient in both languages. The educational system would be tasked to accomplish this mission. The literature on Paraguayan bilingualism points out that such ideas surfaced in the general population of the country (Villagra-Batoux, 2008). While Paraguayans embraced the idea of national bilingualism, the Guarani language nonetheless carried pride and stigma.

3.3.4. Ambivalent Indexical Value: Currently, a pivotal element of the paradox of language and identity lies in the Guarani language's ambivalent indexical value. While, as we saw in the students' answers reported earlier, language can be the motif of great pride, using it as a primary means of discourse can also be perceived as a handicap, especially in urbanized areas. Conversely, being a Spanish-dominant speaker is socially acceptable and increasingly more common, while being a primary speaker of Guarani may cause limitations in many social domains. However, symbolic affiliation and some level of proficiency in the Guarani language are necessary, as the case of athlete Fatima Amarilla demonstrates. To explore the roots of this stigma, I turn to a language ideology analysis.

3.4 Language Ideologies and Stigma

3.4.1 Language Ideologies: The concept of language ideologies is central to my analysis in this chapter. I foreground this analysis on the notion that any view on language is ideological (Irvine, 1989; Kroskrity, 2008; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). Sociocultural categories of registers of language place the individual in a multidimensional socioeconomic spectrum (Gal, 1998). The analysis of ideologies of language allows us to "locate the meaningfulness of linguistic signs concerning other signs in particular historical, political-economic, and

sociocultural contexts, and interrogate from what perspectives a given sign comes to take on particular value" (Rosa & Burdick, 2017: 103). These values might index prestige, sophistication, and legitimacy, while stigmatized forms index ignorance and illegitimacy, yet also solidarity and local/national belonging. Traditionally, ideologies of language serve the interests of the dominant group as a means of restricting access to privilege and influence (Kroskrity, 2008). The group that exerts influence may control belonging by attributing value to certain forms of languages over others.

The way people speak about a language is revealing of the constructed ideologies around this given language or register of language: "Ideology is variously discovered in linguistic practice itself; in explicit talk about language… and in the regimentation of language use through the more implicit metapragmatics" (Woolard, 1998: 9). Thus, language ideologies may be understood as the conglomeration of shared beliefs and attitudes regarding languages and language practices. Such conglomeration contributes to the longstanding conception that one language variety is appropriate for commerce, education, and other formal scenarios. In contrast, these beliefs disseminate the idea that other language registers—and consequently their speakers—may not legitimize participation in certain activities of the public sphere if they do not match the dominant groups' linguistic practices. Agha deems the above-mentioned categorization of languages as "enregisterment," or mechanisms through which linguistic forms come to index preconceived understandings about an individual or group of people (Agha, 2007: 5).

Further, language is a power mechanism, and social institutions are sites that reinforce power dynamics attached to a language or language variety. Some institutions, such as school sites, can act as platforms for the dissemination and naturalization of certain language ideologies. Pierre Bourdieu reinforces this idea by emphasizing that "…members of a linguistic community

share a knowledge of and commitment to the relative values of particular linguistic practices that is cultivated in schools and the public institutions of society" (Bourdieu, 1991: 16). These ideologies, therefore, attribute a positive value to particular language practices, which are primarily transmitted by family and other immediate social circles to which an individual belongs. This, in turn, in social interactions provides them with "cultural capital," or a currency of prestige that in this case is strictly linked to language use (Bourdieu, 1991).

In predominantly monolingual communities, ideologies are mainly tied to different registers of language that define social class (Gal & Irvine, 1995). In multilingual communities—such as Paraguay—languages can exist in a spectrum of diglossia. First established by Charles Fergusson, diglossia refers to the condition in which language A represents a high variety that is used in public and formal domains—education, market, government, as well as written communication—whereas language B is the low variety, used in the informal, often private domain and predominantly oral. Language A can index more prestige than language B within a certain community where these languages coexist. Diglossia assumes that most speakers implicitly know when and where to apply the use of each language (Ferguson, 1959). This scenario of language contact is packed with an understanding of socioeconomic prestige. Joshua Fishman, building on Fergusson's ideas, extends these concepts to language varieties as well (Fishman, 1967). Although diglossia explains this linguistic phenomenon at the surface level and serves as a guiding principle, it overlooks the complexities of context and what this can index. Multiple elements may trigger language choice across domains. Nonetheless, the concept of diglossia is useful to describe the bilingual situation in Paraguay (Bareiro Saguier, 1990; Hauck, 2014; Makarán, 2014).

Equally important to my analysis is the distinction between standardized and non-standardized forms of language. The uses of each of these can determine what constitutes perceived "authentic" and "non-authentic" discourses (Lippi-Green, 1997; J. Rosa & Burdick, 2017). First, standardized language use refers to registers of a language that are regulated by a set of formal rules established by grammarians and institutions (prescriptive grammar). These forms of language are mostly available to the elites and educated groups of society. Non-standardized language varieties reflect ground-level language use that alludes to how people use language in everyday interactions (descriptive grammar). Neither of these is strictly tied to social classes; however, elite groups tend to be familiar with and subscribe to prescriptive, or standardized norms.

Standardization, or the process of selecting and grammatically curating a certain language variety to be held as prestigious, ultimately attempts to present legitimacy in language use. Bourdieu sustains that this process is a product of institutional and collective efforts: *"The legitimate language is a semi-artificial language which has to be sustained by a permanent effort of correction, a task which falls both to institutions specially designed for this purpose and to individual speakers"* (Bourdieu, 1991: 60). Historically, dominant institutions, including the government structure, helped perpetuate this system.[45] Ultimately the use of standardized languages asserts power over the use and users of stigmatized varieties.

In Paraguay, the debate on non-standardized languages centers around Jopara. The association of the term Jopara and the language variety of Guarani can be traced to Antonio

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[45] In the case of Paraguay "*mientras que la persistencia del guaraní podría leerse como resistencia a la asimilación lingüística hacia la lengua colonial, la política lingüística paraguaya fomenta la asimilación ideológica*" (Hauck, 2014: 132). Translation: "While the persistence of Guarani could be understood as resistance towards linguistic assimilation to the colonial language, Paraguayan language policies give way to ideological assimilation" (Hauck 2014: 132).

Guasch (1879-1965), a Spaniard Jesuit priest who was also a Guarani grammarian. Guasch created the connection between language and Jopara, a term used to refer to a traditional Paraguayan stew that brings in a variety of meats and vegetables. Guasch was a pioneer in describing Jopara as impure by holding it against an allegedly pure form of language with historical and academic roots. Guasch's ideological purism bears part of the blame for legitimizing the stigma that Paraguayans ascribe to the way they speak "bad Guaraní." Further, Guasch is a pioneer in stigmatizing Jopara and proposing that Paraguayans pursue the illusory goal of language purity. That is, he used his grammarian position to condemn perceived language hybridity vis-à-vis ideologies of monolingualism (Penner, 2014).

Other concurring narratives on language rooted in standard language ideologies lead to attributing languagelessness to speakers of hybrid language varieties. Languagelessness is the perception that people who speak a hybrid variety of languages are void of "true" linguistic capabilities (Rosa, 2016). These speakers are perceived to dwell in a linguistic limbo between two named languages. Under a strict prescriptivist view, since they do not conform to either named language variety and its norms, they ultimately possess no language.

Jonathan Rosa proposes the term languagelessness based on an analysis of White Americans imposing this label on Latinx peoples who speak Spanglish or non-standardized varieties of either English or Spanish. Rosa elaborates on how educational systems conceive of their Latinx students and perceive them to be linguistically handicapped. These conceptualizations consequently relegate Latinx students to English as a Second Language classes, even though their English abilities are on the same level as their primarily English-speaking peers. Thus, widespread language ideologies contribute to holding students' academic

progress back by preventing them from engaging in other classes to advance their academic profile (Rosa, 2016).

Similarly, Phillip Carter points out that in certain communities the perception of Latinx students based on their linguistic backgrounds affects their academic trajectory. The simple fact of being bilingual or belonging to a non-English speaking home perpetuates their enrollment in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, even if they are proficient speakers of English. In this case, specifically, instructors may assign their students to these classes solely based on their Spanish surnames. The ESL track conflicts with other prestigious paths at school that impede the success of bilinguals. Lastly, this perpetuates the idea of the "unwillingness" to integrate into society and functions as a structural blockage for this population. Under this view, the bilingual speaker willingly refuses to speak a language "properly" (Carter, 2014).

Shared language perceptions rooted in language purity are a cause of widespread linguistic insecurities, or the (self-)imposed sense of inferiority to one's own language (Zentella, 1997)**.** Linguistic insecurity hinders one's language practices as well as the perception of the community's language practices. These perceptions depict circumstances where the speaker's own and shared translingual language practices coexist in tension with monolingual ideologies. Ultimately, speakers of non-standardized language varieties suffer from the stigma attached to these views.

Paraguayans have demonstrated a shared sense of linguistic insecurity in describing their own language practices. When asked about the perceived state of Spanish in the country, especially if compared to the varieties of Spanish spoken in other countries such as Colombia, Mexico, and Spain, Paraguayans describe their Spanish as poor. This belief also comes from the perception that Guarani has corrupted Spanish, as seen in the commonplace assumption

"*hablamos mal el español*" (Chiquito & Saldivar-Dick, 2014). Not surprisingly, the same applies to Paraguayans' views on Guarani and Jopara. In an LP practices study conducted in an educational setting in Asunción Paraguay, I found that despite LP management efforts in Paraguay to instate bilingual LPs and public spaces, the study's participants reported monolingual orientations, such as subscribing to language purity ideas—whether consciously or not—and reinforcing Spanish's prevalence in public domains (Von Streber, 2018). These tensions further reinforce linguistic insecurity in speakers and prevent them from creating domains where they may incorporate translanguaging, or when a speaker makes use of their full linguistic repertoire without explicitly following the conventional rules of a named language (Otheguy et. al. 2015; Zentella, 2007). Mortimer found comparable results in educational settings, where instructors relied on translanguaging to aid their teaching, yet these same educators perceived it as transitional and remedial as opposed to a valid pedagogical tool in education (Mortimer, 2016).

3.5 Discussion

3.5.1. Collective Identity and Language Practices: Guarani is undoubtedly a pivotal element in Paraguayans' collective identity, as is the case with the participants at PFS. Guarani does not have to constitute a significant part of speakers' linguistic repertoire to be a part of their identity. Barbara Johnstone argues that certain local language varieties may give way to other dominant ones under the influence of globalization and global languages. Rather than disappearing, speakers tend to shift to using these local varieties in an emblematic way by retaining parts of the lexicon of the local variety. Johnstone points out that a language becomes an "object of discourse" rather than a medium of discourse itself (Johnstone, 2013). Based on my ethnographic data consisting of semi-participant observation, interviews, and analysis of

local language practices, I suggest that urbanized youth's use of Guarani is mostly emblematic, or that of an object of discourse as opposed to a medium of discourse, as Barbara Johnstone frames it (Johnstone, 2010).

According to participants' understandings, the use of these discursive elements is enough to grant a form of ownership over Guarani. At the national level, most Paraguayans claim to belong to a bilingual nation that stands out among other countries for its widespread and "singular" rates of bilingualism.[46] In this way, as an object of discourse, the Guarani language has a high historical and cultural value. Yet, when framed as a medium of discourse it has ambivalent indexical values; being a primary Guarani speaker carries a social stigma, which is rooted in prescriptivist views on language. Guarani, therefore, occupies a paradoxical position since it represents a strong sense of national identity while carrying centuries of social stigma.

Language prescriptivist views imposed on Guarani cause the language to be perceived as "broken." The unfolding consequences of this view perpetuate beliefs such as the need to attain a form of utopian bilingualism, or "true bilingualism." *Profesora* Luisa promoted this understanding of language in section 3.3.1. This view hinders the applicability of the Guarani language in many domains of society and has tangible consequences for primary speakers of the language. Ultimately, this paradox also diminishes the willingness of younger generations to continue with the use of the language.

3.5.2. Chasing "True" Bilingualism: Never-ending reforms of the Guarani language imposed in the educational system prevent younger generations from learning or using Guarani. Local language ideologies perpetuate the belief that a mixed language is a problem to be fixed.

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[46] Refer to Chapter 4 "Translating Policy Into Language" for a broader framing of the construction of the idea of Paraguayan bilingualism.

As mentioned above, the concepts of language purity, languagelessness, and linguistic insecurity taint shared ideas about Guarani. These ideological issues find their way into cases like the Academia del Guarani's desires and struggles to establish a new alphabet in 2021, or the conflicts that emerged when the Ministry of Education chose a language variety suitable for education (Hauck, 2014). Not surprisingly, these projects stagnated since a pure language variety is an unattainable goal. Nonetheless, my research showed that these ongoing debates between language registers in Guarani affected many participants in this study.

During my fieldwork, two key moments point to the contemporary relevance of this issue. First, *Profesora* Luisa's statements in class suggested that *de facto* bilingualism in Paraguay is generally illegitimate. She stated that more work needs to be done to "achieve true bilingualism," which, to her thinking, meant that bilingualism that incorporates language mixing is far from acceptable (see 3.3.1). On different occasions, she warned students against the use of Jopara. Luisa's comments suggest that language mixing does not count as bilingualism, or that it is a problematic type of language practice. Second, even Steffano, a proficient Guarani speaker, does not consider himself a legitimate speaker. Awareness of his own language mixing caused him to understand his language practices as insufficient. Steffano was one of the only students other than Marcos who could communicate in Guarani. Nonetheless, in our interviews, he did not consider himself a legitimate speaker. In an interview in December 2020, Steffano described his use of Guarani in the following way:

- Steffano: [20"]*: …no es un guaraní fluido. O sea, no es como… Es como un menonita por ahí te voy a decir...*[47] *Hablamos, por ejemplo, eh, yo te digo: "¿Mba'eteko,*

[47] In Paraguay, the term "*menonita*" (Mennonite) refers to German immigrants who are known for language mixing. In many cases, these German immigrants mostly speak Guarani and German.

Guilherme?", te digo, ¿Verdad? Y después vos me decís: "y roiko porã, aha'í" por ejemplo me decís: "Ando bien, me estoy yendo, hina".

- GVS: *Claro, claro. Ahaí hese.*
- Steffano: *Y después ya le preguntás: "¿Por qué? ¿Qué pio pasó? ¿Cómo rendiste? Y no sé que" ¿Entendés? Es ese tipo de conversaciones las que tenemos. Eso es lo que preservamos más que una charla común de un solo idioma. No es brutal el, el [guaraní] lo que hablamos. O sea, no es un 50/50 ni siquiera. Es ponele un 10/90; guaraní 10 y español 90.* (Fieldwork Interviews, December, 2020).[48]

Steffano's comparison with the Mennonites alludes to language mixing since that community is locally known for mixing Guarani and German. Further, in his view, his language mixing involves only using 10% of Guarani words and complementing the rest with Spanish. This impression of his language practice reflects those of student colleagues in this study.

Paraguayans' own views of their language practices point to linguistic insecurity and the upholding of the notion of an idealized native, monolingual speaker. The perception that deep in the interior of the country Guarani monolinguals speak a variety of language that is free from Spanish discourages language learning. That is, Jopara will never be seen as a suitable language since it is constantly held against this pure, albeit imaginary variety of Guarani. The concept of named languages creates divisions where boundaries on the ground are much less strictly

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[48] Translation (translated from Spanish and Guarani):

-Steffano: …it is not fluent Guarani. I mean, it's like… it's like Mennonite, so to speak. We say, for example: "How is it going, Guilherme?", I say, right? And then you say: "I'm doing well. I just keep going" you say, for example: "I am fine, I am just going".
-GVS: Yeah, yeah. I just keep going.
-Steffano: And then you just ask him: "Why? What happened? How did you do on the exam?" and all of that, get it? That's the type of conversations that we have. That is what we preserve more than a dialogue in just one language… The Guarani that we speak is not, is not brutal. I mean, it's not even 50/50. It is, say, 10/90; Guarani 10 and Spanish 90 (Fieldwork Interviews, December, 2020).

conceived. The rural school I worked with (*Nueva Esperanza* School) described their Guarani as not as pure as that spoken in other communities. *Profesora* Marisa talked about a certain school she works with located to the north of the country and in the depths of the *interior* where one could find the true speakers of the language. Ironically, even *Profesora* Marisa later mentioned that youth within this “true” Guarani-speaking community were using too much Spanish. Whether intentionally or not, Marisa ultimately ends up reproducing language ideologies that significantly constrain students’ bilingual abilities.

3.5.3. Limited Applicability in Public Domains: The participants in this project also struggled to identify domains where they could use Guarani in Asuncion and other urbanized contexts. Participants described only using it at school within an academic context, with older family members, and in the interior of the country. In fact, they framed Guarani at the same level as a foreign language. When compared to other language opportunities, often students would opt for Portuguese, English, or French:

- Soledad [41:51]: *Yo por ejemplo, si viene un brasilero y me dice: “hablame en guaraní” no voy a poder porque yo no sé guaraní. Entonces también no es el no valorizar no más. El tema es que yo tampoco sé y no voy a poder. Prefiero hablarle en portugués, que sí entiendo a que hablarle en guaraní.*
- Bruno: *Eso por ejemplo es algo que me pasó. Entiendo mucho más el portugués que el guaraní.*
- Carlos: *Yo el inglés* (Fieldwork Interviews, June 2021).[49]

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[49] Translation:

- Soledad: I, for instance, if a Brazilian comes and asks me to speak Guarani, I wouldn’t be able to do it because I don’t know it. So, it’s not just about one undermining it [Guarani language]. The issue is, I don’t know the language and I wouldn’t be able to do it. I would rather speak to them in Portuguese, which I do know, rather than doing it in Guarani.

Soledad further mentioned her intentions to attend a university in Brazil, so Portuguese had a higher level of applicability. To my surprise, these students framed Guarani as a foreign language just like any of the other ones they mentioned.

Another reason for the perceived lack of applicability of Guarani is the excessively formal language variety used in schools. Students mentioned that the Guarani being taught in schools is too literary and not coherent with the language practices of primary speakers. An excessive focus on literary texts and a lack of oral practices were problematic to students. Marcos criticized the way that schools create opportunities for learning the language. During a field interview, Marcos stated that:

> Marcos: *[E]n los colegios no se enseña bien [el guaraní]. Se enseña mucha gramática, mucha lírica y yo al menos estudiando otros idiomas te puedo decir que la gramática descompone bastante… Porque yo no me voy acá a la esquina y le pido al señor que me dé una comparación en guaraní, o una metáfora, o dame una sinestesia ¡No vá a saber! Yo me voy y le digo: "¿Mba'eteko? ¿Ha'upei?" y todas esas cosas... Para qué te voy a mentir, a veces ni yo no entiendo lo que dice el libro ni qué lo te están pidiendo. Porque son palabras difíciles y muchas veces son inventadas ya. No significan tal cosa, porque el guaraní es un idioma grande pero hay bastantes palabras que fueron inventadas y eso me consta. Así que me gustaría que se enseñe de manera más tradicional. Que no te den un libro y un texto larguísimo y te pidan 300 cosas, sino que hagan diálogos, que hagas*

- Bruno: That, for instance, is something that happens to me. I understand Portuguese way more than Guarani
- Carlos: For me it's English (Fieldwork Interviews, 2021).

conversaciones, preguntas, respuestas; cosas didácticas con el idioma y así vas a aprender más (Fieldwork Interview, June 2021)[50]

This rejection of "*palabras inventadas*" (made-up words), affects primary speakers and beyond. Jan Hauck signals that the second bilingual educational plan put forward by MEC (Ministry of Education and Science), was largely rejected for its perceived artificial character (Hauck, 2014). Incongruence between primary speakers and the language variety used in class textbooks ultimately hinders the process of language learning for students across the country.

3.5.4. Consequences for Primary Speakers: The idea of utopian bilingualism and never-ending language reforms in the educational system (see 3.2.2 of this chapter and 4.3.3. of Chapter 4 "Translating Policy Into Practice…") have material consequences for many. Primary speakers of Guarani face the stigmas of backwardness, lack of education, and multiple social barriers in Paraguay. To recap, the Guarani language has been historically diminished and minoritized in Paraguay. During most of the country's history, governmental administrations have operated in Spanish despite the vast majority speaking the indigenous language. Spanish is dominant in urbanized contexts and is an unspoken prerequisite for participation in the public sphere. In these contexts, purist language ideologies position speakers of Jopara as illegitimate because of its perceived impurity. The primary participants of my study—urban Spanish

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[50] Translation:

- Marcos: Schools don't teach Guarani well. They teach too much grammar, too much poetry, and from my experience studying other languages, I can tell you that grammar spoils it. Because I don't go to the street corner [store] and ask the man to give me a comparison in Guarani, or a metaphor, or a synesthesia. They won't know it! I go and I say: "How is it going? What's up?" and all of those things… I'm not gonna lie to you, sometimes not even I understand what the textbook is saying because they are difficult words and they are made up. They don't mean so and so because Guarani is a big language but many words were made up and I am aware of that. So, I would like them to teach in a more traditional way. I don't want them to give you a book and a really long text so that they ask you 300 things; instead, they should dialogue, ask you to speak, ask questions, answers and other didactic things with the language and you will learn way more that way (Fieldwork Interview, June, 2021).

speakers—did not face such social limitations, and whenever they used Guarani, it was for conveying erudition while benefiting from the prestige of being bilingual.

3.5.5. Translanguaging: Translanguaging has the potential to question policies and dominant discourses, and thereby change practices in present-day Paraguay. To recapitulate, translanguaging consists of "…the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (Otheguy et al., 2015: 281). Such a concept implies that a speaker may freely communicate without regarding the norms and limits ascribed to any named language, such as Spanish or English.[51] A democratic approach to language, such as the one facilitated by translanguaging theory, can challenge the widespread goal of attaining a utopian form of bilingualism that language purists propose, or what *Profesora* Luisa called "true bilingualism." Guarani is historically an oral language. Constant attempts to curate the language with an artificial lexicon and rid it of Spanish borrowings by different institutions have never succeeded in the country. If used as a medium of discourse, the Guarani language can benefit and widen the range of use of this language. Speakers understand LP as a failure since the language fails to fulfill every communicative function in different domains.

Translanguaging may further attenuate the argument that Guarani must fulfill every communicative function (professional, academic, legal, and others) in order to be considered a legitimate language in Paraguay. To recap, this view holds that if Guarani cannot be used in technology, social media, and as a medium of instruction for higher education (to name a few sectors), it is an insufficient language. Speakers echo this belief when they talk about how the

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[51] For an in-depth discussion of translanguaging, see Chapter 1 "Introduction", section 1.4.

language should be “fixed.” However, if we adopt a translingual perspective, more attention should be devoted to ground-up translingual practices, and the communication potential offered by such practices.[52]

Debunking narratives of language purity through democratic conceptualizations of language and a better understanding of language practices in Asuncion can diminish the language paradox. The Guarani language is integral for Paraguayans as many participants in this study confirmed. Expanding the idea of who is an accepted—or “legitimate”—speaker of the language is potentially beneficial for all. Accepting that language mixing is not only inevitable but a natural aspect of local language practices can redefine the value of Guarani—both Guaraniete and Jopara—in present-day Paraguay.

3.6. Chapter Conclusion

3.6.1. Language Paradox and its Consequences: This chapter has explored how shared narratives about language and a form of national identity inform Paraguayans’ language practices, especially those of the urban-educated youth at PFS. Whether Guarani is part of someone’s linguistic repertoire or not, Paraguayans frame their individual and collective identities with the Guarani language, as is the case of athlete Fatima Amarilla (see 3.3.1). This language provides them with a strong sense of belonging, as well as a cultural and historical identity. However, negative connotations towards this language, especially towards the mixed language variety Jopara, affect speakers of this language.

As I signaled earlier, the complexity of Guarani lies in its ambivalent and competing indexical values. Nominal affiliation with the language asserts the construction of national

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[52] For a longer, in-depth explanation of the concept of Translanguaging, please refer to Chapter 1 “Introduction”.

identity as Paraguayans. Likewise, claiming proficiency in the historically indigenous language grants Paraguayans the prestige of being bilingual. However, being a primary speaker of the language carries much stigma in the form of backwardness and lack of education. Public sphere domains—such as work, education, and mass media—are generally not conducive to the use of Guarani. Most primary speakers use the variety known as Jopara, which is permeated by lexical, morphosyntactical, and even phonetic borrowings from Spanish. Competing narratives about language highly condemn borrowing. Ironically, Guaraniete—or "pure" Guarani—only exists among intellectual circles. These tensions often lead to speakers opting for Spanish alone.

Speakers who allegedly do not speak nor understand the Guarani language, such as many PFS participants who self-identified in this way, become distanced from the very language with which they claim affiliation. Shared negative perceptions of Guarani framed around backwardness and lack of education prevent them from trying to acquire and use the language. For example, Soledad stated she would rather learn Portuguese for its professional and academic applicability (see subsection 3.5.1.). Steffano (see 3.5.2) who at various points of my semi-participant observations demonstrated proficiency in Guarani, considered his language skills as inadequate. This was rooted in the idea that he incorporated too much Spanish into his Guarani.

Primary speakers of Guarani, such as *Profesora* Marisa (see 3.5.2.), believe that even their own students who are also speakers of Guarani resort too much to borrowing from Spanish these days. To back this belief, they seem to compare themselves to an imaginary speaker in the *interior* (inland) who speaks Guaraniete, a language variety that is supposedly free from lexical borrowings. Others, such as Luisa (see subsection 3.3.1), consider others' linguistic practices—and sometimes even their own—as impure when they measure them against the imposed legitimacy of academic Guarani. Language practices are measured within the parameters of

utopian bilingualism, which creates an understanding that the language must be repaired, and the country as a whole should be in pursuit of "true bilingualism." Under this view, only by respecting the seemingly clear-cut division of named languages and monolingual practices will the country be legitimately bilingual.

Language purity—based on language prescriptivism, language insecurity, and negative language ideologies—poses consequences of varying severity to speakers across linguistic profiles in Paraguay. Ultimately, utopian bilingualism affects language transmission in urbanized contexts and hinders the social engagement of primary speakers of the country in the Paraguayan public sphere. Translanguaging represents a more democratic conceptualization of language practices and embracing it can alleviate the negative implications raised by utopian bilingualism.

3.6.2 The Ghost of Language Shift: Lastly, although this study focuses on language practices and ideologies of the PFS participants, it is worth further analyzing the broader urbanized context in Asuncion. In light of rapid industrialization, mass communication, and interconnectedness, several scholars have speculated about a possible language shift to Spanish-only in the country (Choi, 2003; Solé, 1996; Walsh, 2014; Zajícová, 2009). These same authors point out that more and more youth in urbanized settings in Paraguay are living in contexts where Guarani is increasingly absent.[53] This shift in language practices occurring in urbanized regions of the country is noteworthy. Language practices are rapidly moving from forced bilingualism—previously imposed on Guarani speakers—to Spanish monolingualism. Neither

[53] Choi (2003) finds that urban youth in private and public schools largely default to the use of Spanish, despite their positive attitudes towards and affiliation with the Guarani language. Solé (1996) concludes that rapid urbanization is influencing language choice of students in high school. Based on data collected in Asuncion's metropolitan area, Walsh (2014) indicates that language acquisition and use is in steady decline. Lastly, Zajikova (2009) indicates that for children in elementary and middle-school, Guarani is losing its status of language of home and the private sphere, when compared to data from previous years.

shift is inherently positive and the factors leading up to these changes should not be ignored. Particularly, language shift is relevant when analyzing local LPs and their crafting. This shift and change in language practices represent *de facto* LPs, which often go against the intended outcomes of national-level, macro-LPs, topics that I will address in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 Translating Policy into Practice: Local Language Practices at Paulo Freire School

4.0 Chapter Introduction

This chapter analyzes the educational Language Policies (LPs) at Paulo Freire School (PFS) with special attention to their translation of national LPs into language practices. For this analysis, I use ethnographic data collected from September 2020 to July 2021. While the focus is on local language practices at PFS, I contrast these with management-level, or *de jure* LP, as established by Paraguayan national legislation. Specifically, I compare these language practices to the expected outcomes of *Ley de Lenguas*, which represents one of the biggest changes in macro, management-level policies in Paraguay. Central to this analysis is the recognition of linguistic culture, or "…the sum totality of ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, religious strictures, and all the other cultural "baggage" that speakers bring to their dealings with language from their background" (Schiffman, 1996: 276), and the influence of linguistic culture on LPs. Ultimately, the recognition and analysis of linguistic culture provides a grounded and transparent representation of speakers' sociolinguistic realities.

The main question that guides my analysis is: How does the PFS community translate macro-LPs into local language practices? Analyzing this process is fundamental to understanding if these macro-LPs are benefiting or hurting speakers. To analyze this, I consider language ideologies, reflected and (re)produced in national narratives about languages, and their influence on the construction of language policies. I argue that PFS youths' translingual LP practices challenge the expected outcomes of management-level LP projects, such as *Ley de Lenguas*, by—at least partly—rejecting notions of linguistic purity and redefining language use according to their own orientations. My findings reveal that regardless of the current and stated goals of *Ley de Lenguas*—especially after the last phase of its effectuation in 2021— PFS' local language

practices better respond to the realities surrounding them: a Spanish-dominant society with aspirations to global languages over the vernacular one. This mainly manifests in three areas: the nature of local linguistic culture, language ideologies, and the symbolic value of language in Paraguay. This process of redefining language involves the community's symbolic ties with the Guarani language in terms of language use and identity. These findings call for more situated, bottom-up approaches in the crafting of national LPs in Paraguay.

4.1. Macro and Micro Frameworks

As a starting point, I use the analogies that Eckert proposes of the map and ground-level views to illustrate macro and micro patterns of language use and the social meaning of language in contemporary urban Asuncion, specifically at PFS. In these analogies, the map provides the macro view of language distribution in the country. I employ the concept of diglossia as a map to provide the macro view of language practices. Diglossia lays out a general outline of top-down or institutional views of how named languages should function in distinct sociolinguistic domains within a given community.[54] The analogy of a ground-level view illustrates a micro view of language, or fine-grained aspects of language practices (Eckert, 2018: 186). For this, I use the data collected in my linguistic ethnography study. Both perspectives inform each other and the two are necessary for a thorough analysis of language use and local language policies.

The combination of these complementary approaches—diglossia as a map and an ethnography as the ground-level view—provides a fuller picture of LP and language practices than resorting to one of them alone. By combining the two, I address a gap in understanding in the Language Policy and Planning literature pointed out by Hornberger and Johnson (2007) and

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[54] In contrast, translanguaging (and similar) approaches are more "bottom-up" approaches that point to the inevitable reality of diverse sorts of "hybrid" practices (often themselves modeled as "code-switching", "code-mixing" and "code-blending/convergence" as Peter Auer argues (1998).

Johnson (2013). Ultimately language use—along with LPs—is specific, subjective, and often ambiguous. Approaches that combine the macro with the micro perspectives hold a greater potential to yield fruitful insights on educational policies, bilingualism, and LP studies.

4.2. Overview of Language Policies

4.2.1. Definitions: Language Policies are normative mechanisms that impact the structure, function, and use of language. They include—but are not limited to—official and unofficial regulations, overt and covert processes, and their status as *de jure,* or concerning law, and *de facto,* or concerning practice. Similarly, LPs can exist at various scales, ranging from macro, to meso, to micro. Macro LPs are large-scale policies, often appearing in written form and reflected in explicit legislations such as those set by a government body. Meso policies are often created and regulated by local-level institutions such as schools. Micro LPs are those enacted at a small community level such as a classroom. For example, an officially monolingual class responds to the meso policies of a certain school. These institutional policies are informed by the macro policies of the nation-state. Further, the same class can implement multilingual policies because a teacher has in practice determined them (micro and *de facto* policies).

LPs are not static products but instead complex and dynamic processes. These are multifaceted and fluctuating, which further alludes to the idea that "policy" might function as a verb instead of a noun (Johnson, 2013: 16). Similarly, policy text and discourse are both intertwined and informed by language ideologies. Spolsky's model for LP analysis is divided into three main realms: LP management, or explicit legislation; LP practices, or ground-level outcome of imagined policies; and lastly LP ideologies, or how beliefs about language influence policy outcomes (Spolsky, 2004: 14). In a later article, the same author adds that community self-management is a crucial component of the analysis of LPs (Spolsky, 2019).

In the unfolding LPs from management (macro) to practice level (micro), some tensions emerge along the way. The imagined outcomes of LP at the management level, as in explicit texts, frequently do not translate into community practices. LP legislation is relatively static, or slow to change, whereas language variation occurs constantly. At the same time that a variety of minority languages "die" around the world, new language varieties emerge from situations of contact in multilingual territories.[55] Part of the complexity of identifying working policies is the rapidly shifting rate of linguistic practices on the ground. Thus, policymakers often struggle to find an effective strategy to keep up with the pace of evolving language practices.[56]

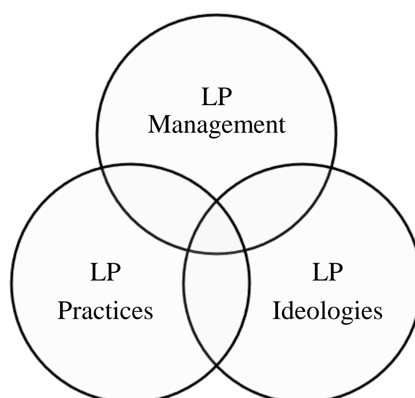

Figure 3. Language Policies Components according to Spolsky (2004)

4.2.2. Critical Language Policy: In the analysis of LPs, one of the most prominent recent approaches is Critical Language Policy (CLP) (Johnson, 2013). CLP conceptualizes language policy as a mechanism of power with the potential to marginalize minority languages and minority language users. It is an analytical framework that questions earlier apolitical and ahistorical approaches to LP by acknowledging that these create systems of inequality and often serve the interests of dominant groups. As embedded in its name, CLP is influenced by critical

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[55] The subfield of language vitality and transmission commonly employs biological analogies as seen in "language vitality, revitalization, and the death of a language".
[56] For the sake of clarity, in this chapter I will refer to LP Management and LP practices simply as LP and language practices respectively.

theory, particularly Foucauldian discourse analysis—a form of textual analysis that considers the power dynamics embedded in language—and the concept of governmentality. That is, the government is not a sovereign single entity, rather, it is an ensemble of multiple, interconnected practices, including the self-government of individuals and the government of communities (Johnson, 2013).

CLP is theoretically rich and has greatly contributed to LP analysis, yet the approach has not sufficiently illuminated the micro level. Some have criticized CLP for failing to recognize the agency of members of minority/minoritized communities (Johnson, 2013). Linguistic minorities resist dominant language policies and develop alternative ideologies and more democratic policies in ways that may not be accounted for within CLP. Hornberger and Johnson point out that critical approaches to LP analysis have been insufficient in cutting across institutional, national, and interpersonal levels since they commonly exclude human agency from the equation (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007: 509). Thus, the authors call for a more grounded approach that seeks to capture the complexities of local language practices, such as those facilitated by linguistic ethnographies, which I define below.

4.2.3. Language Policies and Diglossia: Diglossia is a conceptual framework that attempts to describe the functional distribution of specific registers of language according to domains, i.e., contexts of use such as home, school, and government. These registers are primarily classified into high (H) and low (L): the (H) register is the one implemented in formal domains, associated with literacy, administration, and commerce, whereas the (L) is the informal register that is associated with orality, intimacy, and informality. Fundamental for Charles Ferguson, who first developed the concept, were the roles of a literary register of language and the power of an elite group to practice and enforce it (Ferguson, 1959). Later, Joshua Fishman

(Fishman, 1967) expanded the reach of this concept to bilingual communities of practice, though Lenora Timm observes that Fishman's definition centered only on the aspect of domain complementarity (Timm, 1981). These debates consequently generated and advanced important understandings of language practice and bilingualism.

Diglossia is itself a type of Language Policy. Harold Schiffman, whose definition of diglossia leans towards Fishman's approach, proposes that: "[I]n diglossic linguistic cultures, typically, overt policies specify the rights and domains of specific languages, but only to the literary or standard language—they ignore the existence of a broad spectrum of verbal repertoires that are employed by people in various ways" (Schiffman, 1996: 4). Further, macro language policies are built around the concept of (H) registers of language, which are in many cases inaccessible to a significant part of the populations in many multilingual states. The reality of many multilingual states is that, while these have small populations of bilinguals and some monolinguals, a majority have diglossic language abilities, that is, heterogeneous levels of proficiencies in different domains (Schiffman, 1996: 13). For instance, a doctor who is a first-generation immigrant in the United States can achieve a high proficiency level in technical terminology related to medicine, while being less proficient in informal domains.

Many have criticized the concept of diglossia for its reductionist nature (Nilep, 2006; Otheguy & Stern, 2011; Zentella, 1997). Ofelia García contends that "languages are not compartmentalized in a diglossic situation, but rather they overlap, intersect, and interconnect in a fusion of languages, dialects, and semiotic systems, all of which are part of an individual's and a group's communicative repertoire" (Garcia et al., 2007 in Auer & Wei, 2007). One of the first concepts to challenge the simple binary nature of diglossia was the concept of code-switching in single domains, which from its onset demonstrated that speakers frequently transgress

formal/informal domain distribution. If extended to bilingual societies, critiques become more accentuated since bilinguals engage in varying degrees of translanguaging practices—using all linguistic resources in a speaker's repertory without watchful adherence to named languages—regardless of the domain (Zentella, 1997).[57] Nevertheless, diglossia remains useful for my analysis because of its potential to point out macro patterns and broad tendencies of language use and to provide an understanding of the functional distribution of specific registers of language according to domains, which are essential for LP crafting.

4.2.4. Language Practices and Ethnography: To revisit the metaphor of the map and ground-level view, the major patterns outlined by diglossia (map) can acquire a more flexible perspective by acknowledging the multiplicity of an individual's linguistic resources observed in their language practices (ground-level view). In this light, I undertake an ethnographic study of LPs as this approach promotes a more representative understanding of policies. Such an approach can illuminate not only the micro aspects of LP but also the macro-ones. It further illuminates how individuals and institutions deal with policy power and individual agency and the influence of processes of negotiation.

4.2.5. Translanguaging Theory and Language Policies: To obtain thorough and grounded perspectives, my analysis of the local linguistic culture is grounded on translanguaging. Speakers often mix the registers of one or more languages in their everyday practices. Otheguy et. al. define translanguaging as "the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (Otheguy et. al., 2015: 281). The authors propose translanguaging

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[57] For an in-depth explanation of translanguaging, refer to Chapter 1 "Introduction."

as a theory of language in that such practices occur even in the face of institutional efforts to restrain them.[58] Jonathan Rosa connects the Bakhtinian concept of heteroglossia to the phenomenon of translanguaging, given its potential to go beyond notions of monolingualism: "…a translingual" approach can denaturalize presumed borders between and within languages and focus instead on the complex heterogeneity inherent in everyday language use" (Rosa, 2019: 159).[59] In this affirmation, Rosa is referring not just to the use of different discursive genres, but also to the use of different language registers in the same utterances. In the next sections, I briefly outline macro-level Paraguayan LPs and micro-level language practices revealed in the collected data during the ethnographic component of this research project.

4.3. Macro Language Policies in Paraguay

4.3.1 Official Languages: The 1992 National Constitution: Since 1992, Spanish and Guarani have been the co-official languages of Paraguay, used in all government branches: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial.[60] The country transitioned to democracy after the 1989 overthrow of Stroessner's dictatorship, an authoritarian regime that suspended democracy from 1954 to 1989. Shortly after this transition, the country established a new constitution in 1992, which led to significant changes in Paraguayan LPs. This later resulted in one of the largest changes in the history of Paraguayan language policy. Guarani shifted from the status of "national" to an "official" language alongside Spanish. The political changes propelled by the

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[58] To my knowledge, Mortimer (2006, 2013, 2016) are the sole works that analyze Paraguayan language practices through translanguaging theory.

[59] Heteroglossia refers to the coexistence of speech genres and voices incorporated by an individual at once, as well as "centrifugal and centripetal forces" of language meet (Woolard, 1998b). The best exemplification of this would be the genre of the novel. In a novel, the author is reproducing various levels of speech in one place and different points of view. Every character has a voice and personality, and characters change speech registers according to the context where each character appears.

[60] Additionally, Paraguay has multiple "national languages" spoken by autochthonous communities in the national territory. Nonetheless, the focus of this chapter is on the co-official languages of the country.

advocates of the new democratic movement were seen in the addition of articles 140 and 77 of the National Constitution, described below. In terms of general awareness of macro-level language policies, Paraguayans are well aware of these articles in the National Constitution. This awareness mostly stems from circulating discourses that assert the Guarani language as a central element in the collective identities of Paraguayans:

> ***Artículo 140. De los idiomas***
>
> *El Paraguay es un país pluricultural y bilingüe.*
>
> *Son idiomas oficiales el castellano y el guaraní. La ley establecerá las modalidades de utilización de uno y otro.*
>
> *Las lenguas indígenas, así como las de otras minorías, forman parte del patrimonio cultural de la Nación*. (Paraguay, 1992)[61]

The National Constitution, a 120-page long document, only cites language (which appears as *lengua* and *idioma* almost interchangeably) in 3 articles. In addition to articles 77 and 140, the constitution mentions language in article 18:

> ***Artículo 18.***
>
> *El Poder Ejecutivo dispondrá de inmediato la edición oficial de 10.000 ejemplares de esta Constitución en los idiomas castellano y guaraní. En caso de duda de interpretación, se estará al texto redactado en idioma castellano*. (Paraguay, 1992)[62]

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[61] Translation: Article 140. On languages
Paraguay is a pluricultural and bilingual country.
Spanish and Guarani are official languages. The law will establish the modalities of usage of one and the other.
The indigenous languages, like those of other minorities, are part of the cultural patrimony of the nation. (Paraguay 1992).

[62] Translation: Article 18. The executive power will immediately make available the official edition of 10.000 copies of this constitution in Spanish and Guarani. In case of interpretation doubts, the Spanish text will be consulted (Paraguay 1992).

Here the document states that the constitution should be available in the two official languages of the nation. However, should there be the need to discuss and interpret the constitution, the default language would be Spanish. While portraying certain neutrality, the policy favors the use of Spanish which is also the language widely used in the legal domain in Paraguay. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the inclusion of the term *pluricultural* in Article 140 implies the legal recognition of multiple ethnic minorities who dwell in the national territory. Article 77 promotes bilingual instruction according to the student's home language nationwide in Paraguay:

> ***Articulo 77. De la enseñanza en lengua materna***
>
> *La enseñanza en los comienzos del proceso escolar se realizará en la lengua oficial materna del educando. Se instruirá asimismo en el conocimiento y en el empleo de ambos idiomas oficiales de la República.*
>
> *En el caso de las minorías étnicas cuya lengua materna no sea el guaraní, se podrá elegir uno de los dos idiomas oficiales*. (Paraguay, 1992)[63]

The main repercussions of this article are visible in the three major bilingual education projects in the country to date: 1) Transitional model (1983-1992); 2) Maintenance Model (1994-1999), and 3) Current Plan (1999-present), discussed in section 4.3.3.

4.3.2. *Ley de Lenguas*-Origins and Present: The officialization of Guarani in the Constitution symbolized a victory for Paraguay's vernacular language. Yet the three articles related to language use fail to address the use of Guarani in public domains. Beyond establishing the officiality of Guarani, other government branches—such as MEC (Ministry of Education and

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[63] Translation: Article 77. On teaching in a mother tongue
Education in the beginning of the academic process will be carried out in the official mother tongue of the student.
The student will likewise be taught in the knowledge and use of both official languages of the Republic.
In the case of ethnic minorities whose mother tongue is not Guarani, one of the official languages can be chosen".
(Paraguay 1992).

Science) or *Secretaria de Políticas Linguisticas* (Office of Language Policies)—did not incorporate the necessary language planning. This legislation did not foresee a mechanism to advance the transition and implementation of Guarani in public domains such as administration, the private sector, or education. Eventually, the process to lay out a plan to do this would take nearly three decades, from its creation in 1992 to its approval in 2010, and the recent official implementation of *Ley de Lenguas* (Languages Law) in June of 2021.[64]

Shortly after the officialization of Guarani in 1992, legislators established the National Commission for Bilingualism in 1994. This committee intended to address specific aspects of language policies in the country, such as identifying adequate strategies to institute a bilingual education plan. These efforts became the seeds for the *Ley de Lenguas* project, an act of linguistic legislation that sought to promote the two official languages of the country, with special attention to elevating the status of Guarani. It was not until 2003 that the first bill for *Ley de Lenguas* took shape. The National Committee for Bilingualism was unsuccessful in concretizing a proposal into a bill mainly due to disagreements on the particular components. The next attempt to pass a language law came in 2007, when members from the then recently-formed *Taller de la Sociedad Civil* (Civil Society Workshop) and *Comité Nacional del Bilingüismo* (National Bilingualism Committee) proposed another version of the Languages Law in a joint act. The slow bureaucratic process of Congress and the perceived low priority of this legislation delayed approval, which was put off for several years. Nonetheless, in 2010, after extensive dialogues and continued efforts, Congress finally approved the *Ley de Lenguas* (Zajíková, 2012).

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[64] This took place during the fieldwork component of this dissertation.

The approval of this law occurred shortly before Paraguay's bicentennial independence anniversary in 2011, a year when patriotic sentiment was in full effervescence. This is no coincidence; authorities were aware of the symbolic significance of Guarani for Paraguayans. During the bicentenary festivities, Paraguayans across social classes celebrated the passing of this law, and, once again, the nation embraced the symbolic value and cultural aspect of Guarani. Both urban and rural populations claimed a strong link with the language and celebrated its enshrinement in the 2010 legislation (Zajícová, 2012). However, over a decade after the approval of one of the country's largest LP projects, *Ley de Lenguas* still has not had practical effects on the population. A brief overview of this legislation project demonstrates in what ways it could benefit portions of the Paraguayan population.

The *Ley De Lenguas* is composed of two main sections: the first outlines its general objectives whereas the second specifies the application of the law. It contains fifty-two articles related to language use covering areas such as linguistic rights (legislation that protects and asserts speakers' rights to use their language), language use in government domains, language in education, specifications of the functions of the *Secretaría de Políticas Linguisticas* (Office of Language Policies), and the role of *Academia de la Lengua Guaraní* (*Guarani Ñe'ẽ Rerekuapavẽ* or the Academy of the Guarani Language). The main goal of *Ley de Lenguas* is described as follows:

> *…establecer las modalidades de utilización de las lenguas oficiales de la República; disponer las medidas adecuadas para promover y garantizar el uso de las lenguas indígenas del Paraguay y asegurar el respeto de la comunicación visogestual o lenguas*

de señas. A tal efecto, crea la estructura organizativa necesaria para el desarrollo de la política lingüística nacional. (Paraguay, 2010)[65]

This clause not only promotes rights regarding the official languages of Paraguay, but also the indigenous languages within the national territory, and sign language. Further articles address other minority languages such as those of immigrant communities, yet without much specification of how policies related to these are to be carried out.

While *Ley de Lenguas* addresses the co-official languages of the nation, the Guarani language receives special treatment. For example, the document mandates the creation of the *Secretaría de Políticas Lingüísticas* (Office of Language Policy) and *Academia de la Lengua Guaraní* (Academy of the Guarani Language), while other minority indigenous languages are not granted corresponding offices. In fact, early attempts to pass such a law were framed as Ley del Guarani. However, to broaden the appeal and scope of the project, it was framed as addressing many languages. Still, the focus on the indigenous languages of Paraguay stands out in comparison to other "foreign" languages, such as Portuguese or German (Penner, 2016). Additionally, the majority of the committees that worked on the creation of this law were made up of Guarani-language educators and intellectuals. No one, however, seems to question the privilege Guarani receives considering the cultural and symbolic weight this language has in the country.

Another central aspect of *Ley de Lenguas* is that its effects are contingent on the standardization of the Guarani language. The policy text specifies that *Ley de Lenguas* can only be

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[65] Translation: "…to establish the modalities of usage for the official languages of the Republic; to outline adequate measures to promote and ensure the use of indigenous languages of Paraguay and to ensure respect towards visual-gestural communication or sign languages. To this end, it creates the organizational structure necessary to fostering the national language policy" (Paraguay, 2010).

implemented after the Academia de la Lengua Guaraní presents a standardized and updated alphabet by focusing on the establishment of an updated alphabet—which focuses on three graphemes when compared to the previous alphabet—and the new Guarani grammar:

> ***Art. 51.- Implementación.*** *La implementación de las obligaciones derivadas de la presente ley que requieran una expresión escrita, sólo serán exigibles una vez transcurridos tres años del establecimiento del alfabeto y la gramática oficial del idioma Guaraní por parte de la Academia de la Lengua Guaraní*" (Paraguay, 2010).[66] [67]

The implementation of the linguistic legislation takes place once the language is standardized (see section 4.5.2). However, this pre-requisite has hindered the potential effects of the law because of internal debates between purists and those considered "*modernistas*" (modernists) members of the *Secretaria*. Members with a language purity orientation are proponents of language varieties such as *Guaranieté,* whereas "*modernistas*" advocate for implementing a language variety that resembles current language practices, which often involves degrees of translanguaging. These debates revolved around the amounts of lexical borrowings from Spanish that would be adequate for the variety of languages with which this committee would like to work. Even more surprising were debates about minute aspects of the orthography of the language, such as the grammatical rules mentioned above. As a result, it took over ten years for the Academia to fulfill the promise of establishing the new alphabet, which had several repercussions, including some for education (Penner, 2020).

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[66] *Ley de Lenguas* text was crafted after the Catalan model of LP of 1992.

[67] Translation: Article 51-Implementation. The implementation of the obligations arising from this law that require a written expression will only be enforceable once three years have passed since the establishment of the official alphabet and grammar of the Guaraní language by the Guaraní Language Academy" (Paraguay, 2010).

4.3.3. Bilingual education in Paraguay: The following sections will briefly discuss the intersection of education and *Ley de Lenguas* within the context of Paraguay's fraught history of bilingual education. So far, there have been three implementations of bilingual plans: the transitional model (1983-1992); the maintenance model (1994-1999); and lastly the current stage (1999-present) (Gynan, 2001; Hauck, 2014). The common factor that hindered the efficiency of these plans was the inability of the macro policy crafters of the Ministry of Education to create linguistic legislation that accommodates different varieties of Guarani, or that corresponds to on-the-ground linguistic use, i.e., Jopara, the language variety that incorporates lexical borrowings from Spanish (see Chapter 3 section 3.2.1. for further reference). The first two registers of Guarani that were used by the Ministry of Education were perceived as excessively academic and artificial, and the population rejected them because they could not relate to them. The third and last model attempted to implement a register that was close to Jopara (called *jehe'a*), yet it was still distant from the population's linguistic practices (Hauck, 2014).[68] [69]

The third and current educational model (1999-present) has also received heavy criticism for implementing a hybrid variety, which students and the general population perceived as an "impure" and illegitimate language variety (Bourdieu, 1991). The pushback highlights the levels of subjectivity that language policy and planning involve and the complexity and ambivalence of Paraguayan attitudes about language and language use. A Paraguayan can be a primary speaker of Jopara, be proficient in Spanish, and paradoxically advocate for the use of a supposedly

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[68] Jan Hauck states that while this model implemented a hybrid register called *jehe'a,* it did not acknowledge the full hybridity of Paraguayan language practices. One the one hand, it recognized the necessity for lexical borrowings from Spanish. On the other hand, it attempted to use a phonological filter to the Spanish words, which it can be argued is another form of linguistic purity or purism?
For more information, see Hauck (2014).

[69] In Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language", I provide definitions and examples of differences between language varieties associated with Guarani.

"pure" register of Guarani in schools and society, even if the pure register is only useful in accessing a literary genre. This underscores the ambiguity of language use in contrast with language ideologies. Some academic approaches to language policy and planning have begun to recognize this: "…the field of LPP is now moving towards a more localised orientation that takes these tensions, ambiguities, and paradoxes seriously to construct policies from ground-up, along micro-social domains" (Canagarajah, 2005: 195). Therefore, these contradictions should also be considered in educational practices.

4.3.4. Bilingual Education and *Ley de Lenguas*: The 2010 articles that address education are more explicit about the use of the two co-official languages within the educational system:

> ***Art. 29. De las lenguas oficiales como instrumentos didácticos****:*
>
> *Las lenguas oficiales serán utilizadas como medio en la enseñanza en todos los niveles del sistema educativo: inicial, escolar básica, media y superior, de conformidad con la competencia requerida para cada nivel* (Paraguay, 2010).[70]

Whereas the National Constitution stated that official languages should be used in education, *Ley de Lenguas* specifies that they should be implemented at all levels of education. The novel aspect is the eventual addition of Guarani to the university level in public universities.

The text also calls on local communities to participate in decisions related to language education:

> ***Art. 27.- De la participación de la comunidad educativa****. El Ministerio de Educación y Cultura dará participación a la comunidad educativa en la toma de decisiones acerca de la elección de la lengua de alfabetización inicial. La elección del diseño de educación*

[70] "Article 29. On official languages as didactic instruments. The official languages will be used as a means of education at all levels of the educational system: initial, basic, middle, and superior according to the required proficiency required for every level" (Paraguay 2010).

bilingüe resultará de la aplicación de instrumentos de evaluación de competencia lingüística al educando y de los compromisos colectivos asumidos por la comunidad educativa (Paraguay, 2010).[71]

Here, the law takes a bottom-up approach that allows LPs and language practices to respond to local-level needs. While this is not entirely new (as seen in the goal to create "coordinate bilinguals" discussed above), it presents a fruitful opportunity for institutions to respond to the needs of their students. It is not clear if the term "*comunidad educativa*" (educational community) refers to individual institutions, districts, or cities, yet this ambiguity permits responses that correspond to a community's needs. I now move from the map analogy to the ground-level view in the following section, which presents language practice data collected during ethnographic fieldwork from September 2020 to July 2021.

4.4. Fieldwork Data

This section comprises a description of the qualitative data I collected—in the form of semi-participant observation reports, interviews, and class materials—during the fieldwork component of this dissertation project that took place between September 2020 and July 2021. To complement the map view of language distribution in the country, I delve into language practices at Paulo Freire School as observed in the educational domain during the ethnographic component of this dissertation.

4.4.1. Language Use: The main domain I selected for my analysis are *Tercero* A—or the senior-level group—classes at PFS as the main indicator of language use in educational domains.

[71] "Article 27.- On participation of the educational community. The Ministry of Education and Culture will allow the participation of the educational community in decision-making about language choice for early literacy. The choice of bilingual education design will be the result of assessing the student's linguistic competence and the collective commitments chosen by the educational community" (Paraguay 2010).

These observations mainly comprised the use of Spanish as the language of instruction, student-to-student interactions, instructor-to-student communication, written texts' default language, and the language of electronic mediums of communication. I additionally consider peer-to-peer interactions and interaction with family members, based on either my semi-participant observations or interviewees' descriptions of their language practices as instances of the private sphere. During classes, the *Tercero* A group mostly relied on Spanish as a means of communication. In all classes outside of language instruction (Guarani or Portuguese), participants widely preferred Spanish. Yet even during Guarani classes, the instructor used Spanish as a scaffold language. That is, both *Profesora* Olga and *Profesora* Luisa translated Guarani content to both oral and written Spanish, sentence by sentence (see Figure 4). In contrast, Portuguese classes offered instances where many students (Soledad, Miguel, Angel, Belén) showed proficiency to varying degrees in using the language as a medium of communication. It should be noted that students' proficiency in Portuguese was aided by its lexical and grammatical similarity to Spanish and students' motivation to learn the language. During focus group interviews, some students such as Soledad said they planned on applying to universities in Brazil. Therefore, they perceived Portuguese to be an appropriate language to be used as a medium of instruction. In contrast, most participants except Marcos showed difficulty using Guarani as a means of communication and preferred to use it mainly within the confines of the Guarani classes' tasks and general content.

Instances of interactions among students and their communication with family also demonstrate a prevalence of Spanish. In classes where students worked in groups, made jokes, or commented on topics unrelated to class, Spanish took the lead. This was most evident during the focus-group interviews I conducted and in my observations of students interacting with one

another in the physical context of PFS (Fieldwork Notes 15, 2021). Moreover, most participants also reported mostly using Spanish at home with their families. However, Marta, Soledad, Angel, David, and Marcos said they use Guarani when talking to family members who live in the interior of the country or elderly relatives, such as grandparents, uncles, and aunts. This pattern of language corresponds to broad generalizations of language distribution in the country (Zajíková, 2009).

4.4.2. Curriculum Priorities: Guarani, despite its importance and centrality in the *Ley de Lenguas*, was absent from the list of courses that PFS considered "*elemental",* a Spanish word that alludes to essential or fundamental. Like most schools in Paraguay, PFS was forced to adapt to lockdown measures linked to the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in March 2020. After the summer break of 2021, the school implemented an attendance model deemed *híbrido* (hybrid), in which students had both online and in-person classes. As of February 2021, which marks the beginning of the academic year in Paraguayan schools, PFS set forward a plan that prioritized certain classes over others. The school called these courses "elemental" subjects: mathematics, physics, chemistry, and Spanish language and literature. The selection of these courses speaks to the school's orientation and goals. Particularly, it reflects the subjects in which students will be tested on the admittance exam for the public university. Guarani was not on this list of "*elemental"* courses (Fieldwork Journal, February 2021: 2).

When classes had to be prioritized, Guarani also fell further in terms of importance. At the beginning of the school year, PFS determined that Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, and Spanish Language and Literature constituted "elemental" courses. In an interview, *Profesora* Olga mentioned that the institution gives students in 11th grade (specifically those in the computer science specialization) the option of choosing between taking French or Guarani.

Guarani is thus explicitly framed as equivalent to a foreign language. This is surprising since according to national LPs, co-official languages must be present at all levels of the educational curriculum (Paraguay, 1992; 2010). However, this option reinforces the fact that students' language practices and career goals are not dependent on Guarani. The linguistic realities of these students, especially those specializing in a field where Guarani has not organically permeated, such as computer science, do not reflect a need for the language for practical purposes.

4.4.3. Class materials: I use specific examples of classroom materials that illustrate language use at the high school level at PFS. On April 5th, 2021, I observed a class where the Guarani instructor, Luisa, discussed the poem "*Ne Mitãkuña*" by Paraguayan author Susi Delgado. The following is an excerpt from my semi-participant observation journal:

- *9:00 am (32/36) Hoy leen el poema "Ne Mitakuña" de Susi Delgado. Sin anunciar, Luisa comienza a declamar el poema.*
    - *Luego de leer cada verso, Luisa los traduce uno por uno…*
- *Luisa da las indicaciones para los ejercicios en castellano.*
- *9:05 am 33/36 Luisa les instruye a que anoten la traducción del poema. Ella les dicta la traducción y ellos tienen que anotar verso por verso lo que ocurre…*
- *Luisa, en forma de enseñar lengua guaraní, dice que a veces en guaraní las afirmaciones se hacen en forma de negación.*
- *También, Luisa hace un comentario que pone en tela de juicio las convenciones de traducción y corpus del guaraní:*
    - *"Me cuesta leer a veces porque tenía que ser diferentes".*

- *9:18 am terminan el dictado y traducción*[72]. (Fieldwork Journal, 2021)

Luisa used this poem to discuss gender in Paraguayan society. After briefly introducing the material, Luisa read the poem for the first time, and, without asking if students needed Spanish translation, she gave instructions for students to write a verse-by-verse translation as she read the poem aloud. Almost no one interacted with her, except Steffano, who had a question about a choice in the translation. Interestingly, the document that Luisa later uploaded to Google Classroom also included the translated version of the poem:

1- Ñamoñe'ẽ (Leamos) NE MITÃKUÑA Susi Delgado	
Ne mitãkuña ...	*Vos/tú muchacha...*
Anive nderesaho	*ya no te distraigas*
pe callere ñaimo'ã	*en la calle como si quisieras*
nde róga rehejaséva.	*de tu casa huir.*
Ndovaléi nde rehecha	*No es bueno que te fijes*
cállepe ojehúva,	*en lo que ocurre en la calle*
ndahasýiva kuña ogueraha.	*que fácilmente a la mujer*
Anive reporandu	*conquista. Ya no andes*
reporuandu'ỹva'erã,	*preguntando*
Umívako hína mba'e	*lo que no debes preguntar,*
Ndovaléiva kuña oikuaa.	*Esas son cosas*
Anive repukaite	*que la mujer no debe saber.*
kuimba'ekuéra renondépe,	*Ya no andes riendo tanto*
péako aña nemokyrỹiva,	*delante de los hombres,*
aña nehundi'arã.	*ese es el demonio que te incita*
Ha hi'arietégua,	*el demonio te destruirá*
ani cheñe'ẽjoko,	*Y encima de todo,*
ne ñe'ẽ reity chéve,	*ya no me calles*

[72] -9:00am (32/36) [number of students]. Today, they read the poem "Tú, muchacha" by Susi Delgado.
-Without announcing it, Luisa begins reading the poem.
-After reading each stanza, Luisa translates them one by one.
-Luisa give directions for homework in Spanish
-9:05 am (33/36) Luisa asks them to write down the [Spanish] translation for this poem. She provides them with the translation, and they have to write them down line by line.
-Luisa, attempting to teach them the language, tells students that sometimes affirmations in Guarani are done as denials.
-Also, Luisa makes a comment that challenges some conventions related to translation and corpus of the Guarani language.
-Sometimes, it is difficult for me to read this because they [translations] had to be different.
9:18 am they finish writing down the translation exercise. (Fieldwork Journal, 2021)

Reñemoñe'ẽkuaa nde kakuaaĝuáme, moõiko nde reikuaáta mba'eve ne kuña. Kuñáko itavy, kuñáko ikangy, naiñakaporãi, kuña itarova, iñe'ẽrei ha haku rei. Kuña ndaha'éi kuimba'éicha mundopýre oikova'erã. Ne mitãkuña ejapysaka, ndéko nde rogapymíme, ñeñongatupy ha kirirĩháme, tĩndymínte reikova'erã.	*ni me tires indirectas No te hagas la bienhablada con tus mayores, qué vas a saber vos de nada, vos mujer. La mujer es ignorante, la mujer es débil, no es inteligente. La mujer es alocada, Es chismosa y calentona. La mujer no es como el hombre que debe andar por el mundo. Vos/tú muchacha escucha, vos dentro de tu casita, guardada y callada, cabizbaja debés estar.*

Figure 4. Guarani Worksheet: Poem "Ne Mitãkuña", by Susi Delgado w/ Translation [73]

I selected this class because it is representative of Guarani pedagogy and language practices.[74] First, the class was mostly teacher-centered. While Luisa was presenting the poem, she did not give students the opportunity to comment and ask questions. Not surprisingly, no student intervened with questions or comments. The written language of this worksheet reflects the instructor's understanding of students' Guarani knowledge. Both poems and directions were glossed with Spanish translations. Luisa also translated every utterance of the poem and every comment she made about the poem that was first expressed in Guarani. Lastly, Luisa's comment on how statements in Guarani imply the use of double negatives shows that she teaches the language as if it were foreign to these students. In teaching it in this way, she naturalizes Guarani as an object of discourse or historical artifact to be revered but not used.

[73] For the purposes of anonymity, I adapted the format and omitted identifiers from the original class document.
[74] Based on my semi-participant observations and document collections, I selected this as an example as it portrays the recurring appearance of Spanish glosses for virtually all uses of Guarani.

Another excerpt from class material further illustrates the common practice of incorporating Spanish as a scaffold language. On June 8th, *Profesora* Luisa opened the topic of the Guarani language and National Identity. This was not the only instance where topics of collective identity permeated the Guarani language class. In fact, Guarani instruction and discussions of collective identity frequently came up as class discussions and instructors reinforced the idea that this vernacular language is a core element of the national identity.[75] Luisa began the class by showing videos of foreigners expressing their views on language use in Paraguay with most of them expressing how central Guarani is in the country.

TEMBIAPO GUARANI ÑE'Ẽ REHEGUA

MBO'EHÁRA:
TEMIMBO'E:
MBO'ESYRY:
ARANGE:

Ahai che remimo'ã ko'ã mba'ére…
Escribo mi opinión respecto a estas interrogantes…

1- **Mba'ére pytaguakuéra ohecharamo ha omoba'eve, ñandehegui, ñande ypykuéra ñe'ẽ.**
¿Por qué los extranjeros admiran y valoran, más que nosotros, el idioma de nuestros ancestros?
2- **Mba'ére chupekuéra ndahasyiete oikuaa, oikũmby ha oñe'ẽ guaraní ñe'ẽ.**
¿Por qué a ellos les resulta fácil aprender, entender y hablar el guaraní?
3- **Mba'ére vaicha ñane retãguávape hasyve ohayhu, oikuaa ha oiporu ñane ñe'ẽ guaraní.**
¿Por qué parece que a los paraguayos les cuesta amar, conocer y utilizar nuestra lengua?
4- **Mba'e tekotevẽ ojejapo ñamoambue hağua ko'ã mba'e.**
¿Qué es necesario para que cambien estos hechos?

Figure 5. Guarani Worksheet-Questionnaire [76]

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[75] In Chapter 3 of this dissertation, I used this same class excerpt to discuss the nationalistic undertones contained in this worksheet. For an in-depth explanation and discussion of Guarani language and collective identity, see Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language".

[76] English Translation: Guarani Language Worksheet. Teacher: Luisa | Student: | Class: | Date:
Answer these questions with my own opinions.

1. Why do foreigners admire and value our ancestors' language more than we do ourselves?
2. Why is it easy for them to learn, understand, and speak Guarani?
3. Why does it seem that Paraguayans struggle to love, know, and use our language?
4. What is necessary to change these facts? (Fieldwork Journal, March 2021).

These were testimonials by an American missionary and a Japanese exchange student, both of whom had an elementary knowledge of Guarani. The contents of the worksheet are illustrated in Figure 5, where once again all guidelines and questions are accompanied by a Spanish translation. This written instance of language use was also demonstrative of oral interactions during class, as the instructor commonly provided immediate translations for each utterance: The language variety used in this material is an academic variant of the Guarani language known as Guaraniete, which is commonly perceived as being curated.[77] This differs from the oral practices of students and instructors at PFS, who mainly resorted to Jopara or the Spanish-mixed variety. Students did not immediately work on answering this exercise. Rather, this was a take-home assignment, and students were able to work in groups, use dictionaries, and take the time they needed to finish the questions, despite these being very short and arguably simple questions to answer. The coexistence of nationalistic discourses alongside the use of a highly academic register of the Guarani—hence the Spanish glosses—represents how schools often produce and reproduce ideologies of language.

It is worth paying attention to the beliefs and comments about language embedded in this exercise. There is an overall assumption, which mimics circulating narratives about language, that Paraguayans do not appreciate or care about the Guarani language, as seen in questions 1, 2, and 4. According to this view, Guarani is a valuable element of national culture that attracts attention and admiration from foreigners. This view assumes that these same foreigners, should they try to learn it, have the ability to communicate in Guarani better than Paraguayans themselves. The exercise finishes with a discussion of how to remedy this situation. This implies

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[77] For an in-depth explanation of the term Guaraniete refer to Chapter 3 “Paraguay and the Paradox of Language”

that some sort of intervention is necessary to rescue Guarani and what it means to the country. In the following section, I discuss the implications of this attitude for local LPs.

4.5. Discussion:

My data interpretation is based on a combination of textual analysis of the *Ley de Lenguas* project combined with materials collected during fieldwork that I presented and described in the above section. Overall, the top-down implementation of *Ley de Lenguas* partially meets the local community's linguistic needs. Yet other aspects of this linguistic legislation present limitations in terms of the LP practices and linguistic culture at PFS. On the one hand, in the educational domain, *Ley de Lenguas* specifies that local institutions can adapt and respond to their speakers' linguistic needs, such as in article 27 "*De la participación de la comunidad educativa*" of chapter IV of *Ley de Lenguas* (Paraguay, 2010).[78] Under this clause, schools have the option to initially respond to their students' linguistic needs at the elementary school level and then transition into a bilingual education model. This clause benefits the PFS community by not imposing one language over another, as Spanish has a prevalence among most participants of this study. It offers a context in which the symbolic aspect of the Guarani language may dominate over the use of the language as a means of communication. On the other hand, *Ley de Lenguas* fails to serve speakers' needs in other areas due to its language purity orientation and a lack of community involvement in the crafting of this law, which distances it from those whom it is supposed to benefit. The PFS' local language practices reflect its surrounding Spanish-dominant society's preference for global languages over the vernacular one. The current and future effects of *Ley de Lenguas*—especially after the last phase of its

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[78] Translation: "Article 27: On the participation of the educational community".

effectuation in 2021—have had minimal impact on these language practices. This is mostly observed in three areas: the makeup of the linguistic culture in the region, linguistic ideologies, and the symbolic significance of language in Paraguay.

4.5.1. Language and Linguistic Culture: In 2010, shortly before the approval of *Ley de Lenguas*, Paraguayan congressman Marcelo Duarte criticized the language of the proposed legislation. Duarte, who belongs to center-right *Patria Querida* (Beloved Fatherland Party), was careful to frame his criticism towards the law rather than the Guarani language itself by stating that "*Entonces atiéndanme que las costumbres van a ser las que triunfen, no va a ser la obligación de una ley como ésta la que haga que el guaraní funcione o no funcione*" (*Diario de Sesiones* 2010/116, *in* Penner, 2016: 52).[79] The congressman's view likely stems from the perceived slow pace of the legislative process (the eleven years between the approval of *Ley de Lenguas* and the time it took effect). His comments also touch on the lack of results shown with previous legislative projects that addressed language use in the country. Duarte suggests that local language practices prevail over top-down interventions in speakers' practices. This commentary is indirectly in dialogue with the concept of linguistic culture, which inevitably has an effect on LPs and language practices.

The linguistic culture of a certain community of practice is a better representation of *de facto* LPs than anything that management-level LPs intend and outline. Linguistic culture consists of "…a belief system, a collection of ideas and decisions and attitudes about language. It is of course a cultural construct, but it is either in tune with the values of the linguistic culture or it is in serious trouble" (Schiffman, 1996: 59). Learning a language implies acquiring not only a

[79] Translation: "So listen to me when I say that traditions will be the ones to prevail, the mandatory character of a law like this will not be what makes Guarani work or not" (*Sesiones* Diary 2010-116, 52 in Penner 2016).

linguistic code but also the ideologies that shape a certain language. Languages are not neutral but rather are subject to discourses embedded in their corresponding community of practice (1996: 58). Therefore, when measuring the impact of policies on a group of people, it is key to contrast covert policies with written legislation. Ultimately, LPs that ignore linguistic culture are doomed to failure.

Consequently, top-down or management-level LPs are incapable of completely altering the culture behind a language. At the bottom line, LPs are socially constructed. Any linguist studying LP and linguistic culture must take into account societal understandings of what constitutes a language or register of language. This is the case where a community of practice may, for example, implicitly or explicitly resist the mandated use of a language register in a certain domain, as is the case of Guarani as a primary language of administration or education, specifically in writing.[80] Despite explicit legislation that seeks to regulate language, linguistic culture will ultimately dictate language use (Schiffman, 1996: 276). This concept has further implications for language transmission and vitality.

The linguistic culture of PFS turned out to be a rich, translingual one that nonetheless favored Spanish. Educators and students' language practices involved proficiency in Spanish and to varying degrees in Guarani, Portuguese, English, and in some cases even French. For example, my observations of Portuguese classes in addition to participants' self-reported proficiency levels in this language make clear that many students know more Portuguese than Guarani. As we have seen, Guarani was generally taught as a foreign language at PFS.

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[80] However, even in these domains, Guarani can function as scaffold language. Some *Ley de Lenguas* clauses intend to implement a language variety perceived as artificial or made up and promote its use in the constitution by resorting to a highly academic language variety. This differs significantly from reports of Guarani language practice, commonly used to negotiate meaning among speakers.

Instruction in this language was framed as course content—or object of discourse—rather than the medium of instruction, or discourse (Johnstone, 2010). Ultimately, Guarani instruction mostly sought to fulfill a symbolic need for the language over discourse itself. These elements are deeply tied to individual and collective identities, which I will expand on in the following sub-section.

Guarani, when compared to other languages, did not organically permeate the academic domain of PFS in the form of discourse. At the macro level, language distribution patterns in Paraguay favor Spanish for public sphere domains, such as administration, commerce, and academic contexts. This is a relevant consideration, since diglossia, after all, is a form of LP. PFS participants generally conformed to this distribution, as expressed by Marcos in an interview with me in May of 2021:

- *Marcos: Yo acá aprendí el guaraní en la casa de mi abuela. ¿Por qué? Porque mis abuelos hablan más guaraní que español. Entonces, yo tuve que adaptarme…*
- *GVS: ¿Y en cuáles otros espacios vos conseguís utilizar el guaraní?*
- *Marcos: Con mis amigos. Eso es lo que me gusta. Porque yo tengo algunos amigos con los que hablamos cuando nos encontramos pero de repente para el lado kachiãi usamos el guaraní. Entonces me es muy bueno saber que puedo contar una historia. Ellos me cuentan una historia, chistes en guaraní. No sé, me gusta saber que al menos un poco, una parte de nuestra nación… porque famoso ahora si hablás guaraní sos valle o sos pobre o cosas así, o tenés que hablar inglés para ser cheto…*
- *GVS: ¿Estos amigos con los que vos hablás el guaraní son del colegio?*
- *Marcos: No, no, no. No, son acá de mi barrio. Con mis amigos del colegio, te digo que soy el único que habla guaraní en mi clase. Así que, el resto, vamos a decirle que*

entienden y algunas cosas me preguntan pero la mayoría me escribe y eso para que les ayude con sus tareas (Fieldwork Interviews, May 2021).[81]

Marcos felt confident in the Guarani language, yet he reported mostly using it to communicate with family members and non-school friends as opposed to implementing it at work or in academic environments. Although *Ley de Lenguas* aspires to level language distribution, especially language use related to the national administration, participants' aspirations did not reflect this.

In contrast, at the management level of LPs, the expectation of *Ley de Lenguas* is that, through major top-down interventions, legislation will fill in the gaps in the above-mentioned realms of the public sphere and alter communication practices on the ground. Some participants in this study believed that such interventions would have a significant impact. For example, after the Academia de la Lengua Guarani completed the standardization projects in June of 2021, *Profesora* Luisa was hopeful that the enactment of *Ley de Lenguas* would bring about significant changes related to Guarani use.[82] She hoped especially that the language would be normalized in public

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[81] Translation: - Marcos: I learned Guarani here, at my grandmother's house. Why? Because my grandparents speak more Guarani than Spanish. So, I had to adapt to that…
-GVS: In what other spaces are you able to use Guarani?
-Marcos: With friends. That is what I like. Because I have some friends with whom I speak when we meet up, but all of a sudden we use Guarani to be funny. So, it's good to know that I can tell a story, or that they can tell me a story, jokes in Guarani. I don't know. I like to know that, at least a little, a part of our nation… because typically now if you speak Guarani you are tacky or poor, or things like that, or you have to speak English to be preppy.
GVS: These friends with whom you can speak in Guarani, are they from school?
Marcos: No, no, no. No, they're from my neighborhood. Among my friends from school I can tell you I'm the only one who speaks Guarani in my class. So, the rest of them, let's say they understand it and they ask me about a few things but the majority text me asking me for help with homework (Fieldwork Interviews, May 2021).
(Fieldwork Interviews, May 2021).

[82] As described earlier, the implementation of *Ley de Lenguas* is contingent upon the establishment of a standardized alphabet and grammar: "Art. 51.- *Implementación. La implementación de las obligaciones derivadas de la presente ley que requieran una expresión escrita, sólo serán exigibles una vez transcurridos tres años del establecimiento del alfabeto y la gramática oficial del idioma Guaraní por parte de la Academia de la Lengua Guaraní*" (Paraguay 2010). English Translation: "Art. 51.-Implementation: The implementation of the subsequent obligations of this legislation that require written expression will only be applied after three years of the establishment of the alphabet and official grammar of the Guarani language by the Guarani Language Academy" (Paraguay, 2010).

realms in the country. However, except for Guarani instructors, most young participants admitted to not being aware that *Ley de Lenguas* existed.

Lastly, *Ley de Lenguas* proposes a highly academic variety of Guarani that does not match the language practices of Guarani speakers. The committee in charge of drafting the legislation was comprised of fifty Guarani language scholars and instructors, as previously noted in section 4.3.2. There was little regard for community participation in the resulting text, leading to Penner's criticism that it involved "*pureza del lenguaje y nula participación por parte de la ciudadanía*" (Penner, 2016: 262)[83]. Carlos' and Bruno's comments in this regard reflect a tendency to reject artificial or literary-heavy language registers:

- Carlos: En el colegio te enseñan un guaraní muy, muy profundo; tipo un guaraní que casi no se habla. Si vamos a ser sinceros, el guaraní que se habla acá en el Paraguay es el guaraní jopará. Se mezclan palabras en guaraní con palabras en castellano. Y eso es lo que mi papá o mucha gente que yo conozco, muchos mayores… el guaraní que se enseña acá [en el colegio] no es un guaraní que se habla y yo no puedo usar en conversación con gente del interior.

- GVS: ¿Literario?

- Carlos: Es muy literario el guaraní que se enseña porque es, poesía y que esto y que lo otro y vos no usás eso en el interior con otra persona.

- GVS: Claro.

[83] Translation: "language purity and absent participation of the community" (Penner 2016: 262).

- Carlos: Pero, por así decirte, aprender un guaraní que se habla con la gente te ayuda mucho más, sabemos que en el interior, si te vas al interior por ejemplo, en el campo, o tal cosa. Te ayuda en eso.

- Bruno: Es más, te digo que hay mucha más gente que aprendió el guaraní yéndose al interior

- Carlos: O al Chaco.

- Bruno: O al Chaco que acá.

- Carlos: Es un idioma oral. No podés estar buscando el sentido literario en guaraní porque no te va a servir (Fieldwork Interviews, June 2021).[84]

Carlos and Bruno's comments express frustration towards the emphasis that the school gives to academic Guarani and an excessive focus on literary analysis, as presented in Figure 5. They compare the language variety that the school tries to teach with ground-level practices in regions such as Paraguay's Chaco, a rural region with many primary Guarani speakers. This discrepancy causes many students, such as Carlos and Bruno, to minimize the relevance of classroom instruction of Guarani instruction. Previous bilingual educational plans did not succeed in

[84] Translation: "Carlos: At school they teach you a Guarani that's too, too deep; like a Guarani that almost no one speaks. If we're going to be honest, the Guarani that is spoken here in Paraguay is the Jopara Guarani. Words in Guarani are mixed with words in Spanish. And that is what my father or many people I know, many elderly… the Guarani that is taught here is not a Guarani that is spoken and I cannot use it in a conversation with someone from the interior [of the country]
- GVS: Literary?
- Carlos: It's too literary the Guarani that is taught here because it is, poetry and so on and so forth and you don't use that in the interior [of the country] with other people.
- GVS: Of course.
- Carlos: But, in a way, to learn a Guarani that you can speak with people helps you way more. We know that in the interior, if you go to the interior for example, or the countryside or something. That helps you.
- Bruno: What's more, I tell you that many more people have learned Guarani going to the interior.
- Carlos: Or to the Chaco.
- Bruno: Or to the Chaco than here.
- Carlos: It is an oral language. You cannot be searching for literary meaning in Guarani because that will not be useful" (Fieldwork Interviews, June 2021).

implementing academic registers of Guarani that involved high levels of language purity. Since *Ley de Lenguas*' design reflects such orientations, its effects can easily be dismissed, partly for not aligning with ground-level language practices.

4.5.2. Official Language Ideologies: References to national discourse about language and language ideologies appear in some clauses of the *Ley de Lenguas* legislation. The *Ley de Lenguas* legislation reflects an orientation toward language purity, which is a manifestation of language ideologies. These orientations are counterproductive since they hinder the potential benefits of this legislative project. One example of language purity is the reliance on Guaraniete, the Guarani variety that avoids mixing with Spanish, which complicated the *de facto* implementation of the legislation.

As described in the Overview of Language Policies section, the effectuation of *Ley de Lenguas*—expressed in the last clause of the legislation—was contingent on small projects of standardization by the Guarani Academy. Some members who were adherents of the idea of standard language ideologies advocated for the modification of the existing Guarani alphabet and updating the grammar manual. Both involved phonetic aspects of the language. The interventions on the Guarani alphabet mainly revolved around the addition of the grapheme "rr" for the phoneme trilled /r/ in Spanish borrowings and the grapheme "g̃" for the Guarani nasalized velar approximant. Similarly, the standardized grammatical rules involved the implementation of orthographic consensus (Penner, 2016: 126-131). Although reaching a consensus on these issues might be a desired goal, prioritizing language purity over other beneficial aspects of *Ley de Lenguas*—such as greater inclusion of Guarani into public administration positions—was an overall shortcoming in its implementation.

Within the Guarani Language Academy, the "traditionalist" members push for the use of a pure register of the language and reject Jopara with its lexical borrowings from Spanish. This creates significant gaps between oral Guarani and its written form, which is the one the Academia is attempting to institute. In this regard, Guarani scholar Penner holds that:

> *En un país donde los guaranihablantes no escriben su lengua y tampoco lo reclaman… donde los hijos de la élite, cuando quieren aprender el guaraní, piden que sea el que les permite comunicarse "en guaraní", y no en una lengua precolombina actualizada con un arsenal léxico inventado para remplazar los préstamos que desde siglos están en boca de guaranihablantes, el postulado "primero normativizar la lengua" es un franco desacierto.* (Penner, 2020: 261) [85]

Fixating on the idea of standardization has shown no benefit for Paraguayans. Indeed, other LPs that favor elitist language registers—such as the 1994-1999 bilingual education plan—have not succeeded in the country. Like Penner, the *Tercero* A students perceived the Guarani taught in schools to be artificial and distant from their linguistic practices. Ultimately, they mentioned this as something that undermined their motivation to speak and keep learning the language.

In fact, the artificial trait of academic Guarani stands in stark contrast with the LP practices at PFS. The few instances of Guarani use by students relied on a translingual linguistic repertory. Specifically, the linguistic culture at PFS, like in most places, is not contingent on the language purity clauses. Marcos, a self-reported proficient Guarani speaker observes:

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[85] Translation: "In a country where Guarani speakers do not write their language nor do they claim it… where the children of the elite, when they want to learn Guarani request it to be the one that allows them to communicate 'in Guarani', as opposed to a pre-Columbian language updated with an arsenal of made up lexicon to replace the [lexical] borrowings that have been in the tongues of Guarani-speakers for centuries, the premise "to standardize the language first" is a sincere mistake" (2020: 261).

- *Marcos: "Así que a mí me gustaría que [en el colegio] dejen de tanto libro, de tanta lectura, de cosas difíciles y empiecen a hablar más de lo que sería lo nativo… Porque yo no me voy acá a la esquina y le digo al señor que me dé una comparación en guaraní o una metáfora o, ¿Cuál es? Una sinestesia. Él no va a saber. Yo me voy y le digo: "mba'eteko, ha'upei?" y todas esas cosas y acá en el colegio se enseña un poco… Porque para qué te voy a mentir. A veces ni yo entiendo lo que dice el libro porque muchas veces son palabras inventadas. No significan tal cosa. Porque el guaraní es un idioma grande pero hay bastantes palabras que fueron inventadas y eso me consta. Así que me gustaría que se enseñe de una manera más tradicional*" (Fieldwork Interviews May 2021)[86].

One of the major implications of trying to disseminate an academic register of Guarani is that purist language views lead speakers to believe they are not legitimate users of the language, and paradoxically reinforce a language shift. Importantly, although many PFS students are Spanish-dominant, their linguistic repertoires are translingual. I contend that their self-ascribed lack of proficiency in the Guarani language stems from a widespread understanding that to be a speaker of a language one must speak it in every domain possible, as observed in parts of *Ley de Lenguas* clauses. This is the case of Steffano who, despite proficiently communicating in Guarani, did not perceive himself as a legitimate speaker of the language. To my surprise, he considered his language abilities to be inadequate since he mostly communicated in Guarani with his maternal

[86] Translation: - "Marcos: So, I would like it if [at school] they dropped so much textbook, so many readings, and hard things so that they start speaking something that is more like what is native… Because I don't go to the corner [store] and tell the guy to give me a comparison in Guarani, or a metaphor, or what is it? A synesthesia. He will not know that. I go and I tell him "How is it going? What's up?" and all of those things and here at school they teach very little of that… Because, I am not gonna lie to you. Sometimes not even I understand what the textbook is saying because most of the time those are made up words. They don't mean so and so. Because Guarani is a big language, but there are many words that were made up and I am aware of that. So, I would like that [Guarani] be taught in a more traditional way" (Fieldwork Interviews, May 2021).

grandmother from the interior, or rural area of the country, and with a few of his Guarani-speaking friends. Steffano's perception was that his language knowledge was insufficient since he only felt comfortable communicating with his family in the language (Fieldwork Interviews December, 2020). This is a problematic understanding since rarely will anyone be familiar with a highly curated and standardized language variety, such as the Guaraniete proposed by the Guarani Academy.

The experiences of bilingual Navajo youth in North America offer an interesting comparison. They transgress affiliation to named languages by incorporating varied, complex bilingual practices into their linguistic repertoires. Based on extensive work with Navajo indigenous communities in North America, McCarty et. al. (2011) explored "real" or bottom-up LPs as well as ideologies in the school system and the community. Among the most important findings is the fact that Navajo students and youth language repertoires are highly bilingual. Whereas educators hold the view that their students are all English monolingual, based on interviews with youth, these same students described themselves as bilingual. Navajo youth groups were at least overhearers of the Navajo language, and in many cases, they used the indigenous language for different contexts and purposes. Nonetheless, adults limited these bilingual repertoires by classifying youth's language practices as either fluent or not. According to the educators, in some cases, none of the students were fluent. This highlights that widespread notions of "fluency," tainted by purist language ideologies, are ambiguous because they are forced into an all-or-nothing logic that can be damaging to the community of speakers. These conceptions affect or sometimes even constrain the translanguaging practices that many speakers, such as these Navajo students, have.

PFS youth have similarly varying degrees of knowledge of the Guarani language, ranging from overhearers to users of the language in certain domains. Based on my observations and their reported language practices, their use of the language has never involved literary analysis in Guarani or an abstract grammatical understanding of the language. Paraguayans' translingual repertoires often do not include reading and writing in Guarani since primary speakers of Guarani mostly use the language orally. Yet, the Guarani curriculum focuses precisely on this type of academic language use, as we have seen. In contrast, *Ley de Lenguas* places a heavy emphasis on written Guarani, as seen in efforts to translate public signs or legal documents with a language register that is free from lexical borrowings from Spanish. At best, this emphasis on written language serves a symbolic purpose to satisfy the purist views of Guarani scholars who were involved in the crafting of the policy text.

4.5.3. Language, Identity, and Symbolic Value: A final important aspect of *Ley de Lenguas* is that it explicitly addresses the symbolic value of Guarani and its importance for a collective Paraguayan sense of identity:

> ***Capítulo 1: Art. 3:*** *El idioma guaraní deberá ser objeto de especial atención por parte del Estado, como signo de la identidad cultural de la nación, instrumento de cohesión nacional y medio de comunicación de la mayoría de la población paraguaya.* (Paraguay, 2010) [87]

This article explicitly presents the Guarani language as a unifying element for the population while acknowledging that the majority of speakers use the language. Although not as prominent as other clauses in the LP text, I suggest that the identity aspect of the language carries

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[87] Translation: "The Guarani language will be the target of special attention by the State as a sign of the cultural identity of the nation, national cohesion instrument, and means of communication by the majority of the Paraguayan population" (Paraguay, 2010).

paramount relevance for the community that I worked with. PFS participants' preference and proficiency in Spanish allow them to treat Guarani as a cultural artifact with high symbolic value while having no real need to acquire further proficiency in the language.

Although some PFS students do not perceive themselves as "legitimate" Guarani speakers, as seen in the comments from Steffano, the Guarani language undeniably invokes an important aspect of their cultural identities. Students described Guarani as part of who they are in their collective and individual identities:

- Bruno: Y es nuestro idioma natal… es un símbolo nacional y un idioma natal

- Carlos: Nos representa como cultura a todos.

- Bruno: El paraguayo se representa primero por… por el guaraní.

- Ricardo: Por ejemplo, a nosotros nos preguntan por un idioma y que hablen guaraní.

- Bruno: Es algo que nos representa, quieras o no, a todos.

- Ricardo: Somos orgullosos por un lado, verdad… yo soy de ahí y yo sé, y yo tal cosa verdad, pero como te digo, es algo que yo creo que, el cual creo que

- Bruno: El Paraguay… los paraguayos les podrían dar más énfasis al guaraní al cual le damos.

- Carlos: Eso pasa mucho. Vos acá en Paraguay no querés, si no te gusta el francés que tal cosa, no quiero hablar guaraní porque no me gusta. Vos te vas en otro país y orgullosísimo estás vos de tu idioma: "no, que yo hablo el guaraní; no que el guaraní es mi idioma y te apoyás." Acá menospreciamos mucho nuestro idioma, menospreciamos mucho nuestra cultura. Nos vamos en otros lugares y queremos galardonar; queremos

mostrar lo lindo que es nuestro país y las cosas buenas que tiene… (Fieldwork Interviews, June 2021) [88]

For this group of educated urban students, the symbolic use of the Guarani language defines their connection to it. Their immediate surroundings and socio-economic conditions do not require them to have full linguistic proficiency in professional or academic contexts, and this is reflected in their linguistic practices. Teachers' responses to students' practices are seen in the way they use Guarani with them. This ultimately results in the language being taught as a foreign language.[89]

McCarty et. al.'s work with Navajo youth in North America, discussed above, can be seen as a dialogue with the case of PFS students in Asuncion. Their findings indicate that youth attitudes toward their native language were ambivalent or sometimes even negative. At the same time, Navajo youth also had a profound link between speaking their languages and their identities: "Even if they did not represent themselves as speakers of an indigenous language, youth expressed deeply held sentimental attachments to their languages of heritage, binding them ironically to a distinctive Indigenous identity" (McCarty et. al., 2011: 41). For them, English

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[88] Translation: - "Bruno: It [Guarani] is our mother tongue… it is both a national symbol and a mother tongue.
- Carlos: It represents all of us culturally.
- Bruno: Paraguayans are primarily represented by… by Guarani.
- Ricardo: For instance, we are always asked about our languages and asked to speak in Guarani...
Bruno: It is something that, whether you like or not, represents us all
Ricardo: We are proud in a way, right... I'm from there and I know, and I such and such, but as I tell you, it's something that I believe that, which I think that.
- Bruno: Paraguay... Paraguayans could give more emphasis to Guarani, which we neglect.
- Carlos: That happens a lot. Here in Paraguay, if you don't want to, if you don't like French or something, I don't want to speak Guarani because I don't like it. You go to another country, and you're extremely proud of your language: "No, I speak Guarani; Guarani is my language," and you support it. Here, we underestimate our language a lot, we underestimate our culture a lot. We go elsewhere and want to praise; we want to show how beautiful our country is and the good things it has..." (Fieldwork Interviews, June 2021).

[89] Comparatively, Portuguese instructors were able to use Portuguese as medium of instruction more than in Guarani classes. They were not subject to translating every utterance as seen in Guarani classes.

fulfilled their communication needs while Navajo defined part of their ancestry and social identities.

PFS presented a context where the local and global intersect. Students' global orientations are evident in their primary reliance on Spanish in most contexts while also aspiring to be proficient in Portuguese—due to its perceived value within the context of Mercosur and Brazil's preponderance in this supranational region—English, and sometimes French. These orientations are fueled by goals such as attending a university abroad or keeping up with the demands of a highly competitive job market. Conversely, part of the students' collective and individual identities was simultaneously tied to the local language Guarani.

The tensions between global and local elements additionally reflect the dynamics of authenticity and anonymity. According to Katherine Woolard, "[a]n ideology of authenticity… holds that a language variety is rooted in and directly expresses the essential nature of a community or a speaker, and an ideology of anonymity, which holds that a given language is a neutral vehicle of communication, belonging to no one in particular and thus equally available to all" (Woolard, 2013: 6). Undoubtedly, in Paraguay Guarani is one of the maximum expressions of authenticity, or the essence of belonging. This authenticity is anchored in the concept of the "interior" of the country that PFS participants frequently reference, and that in my experience, mirrors general understandings of language in Paraguay. Reliance on anonymous and cosmopolitan languages such as Spanish or even Portuguese and English grants speakers participation in the public sphere and the privileges associated with it.

Participants conceive of Guarani as an artifact that provides speakers with local authenticity, in Woolard's terms (2016). They do so by claiming an affiliation with the language. Neither Ricardo nor Bruno reported being proficient speakers of the language, yet in this

interview, in one way or the other, they are claiming Guarani to be a fundamental part of their collective identity. These students, as well as most PFS participants, had the option to symbolically relate to this language by relegating it to using emblematic phrases, and folklore, and alluding to it as a national artifact. Their Spanish-dominant reality of Asuncion allows them to do so. In an inverted scenario, primary speakers of Guarani would not have the luxury of not knowing Spanish if they wanted to participate in public activities in the capital Asunción.

Students' global orientations pushed them to assert their ties with Guarani despite not being the primary speakers of the language. PFS youth articulated the local language Guarani as part of their global identities. These participants' ability to adapt to the pressures of globalization is rooted in the language's ability to invoke the local identity. In this regard, Barbara Johnstone holds that: "…changes attendant on globalization—geographic mobility, the increased heterogeneity of local demography, and economic change that forces people to reimagine themselves—are precisely the conditions that most effectively foster the dialect and language awareness that can give rise to new uses of language to index identification and difference" (Johnstone, 2016: 354). The localness of Guarani can provide the PFS students with enough grounding to respond to globalization forces. Thus, participants' symbolic ties with the Guarani language provide them enough connection to it to claim the national identity while allowing them to simultaneously pursue other global languages, such as Portuguese or English, with levels of perceived instrumental value.

4.6. Chapter Conclusion

This chapter described and analyzed the language practices at the Paulo Freire School (PFS) and the influence that national, management-level LP has on those practices. I chose the PFS community for being representative of language practices in Paraguay's capital. I did this

with the understanding that certain beliefs and patterns of language use tend to emanate from the capital outward to the rest of the country (Solé, 1996). I first provided a macro view—or map-like perspective—on language distribution in the country by using diglossia as a framework. The concept of linguistic culture helped illuminate the language ideologies and language practices of the community at stake. Then, through my ethnographic data collection and interpretation, I provided a ground-level view of how PFS responds to national LPs, thus enacting policy into practice. I focused on the most recent and relevant changes taking effect in LP in Paraguay: the *Ley de Lenguas* legislation. Through these combined approaches, I provided an in-depth perspective on how some of the main clauses of this LP project affect and will continue to impact the lives of members of PFS and beyond.

The urban, educated, middle-class community of practice in Asuncion, Paraguay is currently redefining the Guarani language. Overall, PFS participants' linguistic profiles involved translanguaging practices to varying degrees, while resorting to Spanish as a primary language. A detailed analysis of LPs, shared language ideologies, and an observation of language practices indicates that Guarani's use decreases as discourse while increasing as an object of discourse (Johnstone, 2016). For the PFS community, affiliation with the Guarani language grants participants authenticity by symbolically connecting them to the most valuable element of national identity (Woolard, 2016). There is a shared and accepted understanding that participants need not to be proficient in this language to take part in this claim. Nonetheless, the ambivalent indexical value of the language—which at times indexes local identity and national authenticity while, at others, indexes stigma, backwardness, and indigeneity—creates a multifaceted scenario. The stigma ascribed to Guarani is paradoxically reinforced by top-down efforts to maintain and revitalize this language.

The macro-LP project *Ley de Lenguas* encourages institutions to respond to the local linguistic needs of the community. PFS partakes in this project and creates a model that generally responds to the needs of its students. Yet certain factors—such as a focus on linguistic purity—distance the PFS students from the stated goal of normalizing Guarani in the public sphere. My analysis of the ideological motives behind the linguistic purity orientation of *Ley de Lenguas* suggests that they ultimately prevent the legislation from meeting the needs of PFS members due to a high academic and elitist focus on certain varieties of the Guarani language. Language purity views that punish speakers for the use of lexical borrowings or lack of proficiency in certain domains are elements that limit language use and understandings of languages, as observed in the lives of PFS students. Ultimately, this is indicative of the social meaning of language for urban youth in Paraguay. Consideration of this can shed light on LP crafting in the country and language use patterns that will likely spread in Paraguay. LPs and translanguaging practices further manifest in the linguistic landscape, which is reflective of this dynamic scenario as discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 Linguistic Landscapes in Hybrid Educational Spaces

5.0. Chapter Introduction

After the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) implemented online education in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Paraguay, *Profesor* Mateo from the rural school *Nueva Esperanza School* (NES) was preparing to teach another class from home. On that day, Mateo grabbed his laptop—the one he had to buy in several installments specifically to work from home—to teach another class. However, that day he could not establish an internet connection. Unlike other days when he managed to fix the problem, he had no other choice but to look for a network elsewhere. Running against the clock, *Profesor* Mateo rode his motorcycle to the city's downtown and parked it underneath a tree near a store where he knew he could find Wi-Fi connectivity. He then grabbed his laptop and, although slightly late, was able to teach the class.

The anecdote *Profesor* Mateo shared in one of our interviews depicts one out of the many cases where the boundaries of an educational space were challenged and expanded as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these students, as reported by local instructors, did not have access to a device with an internet connection. On the other side of the screen, some of *Profesor* Mateo's students would not be able to participate in this synchronous class, despite his efforts. Later that night, some of these students would watch the class recording on a parent's cellphone. Others would have no option but to visit the school site in person to get print copies of the week's materials, despite COVID-19-related restrictions. This required instructors to ignore policy and be on-site to meet students' needs. Others would be forced to

pause schooling indefinitely, as was the case with as many as half of the student population in some rural communities throughout Paraguay (*Estudio quedó de lado*… 2021)[90].

5.1. Chapter Overview

This chapter analyzes the schoolscapes, or the Linguistic Landscape (LL) of educational spaces (see 5.2.1 for more), of the Paulo Freire School (PFS), a bilingual institution in Asuncion, Paraguay. Not unlike what happened at the rural school described above, lockdown measures related to COVID-19 altered the notion of educational spaces for the PFS community and other schools throughout the country.[91] Initially, I designed this section of the ethnographic project to analyze the visual and material representation of language at PFS through a Linguistic Landscape (LL) approach (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006). The idea emerged out of discussions, brainstorming, and various conversations with academic advisors and colleagues who suggested I carry out an LL project to obtain a nuanced understanding of the community that conforms to my ethnographic project. These LL projects "… allow us to point out patterns representing different ways in which people, groups, associations, institutions, and governmental agencies cope with the game of symbols within a complex reality" (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006, 27). Ultimately, I carried out the LL project to further understand the meaning-making process behind language choice and language use at this institution.

[90] The report published by the news outlet ABC Color based on a World Bank survey estimates that over half of the student population in rural areas of the country, which make up to 62.95% of the population, could not continue their education because of lack of access to the mediums. Participants reported lack of technology access and lack of financial resources as the main obstacles for online education. This report stands in sharp contrast with urban population students out of which 97% were able to access online education (*Estudio quedó de lado*… 2021; Paraguay, 2021).

[91] This was the case of Steffano, a *Tercero A* student who during the participant observation stage of this project took a Portuguese exam at his mother's workplace. Steffano also had to borrow his mother's cellphone to access the virtual space of the classroom (Fieldwork note May, 2021).

An LL analysis provides fruitful perspectives to a larger ethnographic project focused on Language Policies (LPs). Recent literature in the subfield of LL has expanded its analytical scope by including issues of LPs all the way to language ideologies. Gorter and Cenoz (2020) situate LL analysis along a spectrum that encompasses more than the visual representation of language. Instead, the authors propose exploring the origins and potential consequences that linguistic landscapes may have on language practices. In this way, LL does not exist in a vacuum; rather, the analysis can be seen coexisting with language policy and language practices: This spectrum goes as follows: "1) Language Policy Processes; 2) Sign-making Processes; 3) Unequal Languages in Urban Space; 4) What people see and read; 5) What people think and do" (Gorter & Cenoz, 2020). Therefore, carrying out an LL analysis constitutes a critical step of my ethnographic project concerning educational LPs.

My plan of carrying out an LL analysis, nonetheless, took for granted the possibility of being physically present at the school site while observing how this community of practice shapes the shared space it occupies. Lockdown measures in response to COVID-19 in Paraguay challenged this approach. Like *Profesor* Mateo, other educators, and students in this research project, I had to reroute plans and go beyond my initial ideas. Consequently, my methods respond to the changes and adaptations that the global pandemic brought about for academics and the broader population alike.

The first structural change in the design of this ethnographic study was shifting work from in-person to a digital environment. That meant that even the first phase, initially outlined to be conducted as in-person participant observation at PFS in Asuncion, had to be done virtually. From the onset, I conducted the first semester of participant observations, from September 2020 to July 2021, fully online from Atlanta, GA. In February of 2021, I traveled to Asuncion

motivated by the Paraguayan Ministry of Education and Science's promises of an imminent return to in-person classes. Upon arrival, I had the opportunity to visit the school site on two occasions before the academic year started. These visits were fruitful and yielded much qualitative data for an LL analysis. However, in mid-February, the public health conditions in the country declined drastically and the return to in-person classes became delayed indefinitely.

After preliminary analysis of the data I collected, I questioned my approach to this LL analysis, or solely the quantification of visible language, in a space that had not been occupied by its participants for over a year. In fact, many of the photographs collected showed empty announcement boards, outdated flyers, and fading art/graffiti around the school. I further understood that the participants of this study were carrying out their education in a complex set of environments that were both physical and digital. Consequently, this pushed me as a researcher to broaden my understanding of what constitutes an educational space for this community.

In response to these significant pedagogical changes, I align my analysis of the linguistic landscape with recent evolutions in the field of LL, and I adopt an expanded notion of what constitutes space (Canagarajah, 2018). Specifically, it was imperative for me to consider the hybrid nature of current educational spaces by combining physical and virtual educational environments that emerged in response to COVID-19 protocols to continue education. Surprisingly, in interviews most participants of this study still conceived of the physical school site as the sole locus of education, despite not visiting the building for most of the 2020 and 2021 school years. Yet, in practical terms, "school" for these participants extended to their homes, a parent's workplace, underneath a tree—as it was for *Profesor* Mateo—and a variety of other places.

In March 2020, PFS adopted an online model to continue the educational process. In May of 2021, the school transitioned to *modelo híbrido,* or a hybrid model of education. In this model, each week half of *Tercero A*, or 3rd Year A senior class that I worked with, went to school on a given day whereas the other half participated in the same class online. PFS chose Google Meets as a medium for virtual meetings and Google Classroom as a platform for class materials, schedules, and syllabi. This hybrid format thus considerably expanded the concept of the educational space which challenged my participants' as well as my own former conceptions of demarcation, or the textual boundaries that create a place (Blommaert, 2012).

I combine the data collected during the initial visits to the school site with an analysis of the online environment that educators and students were a part of for most of the 2020 and 2021 school years. I combine LL methods that are conventionally focused on physical spaces (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Gorter, 2006; Spolsky, 2012) with an additional expanded understanding of what constitutes space during COVID-19 lockdown protocols, drawing inspiration from language ecology, schoolscapes, and definitions of space beyond physical contexts (Brown, 2012; Kramsch, 2018, Canagarajah 2018). I argue that despite an apparent predominance of Spanish in PFS' written items, educators' and students' language practices transcend affiliation to a single named language across domains.

5.2. Linguistic Landscapes, Schoolscapes, and Language Ecologies

Linguistic Landscape studies emerged in the late 1990s as a methodology to analyze the non-verbal facet of multilingual settings. They explore the visual representation of languages mainly in their written form, which often reflects manifestations of local linguistic identities regarding the national, transnational, and the global. Linguistic Landscape studies further understand all languages as "socially situated, which inevitably positions them as unequal"

(Gorter & Cenoz, 2020, 19). Multilingual settings are contexts where socially constructed language hierarchies become visible. Often, these hierarchies are present in the various forms of visual representation of language found in different manifestations of written language. Ultimately, LL studies point out power relations between named languages and suggest how Language Policy influences the written representation of language in a given context.

Ben-Rafael et. al. (2006) further frame linguistic landscape studies to analyze the symbolic construction of the public space. The authors expand on LL methodologies by implementing Bourdieu's notion of fields (delimited contexts that demonstrate the interpellation of power relations between social actors), Goffman's presentation of the self (tied to social identities), and Boudon's rational considerations (the attractiveness of signs to the consumer) (2006: 27). Therefore, the processes of public space construction are indicative of language dynamics set forward by the participating communities.

Materiality constitutes another relevant area of LL studies that shifts the analytical focus toward the objects of material culture. Shankar and Cavanaugh (2017) propose that the very concept of linguistic practice possesses a material dimension based on the relationship between language and physical objects. The data in this type of analysis is more reliable than some other sociolinguistic inquiries, such as self-reported language practices. Aronin and Laorie (2012) suggest that the presence of material objects in bilingual and multilingual spaces may influence language practices if these favor a certain language over the other. They further call for a shift towards contemporary artifacts and spaces intertwined with language by contending that "objects and artifacts of material culture tend to influence languages and change language practices" (Aronin & Laorie, 2012: 300). Contemporary artifacts may extend beyond signs to

encompass devices such as computers, cellphones, and tablets that mediate communication for populations such as the high schoolers in this study.[92]

Importantly, Shankar & Cavanaugh sustain that "…language itself is changing in terms of the technologies that mediate our speaking, the globalizing processes that commodify it in previously unforeseen ways, and how we, as ethnographers, must attend to language use across the multiple, often simultaneous, modalities across which everyday communication now occurs" (Shankar and Cavanaugh, 2017: 4). The authors, in addition, propose that a shift towards materiality and the global mediums that affect communication—for example instant messaging platforms—can challenge general language research's trend to focus on in-person communication as the sole data source for analysis. More than ever, recent shifts in the medium of communication—especially those in the workplace and education brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic—point out a need to redirect the focus of language practice research towards virtually mediated communication. Doing so would yield a better understanding of the meaning-making processes embedded in virtual communication.

The primary inquiry of many LL studies is the analysis of written and visual language. Yet since its beginnings in the late 1990s, these studies have evolved beyond the analysis of written and image units. Over time, LL studies have adopted elements that encompass what Jaworski and Thurlow call the semiotic landscape. These authors define the semiotic landscape as "any public space with a visible inscription made through deliberate human intervention and meaning-making" (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010: 2). Expanding the analysis to other meaning-

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[92] One instance where material objects influenced language practices was seen during class; Olga would repeatedly tell students to "*pemyandy que la nde camara*" or "turn on your cameras" (translation from Guarani. Olga, fieldwork observation). This is one case where language adapts to the technicalities of the devices that mediate online education.

making manifestations includes inquiry into artifacts (Huebner, 2008), audible languages and soundscapes (Carson, 2016), clothing (Caldwell, 2017), or tattoos (Roux et al., 2019). These expansions become increasingly relevant for contexts such as the one analyzed in my ethnographic project, where the hybridity of in-person and online environments, and multimodality are predominant within the school environment.

A transidiomatic framework sheds further light on contexts where communication not only occurs in multiple linguistic codes but also in a variety of mediums. A useful framework to analyze digitally mediated educational spaces such as classes via Google Meet is Jacquemet's (2016) concept of transidioma, or "massively fluid semiotic production of multilingual codes that circulated through a multiplicity of communicative channels, from face-to-face to mass media to digital communications" (Jacquemet, 2016: 22)[93]. This implies not only the incorporation of various linguistic codes—such as named languages— in one act but also multimodal communication, or communication in multiple mediums. One example might be court hearings in Rome for Kurdish refugees, which have Kurmanji to Italian translators, while, during hearings, court officials search the web for complementary input on the testimonies. The variety of languages and mediums in the given instance depicts the implementation of transidioma in a single context (Jacquemet, 2016). Similarly, interactions during language instruction classes at PFS reveal transidiomatic practices when students use various linguistic codes in a digitally mediated environment.

5.2.1. Education and Schoolscapes: In the educational realm, some scholars propose that LL analysis of schools be specifically framed as "schoolscapes". Brown defines schoolscapes as

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[93] Furthermore, transidioma's consideration of medium is highly valuable for a linguistic ethnography and linguistic landscape like mine. I find the incorporation a valuable complement to the theoretical framework of translanguaging theory that guides this dissertation.

"…the physical and social setting in which teaching and learning take place. It is the vital, symbolic context in which the curriculum unfolds and specific ideas and messages are officially sanctioned and socially supported in the school" (Brown, 2005: 79). Moreover, a schoolscape orientation facilitates uncovering layers of language ideologies present in education: "the school-based environment where place and text, both written (graphic) and oral, constitute, reproduce, and transform language ideologies" (Brown, 2012: 282). This permits an observation of how individual agency may shape circulating discourses that are tied to notions of local power.

Brown (2012) conducted an ethnographic schoolscape project in Estonia with the Võro community. The school where the study took place primarily taught in Estonian while also having classes in Võro, a local marginalized minority language. As is often the case with minority languages and communities, parents wanted their children to learn the Võro language and culture since these parents considered that their children's generation could not speak it "purely anymore."[94] There was a stark contrast between rural and urban schools; Võro was more significantly present in rural schools than in urban ones. Yet, ultimately, the incorporation of minority languages into the schoolscape—mainly of urban schools—and the visibility this gives to its speakers can be indicative of the vital role that schools may have in language revitalization. The author suggests that, at first, a focus on LL alone would suggest that the presence of Võro at the school is invisible. However, Brown carries out an LL analysis of the site and through it demonstrates the presence of Võro beyond the written context, primarily found in oral

[94] A similar instance is found in Robert Blackwood's work in Corsica, where the author found that participants had highly positive views towards the language, yet participants' low usage of Corsican hindered general language transmission. This caused current speakers to rely on school for language transmission (Blackwood, 2008). Similarly to what happens with most minority/minoritized languages, visual representations of Guaraní tend to be in a constructed, standardized variety, which differs greatly from vernacular use; parents assume they themselves cannot speak the heritage language "properly" and rely on the school to teach their children to learn the pure register of it (without the interference of other languages).

interactions. Thus, the author proposes a methodology that goes beyond material elements alone in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of language use.

After Brown (2005) coined the term, others contributed to expanding the analytical scope of schoolscapes. Most start off with the premise that language and identity are partially constructed and shaped in schools by the presence of multilingual written language and other elements of the visual landscape. Yet, these same students may also defy the boundaries of the physical site of a school and mainly construct their social identities from elements beyond the institution. Poveda (Poveda, 2012) conducted a school project with the intent of demonstrating the presence of students from different nationalities and their sense of belonging in Madrid, in and outside the institution. Laihonen and Todór (Laihonen & Tódor, 2017) explored the schoolscape in a Hungarian institution to analyze the construction of language and identity while factoring in the permeation of global influences. Rowland (Rowland, 2013) explored the integration of LL with English Language Learning (ELL) instruction and demonstrated the potential benefits of LL as a language learning methodology. However, one current shortcoming of the implementation of LL into ELL is that, although it holds the potential to enhance language learning, research on its effectiveness is still pending. Spatial considerations—as explored in the following section—play a fundamental role for LL in educational contexts.

5.2.2. Language and Space: Shifting the analytical focus to language and space, Canagarajah proposes a spatial orientation to linguistic analysis. The author conceives space as not only geography, but also as history and society: *"Treating spatiality as significant means understanding every practice as situated, holistic, networked, mediated, and ecological, thus integrated with diverse conditions, resources, and participants"* (Canagarajah, 2018: 33). Canagarajah's spatial orientation—informed by translanguaging theory—approaches the

analysis of signs beyond verbal by focusing on the locus and its environment. That is, the agency and intentions of the community at stake are revealed through a holistic analysis of not only the spaces it inhabits but also the environment or ecology of these spaces.

The concept of demarcation of space also carries direct implications for LL studies. Blommaert sustains that “signs demarcate spaces, cutting them up in precisely circumscribed zones in which identities are being defined and enacted, forms of authority can be exerted, ownership and entitlement can be articulated –a complex range of social, cultural and political effects results from the semiotization of space” (Blommaert, 2012: 20-21). In this way, signs not only demarcate public spaces but also interplay with subjects’ identities and select who becomes agents in the given public space. For example, Blommaert refers to a sign in London written in Chinese advertising an apartment where clearly the intended audience is not the general public of London, but members of the Chinese-speaking community (Blommaert, 2012: 56). In this way, Chinese speakers acquire the rights of valid users of the demarcated space.

5.2.3. Language Ecology: A final spatial consideration for LL studies is the concept of Language Ecology, which, according to one of the field’s founders, Einar Haugen, constitutes “language in relation to its human environment” (in Eliason, 2013: 21). Most scholars, including Haugen, understand the concept as a metaphor that encompasses the various elements that coexist in one environment, thus exploring how language practices unfold within the place where they are housed. The elements of inquiry of Linguistic Ecology, according to Haugen, are “…[the] typological classification of a language, the nature of its users, the latter’s attitudes towards language, concurrent languages, internal variation, domains of use, and written tradition” (Ludwig et al., 2019: 7). In more contemporary definitions of the term, Steffensen and Fill’s (2014) concept of Language Ecology integrates multiple scales of social factors, which

encompass “the domain of human agents enacting small-scale cognitive events through which our lives, projects, and aspirations flow, and that of large-scale societal arenas structuring the sociocultural and technological resources at our disposal” (Steffensen & Fill, 2014: 20).

In this light, a Language Ecology analysis carries implications beyond the demarcated site, as the given context inevitably alters and is altered by its surroundings. Kramsch et. al., conceptualize language ecologies within the framework of language education as a complex “general contextual view of human nature and activity” (Kramsch et. al., 2020: 20). In this view of language ecology, three elements are particularly relevant: heterogeneity or agents’ multiplicity of formative experiences (such as language repertoire, cultural backgrounds, education); non-linearity or the ways in which the experiences of individuals within the learning contexts are linked to different degrees; and adaptiveness. This last element constitutes the influence of internal/external factors that alter agents’ experiences within the language ecology, such as historical, socioeconomic, and political changes (2018: 21).

School sites constitute environments that possess their own Language Ecologies. Brown (2012) proposes that “schools are institutions that host their own “linguistic ecosystems” that constitute and reproduce surrounding ideologies at the micro and macro levels” (Brown, 2012: 284). Schools and their communities represent a set of agents that both shape and are shaped by the local ecology. These sites can serve as the locus of creation and reproduction of language policies as well as language ideologies. Such policies and ideologies are manifested in the LL of a given institution as well as in the local language practices of the same place. In this study, I take into consideration the various elements of the schoolscape of PFS –particularly those beyond visual language representation that conform to the local ecology, as a means to adequately respond to the multimodal and hybrid context at stake.

5.2.4. Language Ecology and Language Practices: A thorough inquiry into the linguistic environment can serve as a valuable indicator of Language Policies (LP) processes. To reiterate, recent advances in the field of LL situate the analysis of written elements within a spectrum of other social factors. As mentioned previously, Gorter & Cenoz (2020) combine LL analysis with other elements such as language policies (LP) and language practices.[95] In Cenoz and Gorter's model, LPs inform both the linguistic landscape and ultimately the language practices of the community. The written representation of language stands in the middle of the spectrum, being influenced by LPs and further influencing language practices. Therefore, such an approach advances the analysis of the participant's meaning-making processes of an ethnographic project that has educational language policies at its core.

5.3. Chapter Methods

In this chapter, I integrate the analysis of the physical PFS campus with representative elements of the virtual environments that educators and students inhabited for most of 2020 and 2021. This combination is indicative of the schoolscape of PFS during the COVID-19 pandemic. The small methodological adaptations I analyze respond to the changes in education during lockdown in Paraguay. The presence of multiple languages (Portuguese, English, and French) in addition to Paraguay's co-official languages (Spanish and Guarani) makes PFS a rich site to examine the sociocultural dynamics of language use.

5.3.1. Setting: To reiterate, Paulo Freire School (PFS) is a binational (Paraguay/Brazil), experimental, charter school situated near downtown Asuncion. Located near Asuncion's downtown. The institution is in a traditionally middle-class, historic neighborhood of Paraguay's

[95] In Chapter 4 "Translating Policy Into Practice", I provide an in-depth exploration of the themes of Language Practices and Language policies.

capital. The student body is composed of approximately 1200 students, while the faculty includes nearly 100 educators. Inaugurated on September 7th (Brazil's Independence Day) of 1964, it is a binational institution, since it emerged out of cooperation between the Paraguayan and Brazilian governments. To reiterate, the school has had one representative designated by the Brazilian government to advise the school's administration. Currently, the Brazilian Embassy's language institute designates instructors to work at PFS with Portuguese instruction. The "charter" label is an approximate equivalent to US terminology, given that the institution is publicly funded yet also autonomous. Although PFS follows the National Curriculum established by the Ministry of Education, it has the flexibility of implementing experimental pedagogical methods of instruction. It additionally receives the title of "experimental" school given that it is partially under the administration of one of Paraguay's most prestigious universities and that it features a program that has university seniors conduct periods of teacher shadowing in some high school courses.

The facility is home both to PFS and a social science division of Carlos Antonio López University. As detailed below (Figure 6), the institution is made up of a series of buildings within a two-block area in the historic neighborhood. The main entrance is situated between areas A and F. The administrative offices and teacher lounges are located in block C. The educators and students of *Tercero A* had classes in block E. For the LL project, I documented the written landscape of block C, the hallways of block D, block E, and all the areas between these since these were where educators and students spent most of their time while at school.

Figure 6. PFS School Map Layout. Photo by GVS
Translation: "You are here"

PFS is an academically prestigious institution with a socioeconomically diverse student body, based on several instructors' assessments of the student body—such as *Profesor* Antonio, *Profesora* Olga, and Luisa[96]—as well as survey data I collected from students of *Tercero* A. This level of diversity stands in sharp contrast with nearly all of Asuncion's high-performing, private, and costly schools. PFS has a renowned pipeline program to the university with which it is affiliated, one of the top higher education institutions in the country.[97] Aside from having a

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[96] For example, *Profesor* Antonio said the following about the socioeconomic profile of the student body: "En general los estudiantes que concurren al colegio provienen de familias de clase media para abajo. Son hijos de profesionales que salen adelante con su trabajo y procuran dar la mejor educación a sus hijos". Translation: In general, students who attend our school come from families of middle to lower classes. They are the children of professionals who progress with their jobs and seek to give the best education to their children.

[97] An academic institutional report at PFS details the institution's goals of tailoring its curriculum towards admission test primarily towards Paraguay's top university: "4.29. *La Dirección Académica asumió el compromiso, de trabajar en equipo, para ofrecer a la sociedad una educación de calidad. Garantizar que los egresados de la institución, salgan con las habilidades y capacidades desarrolladas en las materias instrumentales, para el ingreso exitoso en la [Universidad Carlos Antonio López] u otras universidades de sus preferencias. El ritmo acelerado de trabajo, la evaluación permanente, la variedad y exigencias de tareas, conllevó al estudiante del [PFS] a mantener celeridad para dar respuesta y desarrollar resiliencia. Este mismo ritmo de trabajo, manifiestan los exalumnos, lo vuelven a encontrar en la universidad*".
Translation: "The Academic Direction took on the commitment to work as a team to offer society a quality education. They aim to ensure that graduates of the institution leave with the skills and capabilities developed in instrumental subjects, enabling successful admission to [Universidad Carlos Antonio López] or other preferred

tailored curriculum for the university admissions test, PFS also serves as an "experimental" research site, demonstrating that there is a concrete nexus between the two institutions. In addition to its multilingual profile and bilingual educational LPs, I chose to conduct this project at PFS' location because it reflects the aspirations of many students—from Asuncion and beyond—who seek admission to this top university in Paraguay.

Additionally, PFS has an indirect influence on pedagogical practices in other schools across Paraguay. In an interview, PFS' academic coordinator *Profesor* Antonio stated that PFS practices inform policies instituted by MEC staff:

> *"En el año 2019, se tuvo la visita del Vice Ministro de Educación y Ciencias, Ing. Robert Cano acompañado de Directores Generales, que tuvo por objetivo recabar información acerca del sistema de trabajo realizado en el [PFS]*[98]*, teniendo en cuenta el alto resultado que obtuvo la institución, a nivel nacional, en comparación a otras, surgidas de la Evaluación "Prueba Pisa". En ese contexto se habló de los idiomas, pero sin profundizar en ello* (*Profesor* Antonio in field work interview)*"*[99]

While the school nominally responds to the Ministry of Education and Science, some of the Ministry's decisions are informed by the pedagogy at PFS. As mentioned above, the institution had outstanding scores on PISA exams, a national examination program to measure students'

universities. The fast-paced work environment, ongoing evaluation, variety, and demanding tasks required students in the [PFS] program to maintain agility in responding and developing resilience. This same work pace, as former students express, they encounter again at the university level".

[98] Name of the school altered for anonymity.

[99] Translation: "In the year 2019, we had the visit of the vice Ministry of Education and Science, engineer Robert Cano alongside general leaders of the institution. The visit had the goal of collecting data about the work carried out at PFS given the high achievements that the institution had at the national level in comparison to other institutions as evidence in the PISA test scores. In that context, languages were also discussed, although not in detail" (Translated from Spanish. Fieldwork Interview, February 22, 2021).

capabilities in language, mathematics, and science. All in all, the significance of language use at PFS goes beyond the walls of the institution.

5.3.2. Data Collection: The first component of the data collection comprised two visits over six months to the school site during the 2021 summer break and one visit in July after the school finally managed to implement *modelo híbrido* or a hybrid model of education. These visits involved interacting with local faculty and staff, familiarizing myself with the facility, and later documenting written elements at the school. I documented the written landscape of the school by taking photographs of general signs and other written elements within the school building. I collected a total of 139 units of the written landscape, which constitute all the signs in the areas that I selected. I defined units as stand-alone elements in each of the photographs I took. Figure 7 illustrates the way in which I categorized and counted units within the same image. Specifically in Figure 7, there are 4 main units: 1) A welcome message (*bienvenidos);* 2) A flyer of a math contest; 3) COVID-19 health guidelines flyer; 4) COVID-19 information flyer.

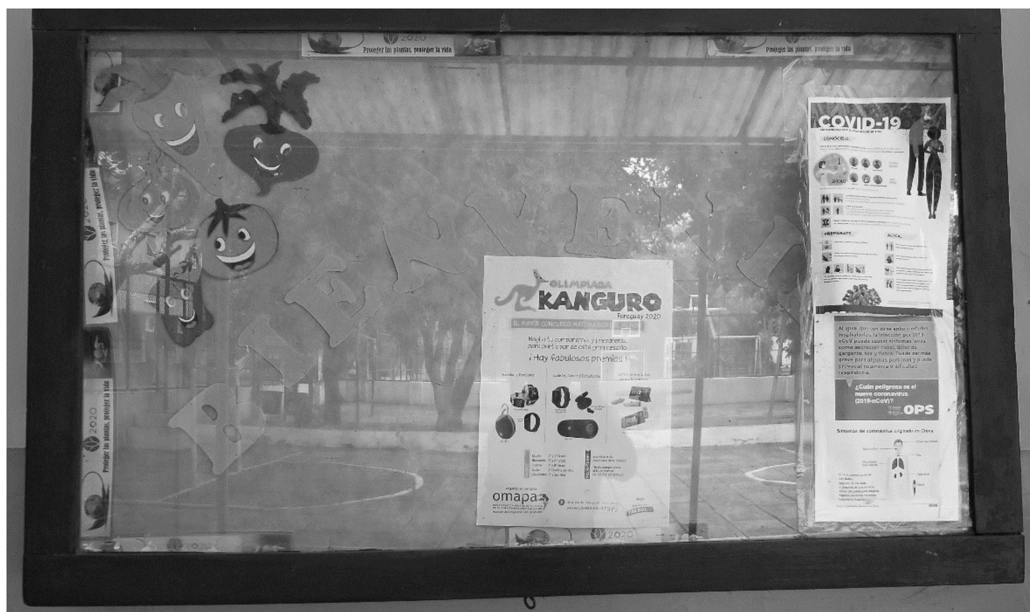

Figure 7. Announcement Board (Various units within one photograph). Photo by: GVS.

Some of these images captured two or more flyers, in which case I would count each flyer as a separate unit. Similarly, images of cork boards often contained multiple units such as calendars, announcement documents, COVID-19 guidelines, which I counted as individual units as well.

As noted earlier, PFS shares its facility with an academically prestigious State University, which I call by the pseudonym Carlos A. López University; the school students use the buildings during the morning and afternoons while the university uses them at night. The school's educators and students still inhabit the same space, thus coexisting with additional signs and written elements made by the university. Not all signs analyzed in this project were created by PFS participants. Here once again, the word hybrid applies to the physical sites of this study. But, as stated in Chapter 2 "Approaches and Methods," I chose to include the university signs in my analysis given that separating these can be an ambiguous or a subjective process and these reflect the notion of shared spaces in the institution.

5.5.3. Data Analysis: After I documented the linguistic landscape via photographs, I then moved to 1) Determining what a unit of analysis is, 2) Quantifying the unit of analysis, and 3) Analyzing units. As stated above, I defined units as stand-alone elements, such as signs, flyers, posters, murals, message boards, graffiti, plaques, and other elements located at the school. As a starting point, I determined the purpose of the messages, such as being informative/symbolic (respectively signs that intend to convey a message and signs that intend to give visibility to language) as well as differentiating between top-down and bottom-up signs (signs created by institutions or authorities and signs created by students respectively) (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; 2020). Lastly, it is important to notice that these binary categorizations are useful as an entry point to study, or a heuristic, but that they are difficult to apply consistently in real situations.

Nonetheless, they constitute important first steps to further understand language practices within this institution.

Second, to incorporate virtual environments, I selected representative images of the digital platforms that mediated interactions between students and educators during day-to-day online instruction. My criterion for determining representativeness was based on the participant observation of online classes that I carried out from September 2020 to July 2021. From this, I established the most frequent virtual rooms and screens used by educators and students for online instruction. Specifically, I selected a total of 12 screenshots of Google Classroom's home screen, each individual classroom section, and all the windows that lead to the main Google Meet screen, which is where all classes took place (Google Meet and Classroom were the mediums approved and sponsored by the Ministry of Education and Science). I included other current images that reflect the general environment of these mediums. In many cases, instant messaging apps—such as WhatsApp—became an impromptu educational space since educators and students would carry out class-related activities such as turning in homework or doing oral exercises via WhatsApp. Therefore, these instant messaging apps were arguably as valid as other mediums officially approved by the Ministry of Education and Science. I selected images from the WhatsApp Group Messaging that I was a part of. The confluence of these two spaces—physical and virtual—best represents the schoolscape of what the learning environment resembled for these participants.

5.4. Findings

After my in-person visits to the PFS school site, my immediate impression was that the space had hardly been modified by its community. That is, the landscape reflected the effects of lockdown and participants being away from the site for eleven months after the beginning of

lockdown. The presence of dated flyers, empty announcement boards, and old graffiti dominated the scene. The exception to these elements were posters of public health guidelines established by the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) in light of COVID-19 (Figure 8). Most of the written elements were produced by faculty and staff since at the time of my visits, students had not been present at the school for over a year.

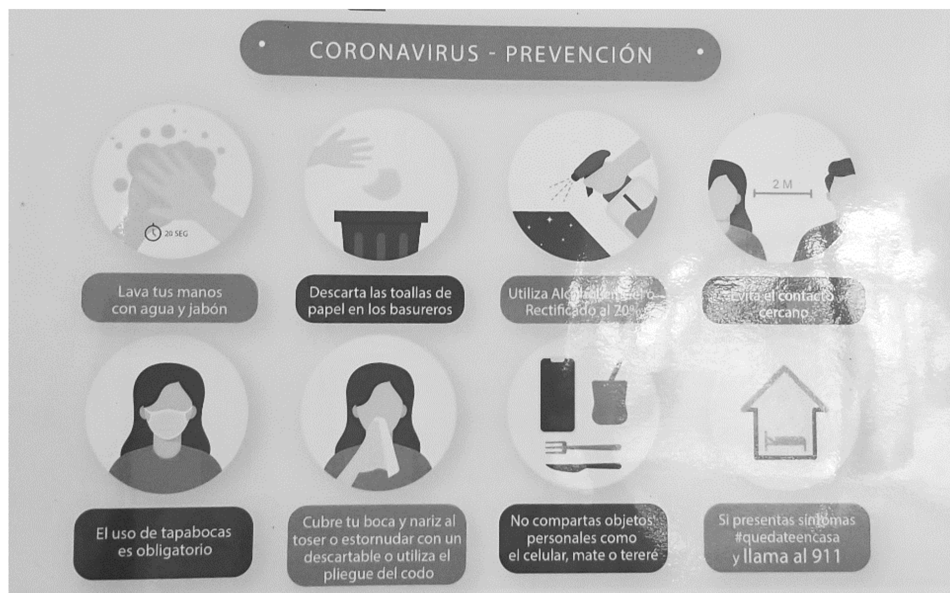

Figure 8. Institutional Public Health Guidelines. Photo by GVS
Translation [from left to right]: Corona Virus — Prevention. Wash your hands with water and soap. Discard paper towels in trash cans. Use hand sanitizer with 70% of alcohol. Avoid close contact. Masks are mandatory. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Use disposable tissue or cover it with your elbow. Do not share personal objects such as cellphones, mate tea, or tereré. If you are having symptoms, stay at home and call 911.

5.4.1. Linguistic Landscape: First, I classified the 139 units into two main categories based on Cenoz & Gorter (2006). These are informative and symbolic, and top-down and bottom-up signs, as shown in Table 2 and Table 3. For example, the public health guidelines in Figure 8 are informative units, while greetings in five languages in Figure 12 are symbolic use of language, and they do not intend to convey an instructive message. An example of a top-down unit is seen in Figure 10 as this was created by the institution, while Figure 11 is bottom-up as it was authored by students. As indicated below, most signs—informative and symbolic—were in Spanish with a total of 114 units. These were diagrams with school maps, announcement boards,

Figure 9. Empty Announcement Board. Photo by GVS
Translation: Human Talent. Announcements.

calendars, flyers, and general signs. I encountered one informative flyer written completely in English promoting an exchange program in the US as well as English lessons. I expected to find informative signs and flyers in Portuguese given the cultural affiliation of PFS to Brazil, yet there were none. Surprisingly, no signs were written completely in Guarani. There were, however, a significant number of bilingual signs in Spanish and Guarani in the hallway area of Block E, where the *Tercero A,* or 3rd year Section A classroom was located in which the participants of this study spent most of their time (see Figure 6 for reference).

The bilingual units were 17 informative signs written in Spanish and Guarani. These signs indicated the purpose of the rooms at the school. They all followed the same format in terms of color and style. When further investigating this, I learned these signs were part of a translation project created by *Profesora* Olga in previous years with the goal of having students add public signage in Guarani.[100] Thus, these were the result of intervention by Olga in which

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[100] Additionally, when I informed Claudia about the LL project she brought up the fact that she recruited 6th graders to carry out a project to enhance Guarani's visibility at the school. They did this by creating bilingual signs (in Spanish and Guarani) and adding them to the Middle School block at PFS. I included these sings to my LL project

she recruited sixth graders to create bilingual signs where the entire middle school area, or *secundaria,* is located. This area is where the *Tercero A* students were having in-person classes.

	Informative	***Symbolic***
Spanish	114	0
Guarani	0	0
Spanish and Guarani	17	0
Portuguese	0	4
English	1	2
French	0	1
Total:	131	7

Table 2. Informative and Symbolic Units.

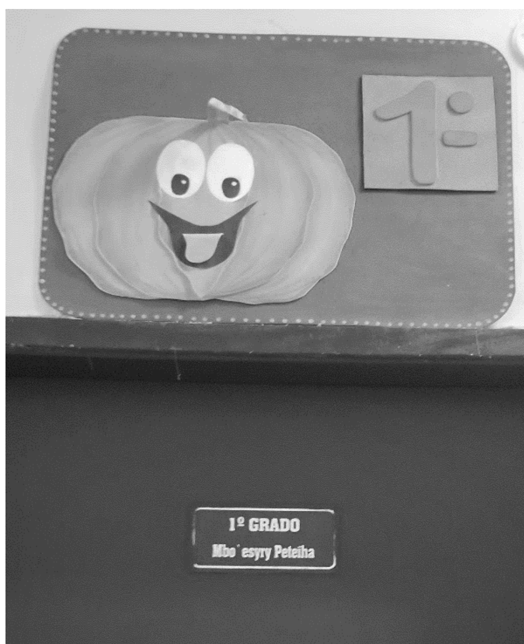

Figure 10. Bilingual Classroom Signs. Photo by GVS.
Translation [top-down, from left to right]: 1st Grade (in Spanish). First Grade (in Guarani).

because the 3rd year A students were having classes in this area of the school. Overall, Claudia expressed frustration regarding the lack of initiative of the administrators in this regard" (Fieldwork notes. March, 2020).

5.4.2. Symbolic Units: In terms of symbolic use of language, there were a total of 7 units of analysis. I classified the unit in Figure 12, depicting the back of *Tercero* A's classroom, as a symbolic instance of language use. That is, the text's purpose was to signal the presence of all languages represented at the school rather than to convey a message. This is one case that demonstrates PFS' multilingual orientations by alluding to the 5 languages present at the school: Spanish, Guarani, Portuguese, English, and French.

Figure 11. Portuguese Mural. Photo by GVS
Translation: "May peace not be armed".

	Top-down	***Bottom-up***
Spanish	104	10
Guarani	0	0
Spanish and Guarani	17	0
Portuguese	3	1
English	2	1
French	1	0
Total:	127	12

Table 3. Top-down vs. bottom-units.

Other instances of symbolic use of languages were found in murals painted by students. One mural shows the phrase "*Que a paz não seja armada"* (may peace not be armed) in Portuguese. Another unit constituted the poster with the message "*Colégio maravilhoso"* (wonderful school) evidently referring to PFS. Both units give visibility to the presence of Portuguese, a mandatory class—unlike English or French—for all students at PFS. These are additionally part of the minority group of bottom-up units since they were authored by students.

5.4.3. Units and Authorship: In terms of authorship, most units constituted top-down creations. Based on my personal inquiry, 127 of these came from the institutional level, ranging from the Ministry of Education and Science all the way to faculty and staff members. This number likely reflects the absence of students at the school site for most of the year. However, it can also reflect the fact that educational institutions mediate and control the signs that appear within their visual landscape. The 10 bottom-up units shown in Table 3 were murals, graffiti, and general artwork mostly containing messages in Spanish. These were art pieces stating which grade painted them followed by a slogan and the name of students. The unit belonging to the sixth grade stood out, given that it contained the phrase "now we are the storytellers", originally written in English.

Figure 12. Multiple Languages in Tercero. A's Classroom. Photo by GVS
Translation: [from left to right]: Hello (in Spanish). Hello (in Guarani). Hello (in Portuguese). Hello (in English). Hello (in French).

5.4.4. Virtual Spaces: I included elements of the virtual spaces where most classes occurred during my fieldwork. PFS conducted synchronous classes via Google Meet and Google Classroom—platforms provided and sponsored by the Ministry of Education and Science—as a platform for classroom content and homework assignments. I additionally include the messenger platform WhatsApp, given that, even if not officially sanctioned, it mediated an important part of interactions between educators and students. Although the use of mediums sponsored by the Ministry of Education and Science—such as Google Meet and Google Classroom—was PFS' preferred approach, students' realities often pushed educators to interact via their personal cell phones on WhatsApp. Even though schools and educators had the necessary resources for online education, this was not always the case for students, especially in rural communities, as *Profesora* Catalina observed about the NES rural school where she taught. There, educators had to send students pictures of homework assignments and voice clips via WhatsApp with directions and explanations so the students could keep up with class content.

I selected screenshots of the virtual spaces that educators and students saw during a typical class with a total of 54 units of analysis. For example, on a daily basis, users would first face the home screen of Google Classroom, go to the specific class, access the Google Meet link, and participate in the synchronous class. Frequently, however, multiple students also interacted with instructors via WhatsApp during and after class to ask clarifying questions, to send late homework files, or to submit audio clips as part of oral exams.[101]

5.4.5. Spanish Classes: Most units selected in this section from the online platforms were in Spanish, with a total of 44/54. That is, all buttons and tools belonging to the platform were in Spanish. In the case of Guarani and Portuguese classes, the content created by the instructors was in the target language (10 combined units in total). To navigate any of these platforms, one must be familiar with a register of Spanish that incorporates a lexicon related to these technologies. Many faculty members confessed that they were challenged when implementing these tools. One of them even decided to retire after realizing that they would not be able to keep up with the changes.

5.4.6. Guarani Classes: In the case of Guarani classes, there was no option in the Google Meet or Classroom platforms to use Guarani as a user interface language. This lack of options in Guarani is yet another factor that encourages students to primarily rely on languages such as English, Spanish, or Portuguese. Global markets largely prioritize these languages for their large amounts of speakers and for their large presences around the globe. Figure 13 depicts language representation in Google Classroom and the 10 units of analysis selected. During classes such as Guarani, this required instructors to incorporate the Spanish lexicon into their directions. The

[101] Contrast between soundscape vs visual landscape: Guaraní (or Jopara) is accepted in the soundscape, but not so much in the visual landscape. This was a relevant element during Guarani classes where *Profesora* Luisa accepted occasional verbal use of Jopara yet rejected it in writing.

instructor and students used the chat tool in Spanish when communicating during synchronous classes. Importantly, at all times, the instructions in Guarani were followed by its Spanish equivalent, with a total of 7 bilingual units out of 10. Further, the workbooks made by the instructor were all in both languages as well. This is similar to the bilingual signs that *Profesora* Olga created with sixth graders, a topic that is explored in the findings section. Bilingualism, based on these instructors' practices implies a strict balance between two distinct languages.

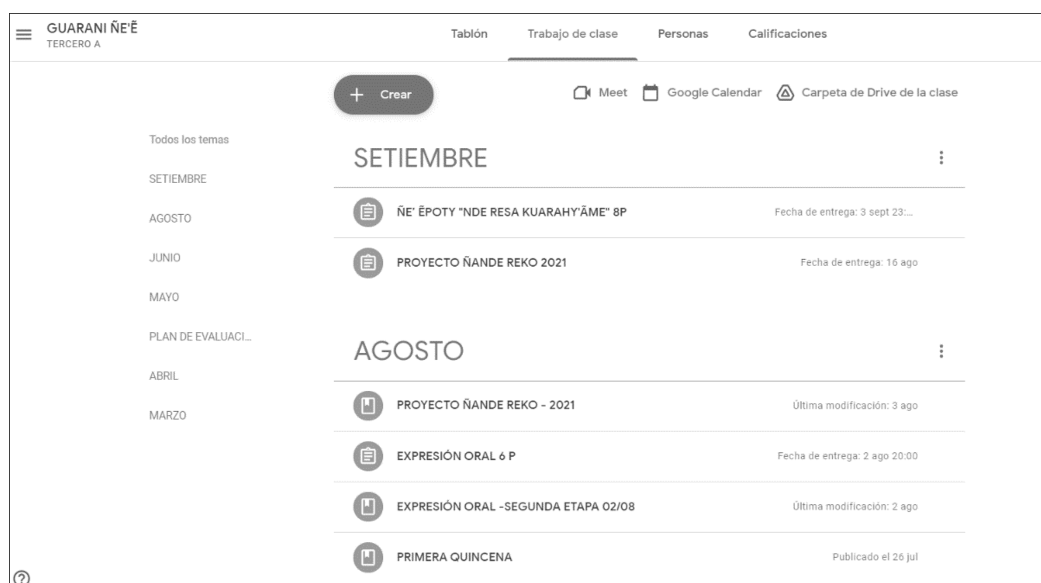

Figure 13. Guarani Class on Google Classroom. Screenshot captured by GVS Translations [translations from Spanish unless otherwise stated]: 1). Bar at top: Guarani Language. 3rd Section A. Main Menu. Class Materials. People. Grades. 2). 2nd Bar at top: Create. Meet. Google Calendar. Class's Drive Folder. 3). Side menu: All topics. SEPTEMBER. AUGUST. JUNE. MAY. EVALUATION PLAN. APRIL. MARCH. 4). Main window: SEPTEMBER. Poem: Your eyes are like the Sun' (in Guarani). Project: "Our patrimony" 2021 (in Guarani). AUGUST. Project "Our Patrimony" 2021 (in Guarani). Oral expression. Oral expression, Second Iteration. First 15 days.

In general, the virtual mediums implemented at PFS proved less favorable for student-to-student interaction in Guaraní. I observed that student participation during all virtual classes was generally low, an observation that the educators interviewed in this ethnographic project also agreed with. Survey data on Guarani use by students indicated that 35% of respondents who did use Guarani either used it with colleagues in informal contexts or at home, mainly with grandparents. When students interacted among themselves in the chat section, they did it in

Spanish. Nonetheless, instructors such as *Profesora* Olga created class content in Guarani, even if it was always followed by its Spanish equivalent.

Moreover, communication during Guarani classes was generally centered on the instructor. As discussed in previous chapters, students would not spontaneously communicate in Guarani. This would usually require the instructor to call on them individually. While the online model was not conducive to student participation in general, students did not frequently use Guarani beyond the mere requirements of the class, for example reading in-screen texts, oral presentations, and other exercises.

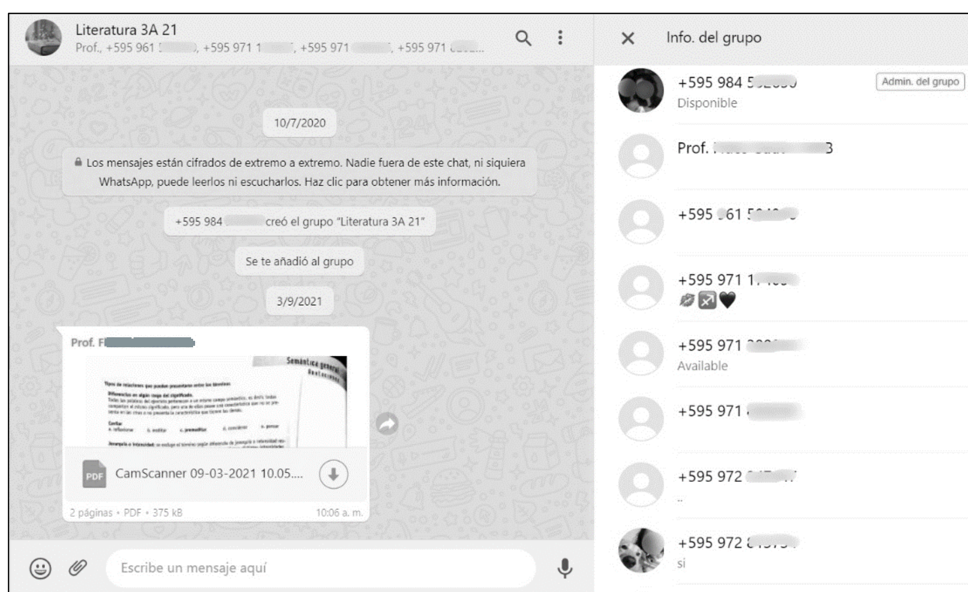

Figure 14. Screenshot of Tercero A's WhatsApp Group Message: Image of teacher sharing homework file with students after class. Screenshot captured by GVS
Translation: 1) Top Bars: Literature 3A 21. Group Info. 2) Chat Box at the Left: Messages are encrypted on both ends. Nobody outside of this chat, not even WhatsApp, can read or listen to them. Click here for more information. +595 984 created the group "Literatura 3A 21". You were added to the group. 3) Bottom message box: Type your text here.

5.4.7. Portuguese Classes: While the Portuguese class had the option of using Portuguese as a user interface language in Google Meet and Google Classroom, the instructor did not use it, and the section remained in Spanish, similar to the Guarani classes. However, all content created by the instructor, such as homework assignments, class readings, and all directions for the exercises was in Portuguese. I selected 10 units of analysis from Portuguese, of which 3 were in

Portuguese. The instructor incorporated the target language for her own instructions and class content such as homework files. Despite Portuguese not being a national language in Paraguay, the Portuguese instances did not appear with Spanish translations as in the case of Guarani. It should be noted that Portuguese and Spanish are mutually intelligible languages, while Guarani has a completely different linguistic origin than Spanish. As a reference, students felt more comfortable writing in Portuguese in the chat section, even if they made mistakes when compared to Guarani.

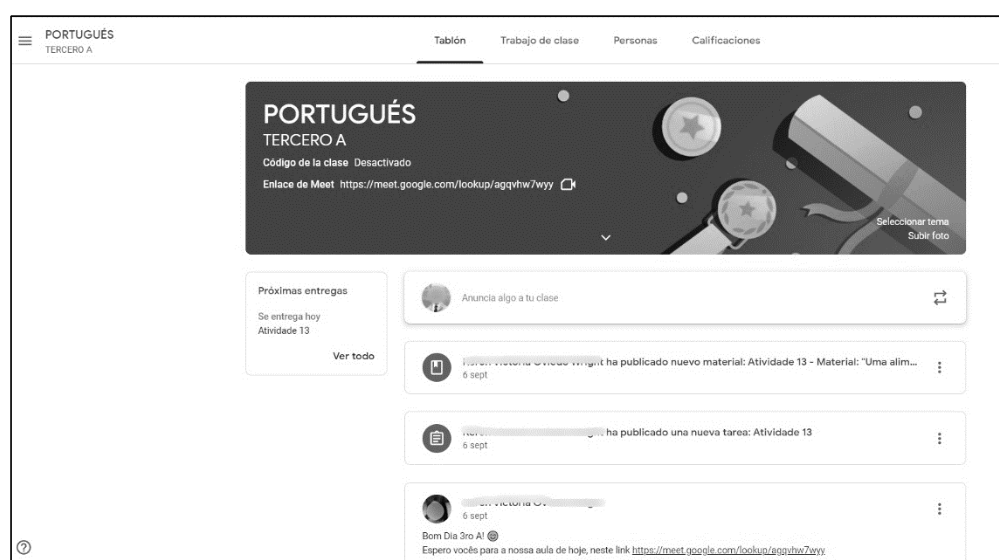

Figure 15. Portuguese Class on Google Classroom. Screenshot captured by GVS
Translation [translated from Spanish, unless otherwise stated]: 1) Upper Menu: PORTUGUESE. THIRD A. Home. Class materials. People. Grades. 2) Main Box: PORTUGUESE. THIRD A. Class code: deactivated. Google Meet Link. 3) Box to the left: Next assignments: Due today-Activity 13. See all. 4) Series of text boxes to the right: Make a class announcement. X has published a new material: Activity 13: Material "A healthy diet" Sep 6 [from Portuguese]. X has published a new assignment: Activity 13 Sep 6 [from Portuguese]. Sep 6: "Good morning 3rd A. I will see you today in our class at this link (web link) [from Portuguese].

WhatsApp was an important communication tool between these participants, even though the Ministry of Education and Science did not plan for educators and students to use it.[102] For example, Figure 14 is a screenshot of *Tercero A's* Spanish class message group on WhatsApp. All

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[102] The use of direct messaging platforms such as WhatsApp was not exclusive to the PFS community. A World Bank report published by news outlet ABC Color indicated that more than half of students in urban areas who were able to access online education during 2020 did it via WhatsApp (*Estudio quedó de lado…* 2021).

units selected in this platform (8) were in Spanish as well. There, students communicated with the instructor while she sent them class resources such as PDF files and others. Sometimes, when classes ran out of time, the instructor would ask students to send any missing assignments on WhatsApp instead of using Google Classroom or email, perceiving both to operate more slowly.

Finally, it's important to signal that how students accessed the virtual learning environment was dependent on their available devices. This can constitute a significant limitation for students' learning and for representing the linguistic landscape. At least 3 students mentioned this type of limitation, as evidenced in my interviews and survey data from PFS students. The screenshot of the virtual classroom in Figure 15 was captured from a computer. However, many students accessed classes from their cell phones, which limited that access to some degree. When participating via a cellphone, the screens are significantly smaller in comparison to a computer, which limits students' ability to read a text on the screen or a slide presentation that instructors tailored to be viewed from another computer. For example, the literature classes often involved the use of long documents with small font texts that students had to read. This hindered students' ability to follow along and participate in class, as they later explained to me.

5.5. Discussion

At first glance, the combined data may portray any language representation other than Spanish as symbolic within the PFS environment. However, the scope of analysis that I propose to LL that incorporates virtual spaces as well as other semiotic elements of the schoolscape reveals the coexistence of multiple languages at this institution. The participants of this ethnographic project inhabited complex spaces—physical and virtual—where language choice transcends affiliation to a single named language in all linguistic domains.

On one hand, the linguistic culture, or the linguistic practices of the institution (Schiffman, 1996), showed a predominance of Spanish in written domains, such as academic writing, online platforms, and institutional communication.[103] The data from the LL documentation project and representative images from virtual platforms reflect such orientation. This can cause students who are primary speakers of Guarani—or other languages—to be academically disadvantaged in comparison to Spanish-dominant students. Nonetheless, at PFS all students from *Tercero A* identified as primary Spanish speakers, as evidenced in all the interviews I conducted as well as survey data from participating students.[104] On the other hand, *Tercero A's* preference for Spanish can also reflect an institutional effort to prepare students for the potential Spanish-dominant public sphere they will face once they graduate. Li Wei deems this strategic monolingualism, a resource that speakers of minoritized languages implement to take advantage of dominant languages and the upward mobility that these can provide (Kramsch et al., 2020). While not all speakers of minoritized languages have access to this strategic monolingualism, it often represents a path for socioeconomic mobility.

Written Guarani was not frequently present in material or instances, and when it appeared, it was always accompanied by Spanish. Yet, when considering PFS' schoolscape—including both the visual landscape and soundscape—we see that Guarani was propagated orally, mostly by faculty and staff members. On my visits to the school site, I heard the gatekeeper communicating in Guarani with other staff members at the entrance of the school. This staff member interacted with everyone entering the school through the main entrance (between blocks

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[103] For a thorough definition and extended explanation of linguistic culture and language practices, see Chapter 4 "Translating Policies Into Practices".

[104] Language Profile by Student from Demographic Background Survey: Spanish 100%; Guarani 35%; Portuguese: 42%; English: 58%. (Von Streber 2021)

A and F, as seen in Figure 6), and based on my observations, he defaulted to Spanish when greeting the general public while using Guarani with other staff members. Members of the faculty also used Guarani when interacting; for example, another Portuguese teacher, whom I call Laura, discussed the week's news with a staff member and used Guarani for humorous purposes. This further underscores the character of Guarani as a (L) or low language variety, or that used for establishing trust among participants, under the diglossic spectrum.[105] Lastly, my interactions with *Profesora* Olga also involved the use of Guarani at times, especially when talking about folkloric topics. This relates to the use of Guarani as a historical artifact, a language that is suited for talking about culture and the ancestors. Brown's ethnographic research with a Võro school in Estonia points to similar results by stating that an LL analysis solely of visible language would conclude that the minority language Võro was absent. Nonetheless, by considering other elements from the local context—such as oral practices—the author demonstrated that the minority language is present in the given context. Guarani then appears orally, filling in the gaps of written Guarani in my analysis of the visual landscape. Ultimately, this use of oral and written mediums can be complementary.

Efforts to give visibility to a minoritized language are crucial to creating inclusive bilingual environments, especially in education. To reiterate, *Profesora* Olga recruited sixth graders to include bilingual signs around the school. When considering the full spectrum of LL, educators' micro language policies—or ground-level decisions about language use—such as *Profesora* Olga's policy, ultimately give visibility and representation to Guarani. Such efforts assign positive indexical values to languages and their applicability in the educational context

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[105] For an in-depth explanation of diglossia, see Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Paradox of Language" (section 3.4.1) and Chapter 4 "Translating Policy into Practice" (section 4.2.2).

and beyond. Cenoz & Gorter (2006) point out that even though dominant languages are more prevalent in multilingual territories, Language Policy can have a positive impact on language representation and visibility.

Even when the frequency of the presence of a sign is numerically inferior concerning other ones, it signals the presence of a minority within a demarcated space. As stated above, Blommaert underscores the importance of the presence of written text of minority languages with the example of a Cantonese sign apartment vacancy post in London. Even though the target audience constitutes a minority within the context, the sign's presence indicates that this group is in fact a part of the public space as well. This constitutes a process of validation of the presence of the group to the semiotic landscape (Blommaert, 2012: 57). Olga's effort to include Guarani in the written landscape significantly contributes to legitimizing the presence of these speakers in the given context and is an example of this process of validation.

Portuguese was also present in the linguistic landscape, although numerically low. I anticipated encountering Portuguese at these rates, given that being a multilingual institution is a core aspect of PFS's profile. This is another instance where an analysis solely of the visible languages would consider Portuguese almost invisible. Yet, as described in other chapters, Portuguese is part of the linguistic repertoire of the students I worked with. Students' communicative competence in Portuguese is significantly more advanced than in Guarani, as I observed repeatedly in several instances when students conducted extensive dialogues in Portuguese and discussed literature, film, and culture in the language.[106] Additionally, at least 5

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[106] "*Aunque los alumnos parecen dudar si participar o no, igual lo hacen. En comparación con la clase de guaraní, participan muchísimo más; Cuando los alumnos participan por lo general se equivocan con los cognados y la pronunciación, pero eso no les impide de hablar. En ambas clases se acumulan puntos de participación, sin embargo en la de portugués se escucha mucho más a los alumnos que en la de guaraní*" (Fieldwork note. June 2021). Translation: Although students seem to doubt whether to participate or not, they still do it. In comparison

of the students whom I had the chance to interview said they were willing to or preparing to go to university in Brazil.

Other named languages such as English and French were also a part of the local schoolscape (see Figure 12). Despite not being the preferred global language at PFS, the influence of English was undeniable, as it was present in the platforms that facilitated education such as Google Meet and Classroom.[107] The school had one student in an exchange program to the United States, of whom staff members were proud. French made only one appearance during the LL project. However, the study's participants constantly brought up the presence of French at PFS, mainly pointing out the institutional requirement to take either English or French once in high school. Ultimately, participants' positive views towards this language reflect the school's orientation as a cosmopolitan, multilingual institution. Both instances of language use are reflections of global forces permeating and being (re)produced at the school site and education in general since other schools also adopted these platforms.

The transidiomatic practices of this community—evidenced in the written elements of the schoolscape, discursive elements, and the variety of mediums employed—point to the coexistence of various linguistic codes within the institution. The participants of this study use these languages in a domain-specific way. This differs from some LP goals that promote equal language use distribution across domains while disregarding the community's language practices. For example, Guarani did not directly stand out in written academic domains at PFS.

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with Guarani class, they participate way more. When students do participate, they usually make mistakes with cognates and pronunciation, but that does not refrain them from participating. In both classes students accumulate participation points, nonetheless, in Portuguese class students are heard significantly more than in Guarani (Fieldwork note. June 2021).

[107] This use of English, even when not used as a language of interaction, produce and reinforce its indexical value as superior to local language varieties thus farther positioning languages in a hierarchical stand

Yet, it was present in bilingual instances, such as those when it was accompanied by Spanish-like classroom signs, the entire Guarani class on Google Classroom, and homework instructions.

This is congruent with the language Paraguayans call Jopara, or a variety of Guarani that incorporates lexical borrowings from Spanish.[108] These participants do differentiate between Guarani and Jopara and have a more positive view of the language they understand as Guarani. The data I collected in this linguistic landscape reflects the practice of Jopara when analyzing the written use of Guarani by this community.

5.6. Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, I argued that the participants in my LL study of PFS were part of a schoolscape where transidiomatic practices, or the use of several linguistic codes and mediums of communication, defied affiliation to a single named language. Although Spanish was the preferred language in the written register for most, other data from the LL analysis, which includes virtual environments as well as various semiotic elements beyond written language, point to the complexity of language practices by these participants. This community, like most Paraguayans, incorporates translingual practices in many domains; education is no exception to this trend. Through a tailored LL analysis that responds to the realities of this context, I demonstrated that, while there is a predominance of Spanish in written registers at PFS, multiple languages coexist at this site alongside other bilingual language practices.[109]

In my fieldwork, one of the most fruitful episodes of co-construction of knowledge took place during a Carlos A. Lopez University virtual academic conference, where I was invited to

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[108] For an in-depth explanation of Jopara, see Chapter 3 “Paraguay and the Paradox of Language” (section 3.3.1).

[109] Further line of inquiry: do virtual environments and interactions accentuate or attenuate or alter in other ways the use and indexical values of particular practices/varieties? Are virtual interactions altering face-to-face linguistic practices in any way?

present. During the discussion, the panel moderator and I established a long dialogue about translanguaging theory and Paraguayan language practices. Ultimately, we concluded that Paraguay must acknowledge that bilingual practices imply the use of Spanish in writing and Guarani orally to negotiate meaning. This stands in sharp contrast with some educational LP goals that conceive of Guarani literacy in a monolingual manner, as seen in literal translations of Spanish into an academic Guarani that the population rejects. These translingual practices—or a speaker's use of its full linguistic repertory without attention to the boundaries of named languages—are best represented by PFS faculty members interacting between class periods, staff members' conversations, and, albeit less frequent, student's own practices when using Guarani. The linguistic culture of Asuncion (and arguably of most of Paraguay) has an established use of Guarani orally alongside Spanish in writing.[110]

In-class Guarani use constantly appears alongside its Spanish equivalent, as I witnessed through detailed participant observations over the course of a year. This primarily reflects the speaker profile of the *Tercero* A classroom as Spanish-dominant speakers, in which only one student identified as a proficient Guarani speaker. Yet, it also demonstrates the place that written Guarani has for the educator and their students. Classroom interactions showed that it was acceptable to use Spanish alongside written Guarani while communicating and/or negotiating meaning in Guarani. Similarly, anthropologist Jan Hauck has pointed out that the Ministry of Education's last three macro plans in bilingual education have been largely unsuccessful because the population rejects the artificially constructed and highly academic indexical value of written

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[110] I discuss and define the concept of literacy and in-depth translingual practices, especially as conceived by these communities in Chapter 4 "Translating Policy Into Practice…" .

Guarani (Hauck, 2014). Ultimately, this explains, albeit partially, why Guarani literacy efforts have stalled in the past.

When considering Gorter and Cenoz' (2020) spectrum of analysis, this LL study also exemplified the direct impact of LP processes at the institution. Specifically, the micro-LPs enacted by *Profesora* Olga gave visibility to the minoritized language Guarani. Through this initiative, Olga addressed the issue of the unequal representation of languages, which has an indirect effect on how people conceive languages. This LL analysis also pointed out the linguistic culture of this target population that implements Spanish as a preferred language of writing in most cases. Lastly, the Language Ecology analysis explored PFS' global orientations, rooted in the ideology that named languages such as Portuguese, English, and French equal access, intellect, and economic growth, whereas Guarani only carries a symbolic value and is important as a national, cultural artifact.

Importantly, although the data selected in my analysis is representative of the realities that educators and students experienced, it heavily relies on abstraction. While this contributes to shedding light on the linguistic practices of this population and further sheds light on the overall LP processes in Asuncion, the data presents limitations. One limitation is that it assumed participants had the same type of access to virtual spaces, whereas these varied according to their access to technology. For example, instructors prepared lectures and homework expecting students to do assignments from a computer while many did them from a cell phone. This chapter makes important steps toward understanding the appropriation of linguistic practices by the target population in this LL project. By analyzing the broad Linguistic Landscape alongside sociohistorical and LP approaches, this chapter has contributed to furthering our understanding

of transidiomatic practices in Paraguay. I now turn to the broader issues of bilingualism and globalization to conclude the project.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.0. Co-constructing Understandings of Language

One of my most memorable fieldwork moments occurred when Raquel, a faculty member at Paulo Freire School and Carlos Lopez University, invited me to present at a series of virtual lectures on applied linguistics. This was one of the most fruitful opportunities that I had to engage in dialogue and compare my analysis—based on the academic literature, data collection, and personal experience—with local scholars. On the day of the event, the question-and-answer session took place immediately after the presentation. After answering questions from participants, I engaged in dialogue with the panel moderator. We discussed various aspects of Paraguayans' translingual practices with a focus on the role of Guarani in Paraguayan education. This dialogue led us to conclude that Guarani is a central element in education as an auxiliary or scaffold language (Mortimer, 2016). Although our discussion centered on education, its implications extend to language practices beyond this domain in areas such as administration, media, business, and the greater public sphere.

Translanguaging theory helps to show that languages can act as scaffolding resources. The panel moderator highlighted that in Guarani-predominant contexts, educators and students use Guarani to negotiate meaning—for example, using the word *ecuación* (equation) in Spanish but explaining the process in Guarani—in classes such as computer science, mathematics, or chemistry. The technical terminology of these class subjects has not permeated the Guarani lexicon, which implies that students and teachers rely on Spanish terminology. These classes are almost never taught completely in Guarani, yet this does not invalidate the use of this language in education. Rather, mediating and negotiating meaning in Guarani is indispensable for students as well as educators. This translingual practice has implications for primary speakers of either of

the official languages of Paraguay. In contexts where Guarani is the predominant language, instructors may convey mathematical concepts by using Spanish terminology, but they can further clarify these processes in Guarani. Likewise, in contexts where Spanish is predominant, with Spanish as a scaffold language, students may learn about history, Paraguayan culture, and even the Guarani language, which is hold as a valuable cultural and historical element to many Paraguayans across socioeconomic backgrounds.

This discussion took me back to a physics class I had while attending high school in Paraguay. During class, the instructor, who was a primary Guarani speaker, taught us to use a new function of a scientific calculator. He told us to grab our calculators and added: "*ha ejapete chupe [Guarani] mode, mode, [English] uno dos [Spanish] ha ojapota ndéve la peipotava, [Guaraní] ¿De acuerdo pá? [Spanish]*". Consciously or not, he used Guarani, Spanish, and English in one sentence: "mode" from English, "uno, dos, de acuerdo" (one, two, ok) from Spanish, and the rest was Guarani. Everyone in the class found it funny, but he surely got his message across. He was aware that we would have enough knowledge in all languages to understand him. In part, this firsthand experience in the educational system in Paraguay represented a full-circle experience in my research journey. This anecdote, coupled with the academic discussion at Carlos Lopez University—a meaningful instance of negotiation and co-construction of knowledge—contributed to helping me to formulate this dissertation's argument and I am grateful that this happened during fieldwork. In light of my ethnographic and overall constructivist approach, first-hand experiences provide rich insights into my analysis and findings.

6.1. Overarching Themes

I have argued that a language variety does not have to fulfill every communicative aspect to be considered a legitimate practice. A close look into multilingual practices both in formal and informal domains suggests the fluidity of boundaries that speakers have. The primary question that guided my research was: How do shared understandings of bilingualism—or metacommentaries about language—affect language practices and LPs? To answer this, I carried out a linguistic ethnography at a multilingual educational institution in Asuncion, Paraguay. I combined the data that I collected through semi-participant observation, interviewing, and survey distribution with document analysis. Through a constructivist framework—or the view that any knowledge of how society works is socially constructed by researchers, interlocutors, as well as collaborators—I analyzed the data by primarily relying on methods such as discourse analysis until theoretical implications emerged (Heller, 2018; Johnstone, 2018). This process was non-linear and recursive, and it involved several rounds of revisions and refinement.

I have drawn from the theoretical framework of translanguaging theory to paint a fuller picture of language practices. Contrary to my initial expectations, this orientation did not generate well-defined, neatly separated categories that explain the language practices of the participants. Instead, I found the nuanced ways that individuals negotiate their identities, using every communicative resource available to them to both communicate and assert who they are and to strategically position themselves in the increasingly globalized context of Asuncion. Given that my primary focus is on bilingualism and LPs, I built on Spolsky's (2004) categorization of the field of Language Policies, which he divides into the study of language ideologies, textual or management-level policies, and language practices. Although I focused on each of these main areas in discrete sections of the dissertation, they constantly overlap and never exist in isolation.

6.1.1. Language Ideologies: Language ideologies or attitudes, beliefs, and pre-conceived notions about languages and their speakers were a central theme throughout my analysis (Gal, 1998; Kroskrity, 2008; Milroy, 2001). Across all chapters, I highlighted how ideologies of language purity inform many Paraguayans' language practices and even in the crafting of LP. Shared national narratives of language purity propelled by institutions such as the Guarani Language Academy create definitions of utopian bilingualism that harm speakers' perceptions of their own practices. Schools are often key sites where some of these ideologies are (re)produced. Ultimately, the widespread notion of utopian bilingualism creates a scenario where virtually everyone loses. On the one hand, primary speakers of Guarani who largely rely on lexical borrowings from Spanish suffer stigma due to language purism. On the other hand, speakers of academic Guarani are rejected by the general population for speaking a highly curated and artificial language that does not resonate with anyone. Despite the negative effects these narratives have on the users of Guarani, these speakers still tend to willingly transgress linguistic norms and freely communicate, albeit with a sense of guilt.

Negative language ideologies can also have an impact on language practices and even speakers' identities. In Chapter 3 "Paraguay and the Language Paradox: Language, National Identity and Stigma" I argued that participants find themselves in the paradox of a language. In terms of linguistic identity, these participants largely aligned with the collective national identity that praises Guarani as a pillar of being a Paraguayan. Nonetheless, in their language practices, "either-or" categorizations of language clearly fall short of describing these individuals' translingual practices and their identities.

6.1.2. Language Policies: LPs were another relevant element given these are mechanisms that impact individuals to varying degrees. Speakers negotiate and adapt LPs to best serve their

interests. Throughout this dissertation, I demonstrated that participants have varying degrees of agency when translating macro-level, management LPs into practice. I looked at *Ley de Lenguas* as one of the largest LP projects approved in recent years and compared it to participants' language practices. Despite the projected outcomes of *Ley de Lenguas*, PFS participants tended to primarily respond to the Spanish-dominant surroundings with orientations to global languages such as Portuguese or English. Nonetheless, PFS participants still engaged in translanguaging and various practices available to them. At times, this was seen in symbolic affiliation with the Guarani language, even when speakers do not consider it part of their communicative repertoire. A careful analysis of the local linguistic culture facilitated the visualization of discrepancies between legislation and practices.

6.1.3. Language Practices: I analyzed language practices through an in-depth analysis of the space these individuals inhabited through an expanded linguistic landscape approach. Ultimately this highlighted the meaning-making process behind language choice and language use at the given institution. This analysis triangulated my findings by comparing the linguistic production of these participants, as manifested in the virtual environments where classes took place (Google Meet, Google Classroom, WhatsApp, school's website) as well as other more traditional elements of linguistic landscape studies such as written language, signs, art, and announcement boards. This was one of the areas that experienced the greatest impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the issue played a central role in this analysis. The results of this analysis underscored participants' rich and multifaceted linguistic practices. While Spanish is a preferred language at PFS, other languages such as Guarani, Portuguese, English, and French are also part of students,' faculty's, and the staff's communicative repertory, and speakers integrate these languages at their discretion in a translingual manner. These translingual practices imply

that speakers often incorporate and mix resources from different named languages that challenge the boundaries of standardized language varieties.

6.2. Expanded Perspectives on Bilingualism

Linguistics and its subdisciplines rely on categorizations that leave out more than they include. Although generalizations are necessary to define an object of study, they create labels that fall short when describing the practices of multilinguals. Traditional linguistics from its inception assumed that languages and the cultural expressions of their speakers are neatly and conveniently divided into categories:

> …[T]he idea that languages are coherent structural systems, one fully separate from the other, the expression of human cultures neatly divided in territorially bound cultures…[is] not only challenged by the mounting empirical evidence of multilingualism and linguistic hybridity in contemporary societies and the value and role of language in political and economic life. They are beginning to clash with the everyday experience of citizens living in our contemporary, diverse, and multi-connected societies, for whom subscribing to a single language and identity with fixed boundaries is not really an option, or whose formerly stigmatized linguistic resources are now valued, or on the contrary, whose formerly valued linguistic resources now fail to produce what they were supposed to. There are more and more people, practices and experiences that do not fit into the pre-existing categories, and we see consequences of communicative behaviour our current approaches ignore or deal with poorly (Heller et. al., 2018: 7).

The dynamics of linguistic practices, especially the contestation and redefinition of norms among youth, reveal the inadequacy of conventional categories to encapsulate the evolving nature of language in diverse and interconnected societies. These dynamics underscore the evolving nature

of language shaped by its users. Hence, the participants in my study not only respond to linguistic trends, but they are also agents of linguistic change who challenge the above-named, pre-existing linguistic categories by creating new ones. These multilingual participants challenge narratives of national identity, have a fluid set of linguistic practices, and use every linguistic resource in their repertoires for academic and professional success. They push the boundaries of named languages with their unique sets of practices. These shared understandings of language coupled with participants' diverse language practices are instances of local responses to globalization forces.

6.3. Globalization

6.3.1. The nexus between local and global: The participants in this study also faced the multiple effects of the increasingly globalized context of Asuncion. Within this context, returning to the local or national can moreover be a response to globalization. Specific to language practices and local languages or regional dialects, this can manifest as "…not a nostalgic or desperate response to globalization but an inevitable result of globalization" (Johnstone, 2010: 387). Participants constantly negotiate degrees of affiliation with named languages. Such affiliation occurs even when they profess to have little or no proficiency in the Guarani language.

The community of practice that I worked with has a potentially similar relationship with what is arguably the most salient index of locality: the Guarani language. Most participants at PFS are children or grandchildren of primary speakers of Guarani. They are able to understand fragments of the language and use it symbolically. However, as I demonstrate throughout this study, Guarani, whether mixed or "pure," does not constitute the bulk of their linguistic practices. Yet nominally, Guarani is still at the forefront of what it means to belong locally. These participants are caught in the middle of discourses of nationalism and globalization, a job market

that requires them to rely on more globally diffused languages (Spanish, English, Portuguese), and a stigmatized language that is looked down upon for being mixed, undergoing never-ending reforms, and with little perceived applicability in the public sphere.

Another response to globalization pressures among PFS participants was an international orientation aimed at obtaining competitive jobs. For educational and professional purposes, they react to the pressures of the Spanish-dominant domains while aspiring to other international languages such as Portuguese and English. Some students at PFS were aiming for an international education to have an advantageous formation in a competitive job market. Yet, even those who planned to remain locally aligned with other languages such as Portuguese, English, or French. The perceived applicability of these languages was a relevant factor in language choice and nearly impossible to avoid within Asuncion, as evidenced by the use of mass communication tools.

During my fieldwork, mediums of mass communication became indispensable after the nationally instituted lockdown measures. In response to the need for quarantine measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the educational system relied on platforms such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and Google Meet. An unexpected factor was the educational community's reliance on private messaging apps such as WhatsApp. All of these platforms, to varying degrees, favor languages with a larger global presence such as English and Spanish. The exception to this tendency was the use of Guarani on WhatsApp in voice clips, a fact that gestures to the oral trait of Guarani. Communication platforms that favor certain languages over others ultimately can affect language practices.

6.4. Future Work

6.4.1. Language and Space: This research represents novel approaches to carrying out linguistic ethnographic work by seriously undertaking analysis of digital spaces that replaced physical institutions during the COVID pandemic. The topic of space emerged as highly relevant in the study of language as the shift from physical to virtual occurred. I primarily responded to it by conducting a linguistic landscape analysis by incorporating all novel elements, such as the school site with electronic environments such as Google Classroom, Meets, or WhatsApp. Despite the contributions of my analysis, more attention should be devoted to understanding the impact of the hybridity of space on language practices. Future linguistic landscape work should also incorporate a diversity of factors into their scope; this implies not only analyzing physical spaces and the various semiotic elements contained within them, but also cyberspaces and oral practices.

6.4.2. The Future of *Ley de Lenguas*: Particular to future linguistic research on Paraguay is evaluating the impact of *Ley de Lenguas* after its *de facto* implementation in June of 2021. Although I was able to analyze the ripple effects of these policies within an educational context, its *de jure* implementation was relatively recent. Importantly, the *de facto* application of *Ley de Lenguas* will also affect other domains such as government jobs, state media, and the linguistic landscape of Paraguay. *Ley de Lenguas* lays the foundations for the incorporation of more democratic language practices into these domains, yet time will tell the degree to which these are either embraced or rejected.

6.4.3. The Public Sphere: Lastly, I chose an educational institution for its prominence in (re)producing patterns of language practice and language ideologies. However, future work must assess the influence of globalization, language ideologies, and LPs on other domains of the country. One of these often-overlooked domains in the literature is mass media and

communications. Additionally, private and state-run workplaces should not be ignored, especially since the linguistic legislation of Paraguay (as stated in *Ley de Lenguas*) nominally requires proficiency in both official languages for government jobs. The degree to and means by which these clauses will be enforced also remains an open question.

6.5. Implications and Significance

As we navigate the evolving landscape of bilingualism, it becomes evident that one-size-fits-all approaches—particularly those adhering to named languages—are insufficient. LPs must be responsive to the lived experiences of language users to bridge the gap between global aspirations and vernacular challenges. Overall, the dynamics of language and identity in bilingual societies demand continual reevaluation of policy frameworks. The tensions revealed between *de jure* and *de facto* LPs point to the importance of flexibility and adaptability in addressing the evolving nature of bilingualism. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has served as an unexpected yet insightful lens through which to examine the impact of external factors on language use in educational settings. The main findings in this project underscore the need for more nuanced and participant-informed approaches to LP formulation, recognizing the contestation and redefinition of linguistic norms, particularly among youth.

This project has contributed to our understanding of bilingualism within the context of post-colonial societies and globalization. This interdisciplinary project primarily relied on qualitative sociolinguistic methods and its results have implications in the fields of bilingualism and language policy and planning studies. Similar to the rhizome metaphor defined in Chapter 2, its contributions are non-linear, as they extend in various directions. Ultimately, my project has implications for language and education, language and identity, globalization, and linguistic

ethnographies. My hope is that it amplified the voices, frustrations, and aspirations of PFS participants and beyond, the very agents of linguistic change who made this project possible.

Moving forward, my vision for this work is that it encourages those crafting LPs to consider on-the-ground practices and lived experiences of language users. Future policies—or the incorporation of existing pluralistic policies such as parts of *Ley de Lenguas*—must be better informed by the nuanced understanding of bilingualism and representative communities of practice, such as PFS. This consideration can foster an inclusive approach that respects linguistic diversity and acknowledges the agency of individuals in shaping their language practices. I anticipate that the project's findings will also influence understandings of bilingualism in post-colonial contexts and guide researchers, educators, and policymakers toward more responsive and context-specific approaches. In essence, this dissertation is not only an addition to academic knowledge but also a contribution towards transformative action in the realm of LP and bilingual education.

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