

Multilingual and Multicultural Backgrounds: An Exploration of Language Attitudes toward
Restrictive Language Policies at the College Level

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Ann Elizabeth McCord

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Dra. Valentín Rivera

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Abstract

Restrictive language policies are formed by language ideologies that prevail among communities, along with the individual attitudes that support the furthering of language ideologies, whether supportive of or adverse to multilingual interests. Currently, the literature demonstrates that both second language learners (L2s) and heritage language learners of Spanish (HLLs) may perceive the restriction of language policies negatively, although some results have been mixed, yielding both positive and negative student responses (Shvidko, 2017; Vidana, 2020; Valdés, 2023). The types of language policies reviewed in current studies are limited to rules at the local, institutional level— typically taking place in a university setting. For language instructors, previous research shows they may consider the challenges standard language ideologies pose for the linguistic practices of HLLs— within the bounds of Spanish second language courses or language courses designed specifically for the needs of HLLs (Showstack, 2024). In a policymaking role as an instructor, Showstack (2024) determined that instructors' personal and linguistic backgrounds play a large role in their classroom policies and legitimization of HLLs' linguistic practices. Until now, the attitudes of several student profiles (L2s and HLLs) and their instructors (language faculty) towards language policies at the state and federal levels have yet to be explored in a cross-sectional study. Furthermore, to what extent teachers', L2s', and HLLs' personal and linguistic histories play a role in their understanding of language ideologies and attitudes towards the policies that embody them remains unknown. This study builds upon the small corpus of studies related to restrictive language policies, language ideologies, and language attitudes to examine the extent to which participants' upbringings, educational experiences, and professional preparation could affect their views towards restrictive language policies.

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Introduction

Attitudes and ideologies about language aid in the formation of our perspectives and beliefs about the world that surrounds individuals and their communities (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Kramsch, 2014, p. 32; Leeman, 2021, pp. 43-44). The ideologies presented in the environments which surround individuals have the power to affect the attitudes they adopt. Historically, anti-Spanish language ideologies were cemented in American attitudinal structures following the Spanish-American War in an August 24th, 1898, *New York Times* column that considered use of the language treason (Lynch, 2018). Today, research on language attitudes and ideologies is imperative to document the ways in which these two aspects affect individuals' conceptualization, preferences and overall use of language (Leeman, 2021, pp. 43-44), especially in current times. Thus, in the present study, the language attitudes towards restrictive language policies harbored by second language learners of Spanish, heritage language learners of Spanish, and various university language department faculty members were examined using an online questionnaire at Kansas State University, a large public university in the Midwestern United States. This investigation aimed to observe the attitudinal similarities and differences towards restrictive language policies, rules at any level of governance that explicitly or implicitly limit language use, and what background, educational, and professional factors could contribute to these beliefs. The individuals from whom attitudes were extracted were comprised of different student and instructor profiles within a university language department. Endeavoring to include various student and instructor perspectives in attitudinal studies will provide the field with observations about group attitudinal convergences and divergences and individuals' reasoning for their views. Detailing findings on the comparisons between student and instructor groups will lead language departments to adopt curriculum that values the multiculturalism and linguistic

diversity of all students. The current study will also give voice to students who had bilingual upbringings, like heritage language learners of Spanish and North American indigenous groups (although to a lesser degree), and who often experience the brunt of restrictive language policies.

Conducting a cross-sectional attitudinal study of individuals involved in university language courses will contribute closing the gaps in the existing literature. Namely, previous research has delineated two ideologies that underlie student attitudes towards non-English languages (Achugar & Pessoa, 2017; Leeman, 2021) and has observed student and instructor perspectives on classroom language policymaking (Valdés, et al., 2003; Shvidko, 2017; Vidana, 2020). At this juncture, the attitudes of multiple student and instructor groups towards the restriction of language have not yet been compiled together in a cross-sectional study, to the best knowledge of the researcher, which the current study sought to accomplish. Further explorations of both student and instructor language attitudes will uncover potential misunderstandings that could be held by either group based on their linguistic background or academic preparation (Shvidko et al., 2015, p. 12). Additionally, this type of investigation will yield greater comprehension and documentation of the attitudes and expectations of second language learners, heritage language learners of Spanish, and language faculty members towards language policies that have the potential to affect them negatively.

To measure the diverse language attitudes of student and instructor groups, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach that incorporated statistical analyses and Critical Discourse Analysis to analyze an online questionnaire administered to participants about restrictive language policies. Analyzing the data with a mixed-methods approach allowed for the integration of quantitative and qualitative data that ultimately obtained a sharper image of the

reasonings as to why individuals adopted their attitudes towards restrictive language policies and how responses to the restrictive policy ideas differed between each of the participant groups.

Literature Review

Introduction to the Literature Review

To comprehend the scope of non-English language restriction in the U.S. and the Midwestern region, a thorough review of the historical context of Spanish in the United States (U.S.), introduction of restrictive language policies, and studies on student and instructor perspectives on such policies is required. Simultaneously, uncovering the historical context of Spanish in the United States will reveal the motivations and government actions that have restricted the use of non-English languages. The review will then expound upon historical, contemporary, proposed, and passed restrictive language policies and their ideological bases—standard language ideology and monoglossic language ideology— and the conditions that influenced the policies’ introduction, along with instructor and student views on the matter, which is a topic that has been particularly under explored.

Historical Context of Spanish in the United States

The use of Spanish in what is today the U.S. finds its historical beginnings in the first European settlement, established in San Agustín in 1565, now part of Florida (McGrath, 2000, p. 207). Spain continued to colonize the New World and parts of what make up the American Southwestern states during the early 19th Century: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Texas (Jenkins, 2018, p. 53). Despite these efforts, the Mexican state established independence from Spain in 1821; their territory included the soon-to-be Southwestern U.S., and the rest of current-day Mexico. Shortly following Mexican Independence, Texas seceded from Mexico and was quickly annexed by the United States in 1836. Ten years later, the U.S. began a

war of expansionism culminating in the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo of 1848 in which Mexico relinquished all territory north of the Río Grande to the U.S.

Prior to the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848, the Southwestern region was dominated by a coexistence of indigenous languages (i.e., Apache, Hopi, Navajo) and colonial languages (Spanish, French, English) until 1848 (Levin, 2024). This is evidenced by Hispanic toponyms that remain today in this area: for example, Santa Fe, El Paso, Santa Rosa, and Nogales. After the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, the U.S. confronted the language issue: how to exert control over the “new” Americans, but not foment dissent among them (Lynch, 2018). This took the form of instituting language policies, such as *The Enabling Act of 1906* (New Mexico), which required that only English be taught in public-school settings. This initiative excluded Spanish from the public and educational sphere, as it was intended to relegate the language to only private and informal domains (i.e., among family members and friends). The emergence and expansion of language policies in the United States, centered upon assimilating Spanish speakers to English, informs the early historical background of this report. The reasoning for such policies—to institute control, test the loyalty of immigrants, and prove Americans’ belief in patriotism —continues today in the lack of public funding for bilingual education and heritage languages¹ (Ovando, 2003; Stransky, et al., 2011; Lynch, 2018; Gómez-Soler & Fuentes, 2021). Since *The Enabling Act of 1906*, restrictive language policies continue to prevail at the local, state and federal levels: threatening multiculturalism, linguistic diversity, and access to bilingual education. To better-understand the impact of restrictive language

¹ Heritage languages are languages to which individuals are tied culturally or through family (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007). The acquisition of heritage languages is often interrupted by a dominant language when children enter the public school system (Valdés, 2001; Stransky, et al., 2011, pp. 56-57).

policies, the following sections provide an overview of other legislative initiatives that more directly affect language use in the contemporary era.

Restrictive Language Policies

To date, many language policies that restrict the use of Spanish in public and educational settings have been instituted or proposed at the local, state, and federal levels. This section focuses on the ideologies that underpin policies limiting language use, rules prohibiting bilingual education, and English-official laws from the *Enabling Act of 1906* to today.

Overview of Restrictive Language Policies

Since the turn of the century, many laws have restricted the language use of minority groups in the U.S. This section will discuss the *de facto* and *de jure* restrictions of these laws placed primarily on Spanish-speakers. *The Enabling Act of 1906*, created at the time of New Mexico's admission into the Union, aimed to standardize the new state's educational system. The federal government was aware of the high density of Spanish-speakers in this region, as it was claimed by Mexico only 57 years before— and prior to that, Spain. To assimilate the new territory to American norms, Congress required the use of only English in public schools in New Mexico. The *Enabling Act of 1906*, effectively forced all students to learn English at the expense of maintaining other languages, resulting in lower Spanish literacy rates and restricted Spanish use by Spanish multilinguals (Lynch, 2018).

Following the *Enabling Act of 1906*, *Operation Bootstrap* (1944) was initiated in the annexed territory of Puerto Rico. Just as Congress had done thirty-eight years before, they again suspended the use of Spanish in public education in a region previously held under Spanish rule—

this time in Puerto Rico. However, many Puerto Rican intellectuals resisted this language law, and Spanish continues to be used as the linguistic vehicle of Puerto Rican education today (Lynch, 2018).

Another thirty years later, in 1974, the Nixon and Ford administrations renewed the *Bilingual Education Act* to institute temporary bilingual education programs for speakers of Spanish (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, p. 187; 2021). As much this could be perceived in a positive light, in effect it does not necessarily lead to greater maintenance of heritage languages (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009; 2021). In many cases, temporary bilingual programs are used to convert multilingual students into English-speakers and promote their eventual use of only English during the school day. Temporary bilingual education programs are intrinsically subtractive in that they assume students can only succeed academically in one linguistic system (i.e., English), thus prioritizing its formal instruction (Montrul, 2018). Thus, such support for English learning simultaneously interrupts the acquisition of heritage languages (Montrul, 2018). This interruption leads to gradual language loss, weakening multilingual students' possibilities of developing proficiency in their home language (Stansky, et al., 2011; Montrul, 2018). Conversely, monolingual English students may be given the opportunity to *add* a second language to their repertoire without producing loss in their first language (Stransky et al., 2011). Because monolingual English students already conform to the linguistic norms of the majority American culture, they are rewarded through language enrichment programs that their multilingual counterparts do not receive.

Twenty-six years after the signing of the *Bilingual Education Act* renewal, the Bush Administration signed the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* in 2002. Title III of the *NCLB* states that allocations for second language learning and bilingual education would be decreased in

order that all emergent bilinguals meet a nationally assessed level of English proficiency (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, p. 187). Much like the *Bilingual Education Act* of 1974, the *NCLB* is subtractive— however, more explicitly so. This is because the focus on pushing English fluency not only limits multilingual students’ support in learning a heritage language but also decreases opportunities for bilingual education among monolingual English children. The *NCLB* policy takes a deficit approach because it aims to conform multilingual children to the linguistic expectations of monolingual English-speakers. Not only do these student groups have different linguistic and cultural experiences— this approach fails to account for factors such as linguistic diversity (Polinsky, 2008; García & Torres-Guevara, 2009; Montrul, 2018). In effect, the attempt at erasure of bilingual education and heavy focus on assessing linguistically diverse students highlights the shortcomings of those who differ from the majority culture (Putnam & Sánchez, 2013; Faber & Kang, 2024).

Contemporary Restrictive Language Policies

Shortly after the institution of the *NCLB*, the U.S. Congress proposed two policies to award English a special status: the *Inhofe Amendment* (2006) and the *Salazar Amendment* (2006). The *Inhofe Amendment* (2006) was introduced as an addition to the *Comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill* (2006) and contained the following wording: “[the government will] preserve and enhance the role of English as the national language” (*Inhofe Amendment*, 2006). Although this amendment was not ultimately passed as a part of the larger bill, it reflects the existence of a desire to make English the official language. Moreover, the institution of an official-language decree designates English as a cultural aspect that needs to be enforced despite

its *de jure* official language status in society at-large (Carrillo, 2017; Midgley, Skirgard, & Ainslie, 2025).

That same year, the *Salazar Amendment* (2006) was written similarly to establish English as the “common and unifying language” of the United States (*Salazar Amendment*, 2006). This amendment is based on an understanding that all Americans should know English to take part in the rights and privileges of citizens of the United States. Thus, this proposed policy lacks an awareness of the unification of other people groups over non-English languages (Carrillo, 2017; Lynch, 2018; Midgely, Skirgard, & Ainslie, 2025). In the end, neither the *Inhofe Amendment* (2006) or the *Salazar Amendment* (2006) became law; however, the Trump Administration recently signed an Executive Order proclaiming English as the national language (*Designating English*, 2025). In effect, this rescinds any requirements on federal agencies to accommodate their services to multilingual persons and violates the longstanding precedent of not establishing an official language at the federal level (Carrillo, 2017; Midgley, Skirgard, & Ainslie, 2025).

At the state and local levels, policies that give legal preference to English have been proposed and passed in several Midwestern locales: Oklahoma, Kansas, and the City of Wichita. In Oklahoma, state residents created, but did not pass, the *Initiative Petition No. 366* (2002) to establish English as the official state language. This petition, if it had been passed, would have required government operations to be conducted only in English and prohibited the translation of official government documents into non-English languages (*Oklahoma Initiative Petition No. 366*, 2002). Although exceptions would have been made in public education to follow federal statutes, the initiative would have limited accessibility to the law for over 400,000 people in Oklahoma that speak a language other than English in the home (Migration Policy Institute - Oklahoma: Language & Education).

In Kansas, the state English-official policy and St. Anne Catholic School's English-only rule in Wichita further reflect the reach of restrictive language policies the Midwest. Nationally, Kansas is one of thirty-two states that have enacted state-wide English-official policies (Carrillo, 2017; [KS stat. 73-2801](#)). State English-official policies assume that the enshrinement of one language produces greater unity and cohesiveness in society which injects standard language ideology into the legal code. Following the letter of the text, Carrillo (2017) posited the statute's lack of definition of the term "English language" and use of the definite article "the" creates a preference towards one standard variation of English ([KS stat. 73-2801](#)). This statute fails to recognize the wide dialectal varieties present in the State of Kansas among English monolinguals and multilinguals— like Spanish, Kanza, and German (Carrillo, 2017; [KS stat. 73-2801](#); Keel, 2020).

At the local city level in Kansas, a Wichita private school, St. Anne Catholic School, implemented an English-only rule for students during the school day (Hill, et al., 2009, pp. 704-706). This policy penalized the leveraging of multiple languages in the classroom— a known practice of multilingual people (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, pp. 187-190; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 3; García & Torres-Guevara, 2021; Prada, 2021). The belief that languages can be separated, or turned on-and-off automatically, instead of acknowledging the continuous coexistence of diverse languages in multilinguals' cognitive systems, forms the foundation for this school's language policy (Grosjean, 2008; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 3). Thus, this prohibition of non-English languages during the school day ignores the psychosocial processes that occur in multilingual brains to make meaning out of the world around them (Grosjean, 2008; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 3; Prada, 2021). Policies like this could have particularly damaging effects on multilingual students and lead to lower overall academic achievement than

their monolingual English counterparts (Thomas & Collier, 2002, pp. 140-141; King, 2009; García & Torres-Guevara, 2009; Shvidko et al, 2015; Gómez Soler & Fuentes, 2021; García & Torres-Guevara, 2021).

Although government entities in the U.S. cannot regulate private schools' language restrictions, St. Anne Catholic School's policy demonstrates the ease with which other institutions may impose limitations on home languages in private and public settings, regardless of potential harms. In other words, private schools could be portrayed as an additional place where the creation and application of language policies occurs at the microlevel (Gómez Soler & Fuentes, 2021). When private schools make policy decisions that affect student language use, they limit accessibility for multilingual communities and fail to recognize their students' linguistic and cultural diversity.

More broadly, the formerly mentioned state-level policies reflect these silencing strategies towards multilingual populations, although less-directly, whereas local, school-level policies have an immediate impact on the linguistic practices of students in the educational sphere. Because of the direct nature of school-level restrictive language policies, they could be most damaging for multilingual individuals and their families.

Ideological Basis for Restrictive Language Policies: Prioritizing Monolingualism

Each of the restrictive language policies explained and analyzed above contains ideological underpinnings that allow for their creation and public support. In this section, the assumptions underlying restrictive language policies will be distilled, allowing for a presentation of the research on multilingualism that finds such ideologies unfounded (García, 2002; García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, pp. 187-190; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 3; Wei, 2018; Prada,

2021; García & Torres-Guevara, 2021). The proceeding section will additionally detail the impacts of the current political environment on the perception of language restrictions. Overall, the contextualization of how language ideologies and the current political situation inform restrictive language policies will allow for a greater understanding of their purpose in the U.S.

Standard Language Ideology

Standard language ideology is the belief that there is one correct way to speak, write, and otherwise produce a named language (Carrillo, 2017, p. 12). The United States educational system instills this ideology from students' first day of kindergarten as they must learn to speak, read, and write "proper" English, and receive corrections for their mistakes (Showstack, 2014, p. 72). At the wider state level, English-official policies in the United States reflect this ideology by not defining the term "English language" and using of the definite article preceding the named language ([KS stat. 73-2801](#); Carrillo, 2017, pp. 10-11). The language of this statute in effect gives special status to one standard English dialect in all official contexts. English-official policies, like Kansas's, present unrealistic expectations for individual language use because one's language use depends highly on social and situational context (*Language Files*, pp. 276-277). Even English monolinguals adjust their register to produce language appropriate for certain domains (Montrul, 2008). For example, English monolinguals will address their closest friends differently than their boss at work ("bro" or "sir", respectively).

Additionally, the *Salazar Amendment's* (2006) inclusion of the phrase "common and unifying language" describes the role of American English which points to standard language ideology (Carrillo, 2017, pp. 13-14). This bill identified a standard English variety as a critical component of American national identity and cohesion. Defining a language as part of a national

identity reflects the nationalistic sentiments of restrictive language policies belied by the belief that other languages promote allegiance to nations outside of the U.S. (*Enabling Act of 1906*; *Operation Bootstrap*, 1944; Lynch, 2018). Standard language ideology embodied by such restrictive language policies forces multilinguals to converge to a prescribed, standardized English variety used by those in power.

Monoglossic Language Ideology

Playing an arguably larger role in the creation of restrictive language policies, monoglossic language ideology, the belief that languages should be separate from one another and used one-at-a-time, has been injected into policies at federal, state, and local levels (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, p. 188). Although research shows that multilinguals leverage their entire linguistic repertoire to communicate and make meaning, restrictive language policies assume that the ideal behavior of multilinguals is that of monolingual English-speakers (Grosjean, 2008; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 3; Prada, 2021). Such policies aim to limit the influences of Spanish on emergent multilinguals' English use, undervalue the use of Spanish in Latino communities, privilege multilingual education for English-dominant elites, and cement monolingualism as the sociolinguistic norm in the United States (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, pp. 187-190; Stransky, et al., 2011).

The support of a monolingual society and limitation of a bilingual one is visible in the lack of educational support for bilingual and multilingual students (Gómez Soler & Fuentes, 2021; King, 2009; Shvidko et al, 2015). More specifically, after the institution of the *No Child Left-Behind Act (NCLB)* curriculum in the early 2000's, financial support for multilingual students decreased, whilst “the number of programs designed to promote early Spanish language

learning among English speakers... increased” (King, 2009, p. 303). However, the *NCLB* incidentally caused English-dominant students and families to maintain linguistic privilege over families that spoke a minority language at home. The signing of educational policies that restrict language use could be fueled by the lack of research of multilingual student populations (Gómez Soler & Fuentes, 2021; Shvidko, 2015). This lack of federal funding for research in this area has led to the creation of educational language policies, like *NCLB*, that promote English proficiency among multilinguals at the cost of their heritage languages (Gómez Soler & Fuentes, 2021; Shvidko, 2015).

Interestingly, multilingualism exists in a dichotomy: it may be viewed as an economic commodity for language-majority students yet seen as a barrier to education and economic success for linguistically diverse students (García, 2002; García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, pp. 187-190; 2021). To resolve multilingual students’ shortcomings in English, legislators have promoted these restrictive language policies to reverse minoritized students’ multilingualism (García, 2002). Such restrictions are often justified by demonstrating that English proficiency provides social mobility, civic engagement, and a strong economy (García, 2002). English-proficiency and multilingualism, however, are not mutually exclusive.

Principally, restrictive language policies reinforce the erroneous belief that multilinguals will produce the same behavior as monolinguals when institutions impose rules on language use. Overall, such policies prioritize a standardized form of English and assume that multilinguals can simply compartmentalize and separate their other languages from English.

Linguistic Views under the Current Political Climate

In addition to the complex variety of historical and political occurrences previously mentioned, the current U.S. political climate favors inequitable and restrictive language policies. Policies instituted at the state and federal levels could be reactions to some perceived external threats to the safety and national security (Branton et al., 2011). For example, following 9/11 in the U.S., many voters perceived immigration as a threat due to the activation of “Anglo social identities” and nationalism (Branton et al, 2011, p. 747). The greatest factors contributing to anti-immigrant sentiment following 9/11 were “acculturation fear, anti-Latino sentiment, and media exposure” (Branton et al, 2011, p. 747). This draws a parallel with the border crossings occurring at the U.S.-Mexico border in the last decade, ultra-conservative political rhetoric, and an English-only executive order proposed by the second Trump Administration (Harrison and Robertson, 2025; *Designating English*, 2025; Midgely, Skirgard, & Ainslie, 2025). In the Fall of 2023, the news media began broadcasting groups of migrants swimming from Mexico to the U.S. across the Rio Grande and their capture by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) ([Paul, Fox News, 2024](#)). The media’s constant focus on the high numbers of migrant crossings into the U.S. is fertile ground to produce fear towards noncitizens, xenophobia, monolingual language ideologies, and isolationism— sentiments compatible with the creation of restrictive language policies (Lippi-Green, 2012; Branton et al, 2011., p. 747).

Contrarily, the previous presidential administration funded campaigns to support multilingual Americans and residents (King, 2009, p. 303; “[Bilingualism as a superpower](#)”, 2024). Societally, sentiments towards bilingualism continue to become more positive (King, 2009, p. 303). This direction shows much promise as educational support in a home language seems to increase achievement levels among minority language students, for whom standardized assessments are not designed (Thomas & Collier, 2002, pp. 140-141; García & Torres-Guevara,

2009; King, 2009; Shvidko et al, 2015; García & Torres-Guevara, 2021; Gómez Soler & Fuentes, 2021).

As this trend in educational support for multilingual students continues, the U.S. must value linguistic diversity as a national resource. This is for several reasons, including the development of empathy. On a personal level, restricting the use of minoritized languages also limits the appreciation of affected linguistic communities. From an economic standpoint, the valuation of linguistic diversity by the U.S. could encourage the workforce to utilize multilingual abilities to manage international relations issues and national security. Valuing multilingualism may also increase the academic achievement of linguistically minoritized students, leading to a more cognitively and ethnically diverse workforce (Shvidko, 2017, p. 37). Lastly, a national focus on linguistic diversity is a focus on accessibility. Although some people may consider low English proficiency a lack of loyalty to the U.S., the government does not adequately provide linguistic support for all people to learn English in settings outside of public education (Midgely, Skirgard, & Ainslie, 2025). A focus on providing both first language support and opportunities for multilingual students to add English to their repertoire would allow for greater educational, legal, and medical accessibility for multilingual people.

State of the Field

To date, the literature on attitudes toward the restriction of language, integral in this study, has observed two groups of people within the classroom: students and teachers. Teachers consist of the instructors involved in educating language learners; students include second language learners (L2s) and heritage language learners of Spanish (HLLs). Second language learners of Spanish are students that learned English in the home and have chosen to add Spanish

to their linguistic repertoire through formal instruction, typically beginning study around the age of fifteen (Montrul, 2018, p. 145). The literature consistently and prominently uses the term “Foreign Language Learner” to define such students; however, the term “second language learner” (L2) will be adopted here to account for the local presence of Spanish in the Midwest.

Contrastively, HLLs are individuals that have opted to receive formal Spanish classes after being raised in a home where Spanish was primarily spoken by the family members and whom are to some degree bilingual in both Spanish and English (Valdés, 2001; Polinsky & Kagan, 2007; Stransky, et al., 2011). It is worth noting HLLs are often expected to develop linguistically like L2s of Spanish (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, pp. 187-190), despite their previously developed receptive and productive competencies and their direct (Hispanic) cultural connections (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, pp. 187-190; 2021). Likewise, HLLs may conversely be expected to perform linguistically like a monolingual Spanish-speaker although they have received an education conducted primarily in English (Grosjean, 2008; García & Torres-Guevara, 2009, pp. 187-190; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p.3; García & Torres-Guevara, 2021; Prada, 2021).

Studies conducted on student attitudes have demonstrated mixed positive and negative attitudes towards the limitation of language (Valdés, et al., 2003; Shvidko, 2017; Vidana, 2020). To the contrary, research on teacher attitudes, like Showstack (2024), has shown that instructors may consider the challenges standard language ideology poses for HLLs language use— often within Spanish courses designed specifically for HLLs (pp. 64-65). To repair damages posed by standard language ideology, teachers may shift towards utilizing pedagogical models that celebrate and support linguistic diversity in their language teaching (Showstack, 2024, p. 65). It is also worth mentioning that research on teacher and student attitudes towards language

restriction is rather scant (Valdés, et al., 2003; Shvidko, 2017; Vidana, 2020). However, throughout this section, the reported attitudes of instructors, L2s and HLLs toward the restriction of language will be discussed as extensively as the literature permits.

Student Perspectives towards the Restriction of Language

The literature suggests that both L2s and HLLs may perceive the restriction of language policies negatively, although some results have been mixed (Valdés et al., 2003; Shvidko, 2017; Vidana, 2020). Students also perceive some aspects of restriction as positive for developing career skills; however, they recognize that these policies place punishment on the use of home languages (Shvidko, 2017). The literature on student attitudes towards language policies is geared towards language policy at the local, institutional level. The attitudes of students towards language policies at the state and federal levels have yet to be explored. The following sections will discuss studies that examined the attitudes of students towards restrictive language policies, prioritization of standard languages, and language use.

Attitudes towards Restrictive Language Policies

The current literature on attitudes towards restrictive language policies has focused on international students subject to such rules at American universities. Shvidko (2017) surveyed the perspectives of students enrolled in an intensive English program (IEP) at an American university that were subject to an English-only rule (p. 25). This rule required students to speak only English in the classroom and encouraged them to limit the use of their first language (L1) outside of the classroom. To measure IEP student perspectives on the rule and its effect, a questionnaire was administered to the participants. IEP students at this university reported both

positive and negative attitudes towards the English-only policy (Shvidko, 2017, pp. 35-39). Students who indicated positive attitudes felt the rule improved their English proficiency, prepared them for using English in the real world and their careers, and allowed them to show respect to people who did not speak their first language (Shvidko, 2017, pp. 35-37). On the contrary, other students expressed that the unconditional policy denied their linguistic autonomy, led to punishment of their course grade, and did not support the use of their L1 outside of the classroom (Shvidko, 2017, pp. 38-39). The students who felt negatively about the rule recognized the importance of using their L1 in some scenarios outside of the classroom, and it could be unrealistic to expect students to completely forgo their use of the L1 when learning a new language (Shvidko, 2017, pp. 39-41). Although this policy was instituted in an IEP at the university level, not a language department, it shows there could be both student resistance and acceptance of language restrictions. Additionally, Shvidko (2017) highlights student attitudes towards institutional-level policies but not towards policies at higher levels of governance. Questions remain as to how attitudes could differ for students and instructors alike when confronted with language restrictions from policymakers at different loci of power.

Attitudes towards the Prioritization of Standard Languages

Another study on attitudes towards language policies in a university context, Valdés, et al. (2003), raised a discussion as to the effects of the prioritization of Castilian Spanish in a university language department. Valdés, et al. (2003) found that preferencing standard language varieties can be embodied by explicit policies and day-to-day practices of department faculty. For example, the HLLs surveyed by Valdés, et al. (2003) expressed that the prioritization of standard Spanish varieties may present challenges for the validation of HLLs linguistic practices

(Valdés, et al, 2003, p. 16). This study focuses on the attitudes of HLLs, but not those of L2s or instructors in a language department. Further observations of the different types of individuals' attitudes in a university language department could be used to obtain a more holistic image of the relationships between individuals and their perspectives. Understanding the make-up of attitudes of a language department with respect to restrictive language policies could also help identify unique learner needs and the attitudinal relationships between all learners. Additionally, as Valdés, et al. (2003) focused on the prioritization of standard Spanish, questions related to attitudes towards the curricular and legal prioritization of English at any level of governance are yet to be explored.

Attitudes towards Linguistic Practices

Connecting HLL perspectives to identity, Vidana (2020) investigated HLLs students' attitudes towards language ideologies with respect to their identities in a borderlands Spanish Heritage Language (HL) classroom. Vidana (2020) found that HLLs may have “internalized hegemonic language ideologies” which prioritize the norms and language of white, English-speaking monolinguals (Vidana, 2020, pp. 34, 101, 120). The attitudes of HLLs presented in this study suggest that HLLs believe white, English-speaking monolinguals buy into standard language ideologies and that HLLs coalesce to perceived dominant discourses. Although Vidana (2020) suggests that HLLs may conform to hegemonic ideological norms, the study shows that such discourse could be reversed with identity-affirming pedagogical intervention in the HL classroom (Vidana, 2020, p. 109).

Vidana (2020) reiterates the need for the documentation of HLLs attitudes in their own language education (p. 124). Although this research looks directly at the ideologies held by

HLLs, it does not specifically examine the attitudes of HLLs towards restrictive language policies. The evidence that HLLs adopt standard language ideology may support some agreement with restrictive language policies in the present study. Any level of agreement towards restrictive language policies among HLLs could be partially supported by the positive attitudes towards L1 restriction in Shvidko (2017) but partially contradicted by the challenges HLLs perceived when their language varieties were restricted in Valdés, et al. (2003).

Despite Vidana's (2020) observations of HLLs perspectives, this study did not explore the corresponding attitudes of instructors or L2s. To draw deeper conclusions on the adoption of hegemonic discourses, different types of members of a language department must be surveyed. Exploring the attitudes of a wider set of language learners could show how identity and linguistic backgrounds impact the adoption of standard and monoglossic language ideologies and agreement towards restrictive language policies.

Instructor Perspectives towards the Restriction of Language

Studies on language teacher attitudes remark on the challenges language restriction presents in the HL classroom, although the literature on this area remains sparse. Showstack (2024) observed the connections between HLL instructors' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and their teaching practices. This study found that teachers draw on their personal contexts and level of HL pedagogy training to shape their classroom policies (Showstack, 2024). Participating educators indicated that they regularly navigate tensions between standard language ideologies and the diverse linguistic realities of HLLs, aiming to create environments that legitimize their linguistic practices (Showstack, 2024, pp. 54-55). Despite teachers' awareness of the unique needs of HLLs, their praxis at times contradicted with their goals for HL courses (Showstack,

2024, p. 57, 65). Additionally, this investigation demonstrated that teachers' professional histories play a formative role in their understanding of language ideologies and methods to empower HLLs in the classroom (Showstack, 2024, p. 65). The extent to which instructors', L2 students', and HLLs students' linguistic histories play a role in their understanding of language ideologies and restrictive language policies is still unknown.

Justification for investigating attitudes toward restrictive language policies

The study of student and instructor attitudes toward restrictive language policies is important to the overall understanding of its relationship to individuals' linguistic, educational, and professional profiles. Often, language policies implemented in English-learning institutions are not informed by empirical research that reflects learner perspectives (Shvidko et al., 2015; Vidana, 2020, p. 124). The lack of research-based policy implementation at all levels of governance undermines positive educational conditions that are required for linguistic development (Shvidko et al., 2015). Due to differences in the literature about how HLLs express identity, this study will explore their language ideologies with a focus on their relationships to a broader group of learner and instructor participants than previous studies (Vidana, 2020, pp. 101-123). Moreover, observing a more-diverse set of bilinguals, including HLLs, L2s, and university faculty, is necessary to obtain a holistic picture of how these groups perceive restrictions to language use (Vidana, 2020, p. 124).

Furthermore, the Midwestern geography of this project is crucial because of the region's under-study in comparison to the Southwestern U.S. (Jenkins, 2018; Showstack, 2024). Kansas is approaching the ten-percent Spanish-speaking population significance threshold set forth for studying the retention of home languages (Hudson, 1998; Jenkins, 2018; American Community

Survey: S1601 “Language spoken at home”, 2023). Currently, about eight percent of Kansans claim Spanish as a home language (*S1601 “Language spoken at home”, 2023*). However, in some municipalities, Hispanics and Latinos make up the majority of the population: specifically Garden City (54.1%), Dodge City (63.9%), and Liberal (68.1%) (*P2: Hispanic or Latino, and not Hispanic or Latino by Race, 2020*).

For this reason, the location of this study will contribute to the growing literature related to Spanish in Kansas and the broader Midwestern region of the United States.

Research Questions

This study aims to answer questions not yet explored by the small sample of studies that have been conducted on language policies, language ideologies, and language attitudes. The research questions will examine differences between multilingual experiences of individuals involved in a Midwestern university language department and their attitudes towards five selected restrictive language policies that embody language ideologies proposed or passed by local, state, and federal policy-making bodies.

1. How could Spanish Foreign Language Learners’ (L2s), Spanish Heritage Language Learners’ (HLLs), and university language faculty members’ upbringing impact attitudes towards language policies?
2. How could Spanish Foreign Language Learners’ (L2s) and Spanish Heritage Language Learners’ (HLLs) academic experiences and university language faculty members’ professional preparation impact attitudes towards language policies?

Methodology

Setting

The present study was conducted at Kansas State University, a large public university in the Midwestern United States. More specifically, this institution is situated in Manhattan, Kansas, a largely rural region, about thirty miles west of the state capital, Topeka. The most recent population estimate of Kansas in 2023 was measured at 2,940,546 residents (U.S. Census Bureau). Of this total, the Census Bureau counts the Hispanic or Latino population at 13.7%, and the Spanish-speaking population at 8.2% ([S1601 “Language spoken at home”](#), 2023). Kansas State University had a total enrollment in the Fall of 2024 of 20,295 students across three campuses, of which 15,650 were undergraduates (Kansas State University, 2024). The ethnic and racial demographics of the university follow below in Table 1. An analysis of racial and ethnic demographics is imperative as these characteristics, much like linguistic background, are a crucial factor in individual identity formation.

Table 1. Kansas State University Fall 2024 Enrollment Demographics.

Race	Number	Percentage of Total Enrollment (20,295 students)
American Indian	79	0.4%
Asian	455	2.2%
Black	635	3.1%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	23	0.1%
Hispanic	1,862	9.2%
Multiracial	737	3.6%
Unknown	185	0.9%
White	15,337	75.6%
Total	19,313	95.10%

Participants

The department that served as the main population from which to recruit participants for this study houses seven language minors, four language and international studies majors, four Master's degree programs, and one Master's certification program. At the undergraduate level, Spanish minors are required to pass four basic language courses (i.e., SPAN I through SPAN IV), one bridge course that transitions the student from basic to intermediate level coursework (SPAN 410 or SPAN 411 (for HLLs only)), and three intermediate-to-advanced-level elective courses (500 to 700, respectively) on varied areas (i.e., Introduction to Linguistics and Spanish in the U.S.). Spanish majors must complete the same coursework with an addition of eight intermediate-to-advanced level elective courses. For students in the Spanish Master's program, a total of thirty-three credits are required to graduate. Master's students must take thirty credit hours of coursework, which may include up to six hours of research supervised by a faculty member. Additionally, this academic unit offers two faculty-led study abroad opportunities each year in Playa del Carmen, Mexico and Pamplona, Spain. Undergraduate students may also coordinate alternative study abroad programs through the University's study abroad office to best accommodate their personal and professional goals.

The student and instructor sample from the Department of Modern Languages was made up of students (n=36) from two bridge courses, SPAN 410 and SPAN 411, geared towards L2s and HLLs, respectively; students from an intermediate-level introductory linguistics course, SPAN 580; students enrolled in an advanced graduate-level historical and sociolinguistics course, SPAN 779; and a sample of Modern Languages faculty. Initially, the total number of participants was 40 across all sample categories; however, four participants were excluded as outliers due to their limited exposure to the linguistic situation in the United States prior to

entering graduate school. Overall, twenty participants were second language learners (L2s), ten were heritage language learners of Spanish (HLLs), and six were Modern Languages faculty members of various languages and concentrations. The participants' numbers and profiles are detailed below in Table 2.

Table 2. Anonymized Naming System

Participant Type	Participant Number
Second Language Learners (#1-20)	1. L2 #1 2. L2 #2 3. L2 #3 4. L2 #4 5. L2 #5 6. L2 #6 7. L2 #7 8. L2 #8 9. L2 #9 10. L2 #10 11. L2 #11 12. L2 #12 13. L2 #13 14. L2 #14 15. L2 #15 16. L2 #16 17. L2 #17 18. L2 #18 19. L2 #19 20. L2 #20
Heritage Language Learners (#21-30)	21. HLL #1 22. HLL #2 23. HLL #3 24. HLL #4 25. HLL #5 26. HLL #6 27. HLL #7 28. HLL #8 29. HLL #9

	30. HLL #10
Language Faculty (#31-36)	31. Language Faculty member #1 32. Language Faculty member #2 33. Language Faculty member #3 34. Language Faculty member #4 35. Language Faculty member #5 36. Language Faculty member #6

The L2s were enrolled in the following courses: SPAN 410, SPAN 580, and SPAN 779. Similarly, students from the SPAN 410, SPAN 411, and SPAN 580 courses formed the HLL participant group. Finally, the faculty group was comprised of professors and instructors of Spanish, French, German, and the department Chair. Faculty added another point of comparison within the sample, creating a bridge between students (Spanish L2s and HLLs) and professionals in the field. This wide sample retrieved a more holistic view of ideological bents of the Department at different levels of instructional investment.

Respondents were also differentiated based on their racial and ethnic identification. This demographic information is relevant to the present study because it can be a critical factor in identity formation, and it runs parallel to participants' linguistic backgrounds (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Leeman, 2021, p. 47). The questionnaire results showed the L2 respondent group was about 79.2 percent (n=19) white and 8.3 percent (n=2) identifying as more than one race. As for ethnicity, five percent (n=1) of the L2 respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino, and the other ninety-five percent (n=19) did not identify as such.

As for the demographic makeup of the HLL group (n=10), the results were more homogenous than the L2 group. Racially, HLLs responded with more variety and filling-in of the "other" category than L2 respondents: all HLL respondents indicated they were "Hispanic or Latino". Racially, half of the HLLs respondents indicated they identified as white (n=5), while

three wrote-in they identified as “Hispanic”, and one identified as “Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander”. An individual respondent noted they did not pertain to any race.

Finally, the faculty group (n=6) showed the highest racial and ethnic homogeneity. Racially, 83.3 percent (n=5) identified as white, and the other 16.7 percent (n=1) identified as both white and “American Indian or Alaskan Native”. None of the language faculty respondents identified ethnically as “Hispanic or Latino”.

After participants identified their racial and ethnic characteristics, the questionnaire sought to detail their state, territory, or country of origin. These questions aimed to understand the extent to which all respondents were exposed to the linguistic situation in the United States. Although most student and faculty respondents in the questionnaire identified their country of origin as the U.S. (n=29), there were some differences to the mode in the HLL group and L2 group, as a larger proportion of HLLs (20%) were born outside of the U.S. than L2s (0%). All the faculty respondents indicated they were born in the U.S. Regionally, most of the student and faculty respondents hailed originally from Kansas (63.9%) or the wider Midwestern region (75%). A smaller portion of respondents were born outside of the Midwestern United States (19.4%) or outside of the United States (5.6%).

Furthering the inquiries as to participants’ exposure to the linguistic context of the U.S. and its relation to their linguistic backgrounds, each group of respondents detailed their home language, primary language, and age of exposure to English. For responses to questions about the use of languages in the home or community, L2s showed mixed results as twenty percent (n=4) indicated they or their family used a language other than English in the home or community. The HLL respondents, however, answered homogenously as all (n=10) responded they or their family spoke a non-English language in the home or community, and that this

language was Spanish. As for the language faculty, 66.7 percent (n=4) did not speak or have family that spoke a language other than English in the home or community growing up. Two (33.3%) of the faculty respondents indicated they or members of their family spoke a non-English language in the home or community growing up. The languages denoted were French and German, “*but only a bit*” (Participant #33).

Reflections on respondents’ primary languages showed that English was most frequently used by the vast majority (94.4%; n=34). Two respondents (5.6%) indicated otherwise: one HLL selected Spanish as their primary language, whilst a faculty member selected both Spanish and English. In relation to primary languages, most respondents were first exposed to English, their primary language, between birth and three years of age (83.3%), regardless of their status as an L2, HLL, or faculty member. This further demonstrates the English-dominated context in which the participants find themselves in the Midwestern United States.

Procedure

An online questionnaire was administered to each participant who signed a consent form to provide their responses (Appendix A.). The L2s, HLLs, and faculty who opted to participate responded to inquiries first as to their demographic information and linguistic backgrounds; second, their educational experiences or professional preparation; and third, attitudes toward five restrictive language policies. To examine respondents’ educational experiences or professional preparation, each participant group completed different second section of the online questionnaire that asked about their educational experiences (L2s and HLLs) or their current roles within the department (faculty members).

After all respondents detailed their educational (L2s and HLLs) or professional (faculty members) preparation, they read and responded to statements adapted from five policies

proposed or passed at the federal, state, or local levels aimed at restricting the use of non-English languages (Appendix A.). These policies were chosen to ensure internal validity of the measurement of perceived attitudinal differences between respondents of different profiles. The policy statements were inspired by the *Inhofe Amendment* (2006), *Salazar Amendment* (2006), *Initiative Petition No. 366*, Kansas' English-official policy, and St. Anne Catholic School's English-only rule explained previously in the "Restrictive Language Policies" subsection of the Literature Review (pp. 11-16). Each policy was proposed or passed in the 21st Century, thus increasing their relevance to questionnaire respondents due to their recency. In other words, respondents may have found contemporary issues more meaningful to them and may have some familiarity with these restrictive language policies. The recency and familiarity of the policies could also increase the validity of respondents' comments, as they connect the effects of restrictive language policies to their personal linguistic and social situations.

Upon reading each policy statement, participants rated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the given statement on a five-point Likert scale. Following each rating, respondents explained why they agreed or disagreed in a short-answer text box. To conclude the survey, respondents then commented on their overall feelings towards the policy ideas they had been presented with. After the data was collected, the main researcher anonymized all responses by assigning each participant with a number, reviewed and kept written record of the overall demographic makeup and educational experiences of the respondent groups, and analyzed the attitudinal responses to the restrictive language policies. To analyze the attitudinal responses, the main researcher utilized the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method, in which main ideas and attitudes were drawn from each response (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Gee, 2011; Pymes, 2016; Fairclough, 2013b; Avineri & Baquedano-López, 2024, pp. 69-72). CDA was utilized in this

study because of its focus on uncovering language ideologies and attitudes of participants within written responses. Through CDA, the main researcher connected participants' understanding of restrictive language policies to standard and monoglossic language ideologies. Next, the attitudinal organization, demographics, language background, and educational experiences were considered by the main researcher to determine what relationships could be drawn from the sample. After this, the responses to each Likert scale were statistically analyzed to determine the mean response value, variation between responses within each of the participant groups, and the differences in agreement of each of the groups. This statistical analysis allowed for a side-by-side numerical demonstration of the differences and similarities between each group. The inclusion of an analysis of the participants' reasoning through CDA supports the statistical figures shown in the results, while also hinting to differences between each group when similar numerical values were reported. These mixed questionnaire methods increase the validity of the survey and decrease the likelihood of random answering by participants as they were required to justify their responses (Dawaele & Dorneyei, 2023).

The inclusion of qualitative data in this study creates meaning of the raw statistical data. Numbers show the aggregate attitudes of participant groups; however, detailing the participants' reasoning allows each participant to voice the factors which they take into consideration when forming opinions. More importantly, the inclusion of qualitative data allows for the most transparency in the dissemination of results as it shows the convergences and divergences of similar participants. Although many participants may seem to have marked the same attitudinal responses according to the raw data, the inclusion of qualitative data aids in the uncovering of the wide attitudinal diversity within each level of agreement.

In the eventual dissemination of the results, the participants' original responses were largely maintained in in-line and block-text quotations, formatted in italics, and labeled with an assigned participant number (see Table 2). Crucial orthographical and grammatical corrections were inserted as necessary and marked with brackets. Moreover, statistical figures were contained within tables summarizing the level of agreement of each participant group (L2s, HLLs, and faculty) towards each of the restrictive language policies presented.

Findings

As previously mentioned, in this investigation, an online questionnaire was administered to 40 participants ranging from second language learners of Spanish (L2s; n=20) to heritage language learners of Spanish (HLLs; n=10), and modern languages faculty (n=6) of various languages, as previously mentioned in the section pertaining to methodology. The findings for the two research questions that define the scope of this study are presented below.

The relationships between attitudes towards restrictive language policies and participants' upbringings and linguistic backgrounds.

Regarding the first research question, which surveyed student attitudes toward language policies according to their upbringing, a difference in attitudes was observed for each group of participants, although slight between student groups. Generally, it was found that L2 respondents tended to agree more with restrictive language policies (29% mean agreement towards each policy) than the HLLs (22% mean agreement) and faculty (no agreement). Throughout participants' responses, tensions between linguistic diversity and majority languages, themes of individual autonomy, and views on accessibility emerged.

Beginning with the broadest statement regarding preferences towards the federal government's power and duty to promote English as the national language, student and faculty respondents demonstrated a clear difference in their levels of agreement. L2s and HLLs reported similar means of agreement, leaning slightly towards disagreement, whereas faculty respondents disagreed much more strongly with this statement, shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The enhancement of the role of English as the national language.

	L2s	HLLs	Lang. Faculty
Mean	2.458333333	2.5	1.16666667
Median	2.5	2	1
Mode	3	4	1
StDev	1.02062073	1.3540064	0.40824829
Var	1.04166667	1.83333333	0.16666667

Overall, it was observed that most HLLs and faculty and some L2s disagreed with the possibility of establishing English as the national language (L2s: 40%, HLLs: 60%, faculty: 100%). These participants deemed such law unnecessary, as English is already in “*a hegemonic position*” (Participant #34, Melissa). Additionally, they believed that this idea could heighten social division (Participants #4, 5, 7, 22, 23, and 24), as well as undermine linguistic diversity in the U.S. (Participants #1, 3, 5, 16, 17, 21, 23, 28, 35, and 36). Concerning the latter, HLLs emphasized the importance of multilingualism as an inherent characteristic of the nation (HLLs #1, 3, and 8). Furthermore, each student cohort identified some potential consequences of the initiative, such as forced linguistic and cultural assimilation (L2s #7, 10, and 17) and devaluation individuals’ identities (HLL #4).

Another set of L2s (35%) and HLLs (10%) respondents identified their opinion as “Neutral” towards this policy idea, while zero faculty respondents selected this option. Some neutral respondents reasoned that English is important as a “*primary language*” in the United States, but a few indicated they had problems with the establishment of a national language (L2s #11 and 15). One problem identified by L2 participants in the establishment of a national language would “*[dismiss] the abundance of other languages also spoken in the U.S.*” even if it provided an established medium for communication (L2 #18). Seemingly contradictory, the only neutral HLL wrote in their response:

“I think that the United States has such a variety of languages that it would almost be like a betrayal to only preserve English” (HLL #6).

Although this respondent selected “Neutral”, they expressed the policy would have negative impacts on linguistic diversity in the United States, much like the HLLs who disagreed with the proposition. Their use of the word “*betrayal*” seems to point towards a sense of personal offense toward the establishment of English as a national language. This participant, (HLL #6) among other students (n=16), suggested codifying English’s status would oppose the United States’ purported value of diversity.

On the other hand, agreement towards the establishment of English as a national language included only members of the student cohorts (L2s: 25%, HLLs: 40%), as all faculty disagreed. Ironically, some of the L2s who responded in agreement cited that English should be used as the *lingua franca*, while simultaneously noting their belief that the U.S. needs multilingualism (L2s #13, 19, and 20). Other L2s who agreed explained English is the “*most popular*” language (L2 #6) and “*it will remain*” alongside other languages (L2 #9). The HLLs who responded in agreement detailed the popularity of English and not their support for multilingualism:

HLL #5: *“English represents the United States’ culture, I don’t see why it should be changed.”*

HLL #7: *“I think there are benefits to having one national language, it streamlines communication.”*

HLL #10: *“At this point, English is the national language that united different cultures and [breaks] communication barriers between other cultures.”*

These HLLs may have sought to coalesce with dominant political discourses that they perceived to favor English as a national language, despite its opposition to their interests as

multilingual individuals. Demonstrating this dominant political discourse, the L2s in agreement demonstrated that such individuals still saw value in supporting multilingualism.

After respondents commented on the possibility of a national language, they considered English's widespread use and its ability to unify a diverse nation. Upon examination of the responses to this statement, the highest agreement came from L2s (90%), followed by HLLs (50%) and then language faculty (0%), as seen in Table 4.

Table 4. English as a common and unifying language.

	L2s	HLLs	Lang. Faculty
Mean	3.625	3.2	2.33333333
Median	4	3.5	2.5
Mode	4	4	3
StDev	1.05552377	1.22927259	0.81649658
Var	1.11413043	1.51111111	0.66666667

The respondents who disagreed that English was “a common and unifying language” (L2s: 5%; HLLs: 30%; Faculty: 50%) wrote English alone may lack the ability to unify all people groups (L2 #5, HLL #1, and Faculty members #2 and 3). Respondents from all groups commented their disagreement was due to the linguistic diversity that exists in the U.S. (L2 #5, HLLs #1 and 8, and Faculty members #1, 2, and 3). To this point, HLLs and faculty reasoned that many other languages have the power to unite communities (HLLs #1 and 8, and Faculty members #1, 2, and 3). One faculty member specifically expounded upon the presence of German and Spanish in the Great Plains region (Faculty member #3). Likewise, the lone L2 that disagreed stated this idea is rooted in “*nationalist*” ideals because of its claim that only English has the potential to unite the country (L2 #5). This L2 expressed that recognition of English as a unifying language could paradoxically foment divisions. Those in disagreement often evoked the unity that non-English languages can create. Perhaps, those denying the unificatory properties of

English already recognize the United States as a divided country, or that enshrining English as a national language would further entrench such divisions.

Due to the two-fold nature of the statement presented to the participants (“...common and unifying...”) several respondents selected they were “Neutral” in their agreement (L2s: 5%; HLLs: 20%; Faculty: 50%). Both faculty and one L2 reported that English is the “*common*” language of the U.S. but were doubtful it had the power to unite the nation (L2 #3, HLLs #2 and 3, and Faculty members #4, 5, and 6). A faculty respondent specifically stated that ‘unifying’ is “*[an] excessively positive term to use when English is... forced on many people*” (Faculty member #4). The neutral HLL respondents echoed the need for recognition of linguistic diversity, but did not include any personal anecdotes as to their experiences (HLLs #2 and 3).

Indicating agreement on the commonality and unifying nature of English in the U.S., were several respondents from the student groups (L2s: 90%; HLLs: 50%); no faculty marked agreement with this idea. Both HLLs and L2s explained that English is both the majority language of the U.S. (n=17) and that it functions as a *lingua franca* between all linguistic communities (n=11). On the contrary, some L2s (n=3) and HLLs (n=3) wrote that the ability of English to unify all people groups was dubious as it has previously alienated users of other languages (L2s #12, 16, and 20, and HLLs #4, 6, and 10). One L2 (#12) noted, “*I think it is the most spoken language in the U.S., unifying lots of people but there are plenty of people that do not speak English and therefore feel isolated because of it here in the U.S.*” to empathize with non-English speakers in the U.S (L2 #12). Another L2. (#20) shared a personal experience about English’s lack of unification in their own community:

“*...there is a significant minority population, mainly immigrants that arrived [in] their adulthood that [find] it hard to adapt or communicate, and are not "unified" [in the] same sense. I speak on*

this as many older parents or grandparents in my community [immigrated] to the US to live with their children after they have become better established, but do not possess the same functional understanding of English that would allow them to connect or excel in the US.” (L2 #20).

This personal anecdote signals the divisions L2s may perceive in their own communities, despite not necessarily experiencing the individual ostracization that language barriers may cause. L2 #20 seemed to have developed empathy for linguistically diverse groups, despite a later acquisition of a non-English language.

A respondent from the HLL group reiterated this sentiment by indicating that they wished all languages would be welcomed in the U.S., despite the existence of a majority language (HLL #4). Likewise, a different HLL participant (#6) noted, “*in ethnic communities it is our language that unifies us more than English*” (HLL #6). In this individual’s case, Spanish has stronger unificatory properties than English. Two other HLL respondents presented a contrasting opinion stating, “*For people immigrating from different countries, English is the unifying language that allows them to communicate with each other*” (HLL #7 and 10, concurring). For these HLL participants, the concept of “unification” implies more than just sharing similar views. In this case, English facilitates communication between various groups, acting as a bridge between cultures. For HLLs who have navigated their lives in bilingual contexts, the value of a common language may alleviate some pressures put on them by adults to navigate and interpret a bilingual sphere for those who are not yet able to do so linguistically.

Proceeding the topic of the properties of the English language enshrined in the law, the questionnaire homed in on a state-level policy aimed at allowing or prohibiting the translation of official documents into non-English languages. All three groups on average agreed with the

proposition to translate government proceedings, as seen in Table 5 (L2s: 90%, HLLs: 90%, Faculty: 100%).

Table 5. Translation of official documents and proceedings.

	L2s	HLLs	Lang. Faculty
Mean	4.5	4.6	5
Median	5	5	5
Mode	5	5	5
StDev	0.7801895	0.6992059	0
Var	0.60869565	0.48888889	0

The lone L2 (#6) who marked disagreement with the translation of government documents, as no faculty or HLLs disagreed, made the argument that English is “*the national language*” (L2 #6). Notably, English had not yet been written into administrative law when this questionnaire was administered. This respondent further justified their disagreement by stating there is a cultural expectation that legal documents be disseminated in English (L2 #6).

In comparison to the disagreement group, the same number of L2s (n=1; 5%) and one HLLs (n=1; 10%) responded neutrally to the statement. Although the L2 respondent thought the idea could be beneficial, they explained “*I haven’t heard much of a desire from society for this to happen*” (L2 #12). Additionally, an HLL respondent cited that there were already translations of government documents into non-English languages, and thus this may be an unnecessary legal action (HLL #5).

As for agreement, the overwhelming majority of the student cohorts (L2s: 90%, HLLs: 90%) and faculty (100%) affirmed the translation of government documents. All three groups framed such policy as useful, suggesting it would make the law more accessible, citizenship pathways easier, and voting more attractive to a linguistically diverse population. An economic benefit of a translation policy identified by a faculty member was an increased demand for well-trained language professionals (Faculty member #4). Moreover, each group identified that

making documents understandable in multiple languages is a human right and, therefore, must be implemented in democratic systems (L2s #3, 4, 7, 18, and 20, HLLs #6 and 7, and Faculty members #2, 3, and 6). L2 and faculty respondents additionally offered an equity challenge this policy could reinforce favoritism towards commonly-spoken minority languages. They suggested that due to the time-consuming nature of translation, lesser-commonly spoken languages could be left by the wayside (L2 #5). To offset this equity, faculty recommended that laws and other important documents be translated into the languages with which individuals are most comfortable reading (Faculty members #1, 2, 3, 5, and 6). Possibly, due to the participants' recommendations, they may perceive the translation of documents as an appropriate method to combat linguistic inequities present in the legal system.

The next restriction to which study participants responded was the prohibition of non-English languages in public schools. All groups showed resounding disagreement with this imposition during the public-school day (L2s: 100%, HLLs: 90%; Faculty: 100%), referenced in Table 6. Not one L2, HLL, or faculty respondent marked agreement with such restrictions on students; however, one HLL respondent took a neutral stance on the matter (HLL #2).

Table 6. Prohibition of non-English languages in public schools.

	L2s	HLLs	Lang. Faculty
Mean	1.25	1.4	1
Median	1	1	1
Mode	1	1	1
StDev	0.44232587	0.6992059	0
Var	0.19565217	0.48888889	0

A common reasoning expounded by all groups for their disagreement was that non-English languages are strongly linked to individual identity and language use, and that multilingualism has various benefits. Respondents (n=14) listed that they believed children benefit greatly from linguistic support in either heritage or second language acquisition in school.

To this point, allowing non-English languages during the school day would help students express their identities and cultures, develop a sense of belonging, and increase their comfort in the educational environment (L2s #1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 18, 19, and 20, HLLs #3, 4, and 7, and Faculty members #2, 4, and 5). The faculty and HLL respondents also explained the importance of recognizing linguistic diversity in pedagogical interventions for linguistic minority students (HLLs #4 and 7) and expansion of students' empathy (Faculty member #2).

In impeding individual linguistic expression, language minority students would be made to experience “...*inferiority, shame, and disparagement of primary [language]*” (Faculty member #4). According to another faculty respondent, prohibiting non-English languages in schools “...*has been historically damaging and has been shown to be traumatic and detrimental to the mental well-being of children from bilingual households*” (Faculty member #2). However important learning English may be in the American educational system, students' linguistic choices speak to a broader conversation of government limitation of the freedom of speech (L2s #5, 7, 9, 10, and 16, and HLLs #5 and 7). L2s indicated linguistic choice is a freedom to which every student is entitled and, furthermore, that regulating the use of a heritage language would relegate parts of one's identity to private settings (L2s #5, 7, 9, and 10). Because students do not choose the language they acquire in the home, an L2 respondent argued children should have autonomy over their public expression of identity (L2s #18 and 20). Another L2 (#10) contributed a family experience as their reason for disagreement:

“I believe prohibiting non-English speaking is detrimental to a child's [wellbeing]. I'm speaking from an Indigenous background whose family was forced to attend boarding schools where indigenous languages were prohibited” (L2 #10).

Even though this anecdote came from an L2 respondent, this perspective highlights the need to incorporate studies that document various student profiles and experiences. Creating spaces in which diverse views can be considered so that more voice can be given to the unheard, like students of Native American heritage whose family members were forced to assimilate to the English language. Participant #10 notes that their family members may have experienced deep trauma, leading to vulnerability and endangerment of children's wellbeing, due to rules that prohibited the speaking of their indigenous languages in boarding schools.

Speaking from their own experiences as linguistically minoritized students, some HLL respondents commented on linguistic equity, punishment towards linguistic minorities, and appreciation of multilingualism in the K-12 classroom. One HLL shared that leveraging a non-English language in the learning process would be beneficial for students who are *“raised in different households, cultures, and may speak a different language”* (HLL #1). Affirming this desire, a different HLL respondent celebrated the supportive multilingual educational environment they have experienced since childhood:

“I grew up in Texas and went to a school that encouraged me to use both English and Spanish. I am so grateful. To take that from a child would be terrible. They should be able to speak both or all of the languages they know and strengthen them. It would be a shame if they lost their ability to speak to them and have to start over like my sisters and I have. Luckily, my mom and dad have encouraged me to better my Spanish. They have helped, and so has the modern languages program at the college.” (HLL #4).

As for punishments towards linguistic minorities, prohibiting the use of non-English languages in schools is inherently punitive. A prohibition as punishment could be a catalyst for the feelings of inferiority cited above by faculty participants (Faculty members #2 and 4). An

HLL participant expanded upon this idea by positing, “[It] is important to... understand that kids have to speak their first language and feel comfortable without getting abused for not speaking [a] simple thing as English” (HLL #3). In an educational environment supportive of multilingual identities, punishment would not be the first resort for school policies; instead, schools would prefer to value and celebrate the individual diversity each student brings into the learning community.

As previously mentioned, one HLL respondent (HLL #2) indicated neutrality regarding language prohibition in schools; however, their reasoning largely coalesced with participants who disagreed. Perhaps taking a more objective stance on the issue, they asserted that English is important to learn in the U.S. context but countered that “...if there so happens to be [another student in a classroom] that speaks Spanish they should be able to speak Spanish” (HLL #22).

In the final attitudinal response listed on the survey, participants commented upon Kansas’ English-official policy: a tangible representation of language restriction in the state in which the investigation was conducted. The L2 group showed a plurality of disagreement (35%), while the HLLs and faculty tended to disagree with the policy (HLLs: 60%, Faculty: 100%). Overall, the student groups showed more agreement than their faculty counterparts, as seen in Table 7.

Table 7. Kansas’ English-official policy.

	L2s	HLLs	Lang. Faculty
Mean	2.625	2.6	1.16666667
Median	3	2	1
Mode	1	1	1
StDev	1.27901117	1.57762128	0.40824829
Var	1.63586957	2.48888889	0.16666667

Respondents of each group who disagreed with the state official language policy cited that it would silence the recognition of linguistic diversity in Kansas. They argued a state language policy should not exist as it limits linguistic diversity, ignores the multilingual present and past of Kansas, and contradicts with the U.S.' former lack of a national language. Both student groups justified this by stating there are large Spanish-speaking populations in Kansas (L2s #3, 4, 5, and 10, and HLLs #1 and 8). Faculty added that German, Kanza, Swedish, and Spanish have historically been widely spoken in Kansas (Faculty members #2, 3, and 4). Moreover, the respondents who disagreed indicated the law would have little benefit (L2s #5 and 16, HLL #3, and Faculty member #6) and would not truly affect the ways in which individuals express language (L2 #1). Faculty further suggested that if languages are to be identified in the law, there should be co-official languages present based on local data on multilingualism (Faculty member #2).

The student respondents who chose to remain neutral on the state English-official policy (L2s: 30%, HLLs: 10%) recognized that English was the most spoken language in Kansas more widely (n=3) than those who disagreed (n=0). Additionally, another L2 indicated the policy may not ultimately affect their own linguistic choices (L2 #14). Most neutral respondents (n=5) seemed to weigh the reasons for agreement and disagreement, opting not to take a stance on Kansas' English-official policy (L2s #12, 14, 15, and 19, and HLL #6). Conversely, two participants did find some issue with a state language policy calling it unnecessary (L2 #11), and the codification of English creates an *“an issue not representing multiple official languages [,] as only one does not respect the speakers of the state...”* (L2 #18). Although this participant marked neutrality on a state English-official policy, the use of the word “issue” seems to indicate some leaning towards disagreement with this law. Notably, two L2s explained they did not

entirely understand the scope of Kansas' English-official policy (L2s #15 and 19). These respondents were unsure about the policy's overall implications (L2 #19) or the extent to which the law would require all residents of the state to speak English (L2 #15).

Finally, a plurality of student respondents indicated their agreement with a state official language policy (L2s: 35%, HLLs: 30%). The reasons given by participants for their positive views on a state English-official policy were highly varied, but both L2s and HLLs wrote that the policy was enacted because of English's majority status in Kansas (L2s #2, 6, 8, 17, 20, and HLLs #7, 10). One L2 respondent contended that English "*should be the official language of every state in the U.S.*" (L2 #13). Other aspects on which the students differed was the reiteration of the unificatory properties of English (L2s #6 and 13) and the effect of the policy on individual linguistic expression (HLL #5). The L2s who agreed with the English-official policy did so due to the unifying properties they perceived English to possess and a lack of linguistic diversity in Kansas (L2s #2, 6, 8, 13, and 20). For example, an L2 participant stated, "... [*Kansas is not*] a *huge spot for immigrants...*" to justify their support for the English-official policy (L2 #6).

The HLL respondent in agreement with the state English-official policy reasoned, much like the HLLs who disagreed, that it ultimately would not affect their linguistic choices (HLL #5). Due to this respondent's seemingly contradictory agreement, perhaps they believed the policy would not affect their individual liberty but reinforce common English usage in a multilingual society. Overall, agreement towards the policy relied on the prevalence of English in Kansas' public and private spheres, among both monolingual and multilingual students.

The relationships between attitudes towards restrictive language policies and participants' educational and professional experiences.

In the second research question, potential relationships between academic experiences (student participants), professional preparation (faculty participants), and attitudes towards language policies were explored. Analysis of the data suggested that language backgrounds, explained in the previous section, educational experiences, and professional preparation could be inextricably intertwined. Demonstrating a pattern in educational experiences, all faculty participants held a doctoral degree in an area of language, whereas student groups showed significant differences in their previous coursework loads. At the college level, L2s reported having taken an average of more than eight second language courses at the collegiate level, while HLLs reported an average of two heritage language courses. Of the HLL respondents, eight reported current or previous enrollment in at least one heritage language course at Kansas State University where the data was collected, yet only one of the eight reported also having experience in a heritage language course prior to college (HLL #5).

Although the HLL and L2 course sequences are not mutually exclusive, the evidence suggests that L2s may have more experience learning a language in a classroom setting than HLLs. Because of these differences, the previous stratification between groups emerges. The participant groups can not only be divided by demographic information, but also by their educational and professional experiences. Due to divergences that existed in both the demographic and educational spheres, the student groups and faculty groups remained distinct from one another as in the first research question.

The data, further analyzed here, shows some evidence of an effect of educational and identity factors on individuals' attitudes towards restrictive language policies. Participants

identified as L2s, and language faculty showed the widest difference in their disagreement towards restrictive language policies (L2s: 29% mean agreement; HLLs: 22%; Faculty: no agreement). Given the similar family linguistic backgrounds and geographic locations of the language faculty and the L2 groups, these results suggest that their backgrounds alone may not account for the divergences in their attitudes towards restrictive language policies. The difference in educational attainment between the L2 and faculty participants is wide. Because of this pattern, a relationship between attitudes and educational experiences may exist, although more investigation on the matter would need to be conducted to conclusively determine whether this is the case.

In the same vein, the HLLs and L2 groups presented different data on linguistic background and educational experience. The literature suggests that identity is strongly linked to attitudes, but the raw data does not indicate for certain whether education or identity plays a larger role in students' attitude formation. The question of the strength of education and background factors for the attitudinal formation of the HLLs group remains inconclusive as both elements diverged from the other participant groups. The data showed that HLLs showed the least experience in the language classroom (average of 1.75 heritage language courses taken), caused by systemic inequities that discourage heritage language education, while also yielding the median level of disagreement with language restriction among the three groups.

Despite this disparity in course enrollments among HLLs, they expressed deep appreciation for the interpersonal connections and language skills developed in their Heritage Language (HL) courses. Four of the HLL respondents noted the most valuable thing they learned in an HL course was aspects of Spanish grammar, orthography, or vocabulary (HLLs #1, 2, 5, and 7). Leveraging this metalinguistic knowledge, other students commented they had noticed

their own improvement in their production of Spanish (HLLs #2, 4, 5, and 7). Beyond language, HLL students noted the HL curriculum left them with a strong sense of cultural agency (HLLs #4, 7, 9, and 10) and a deeper connection with their identity (HLLs #3, 7, and 9). Two participants (HLLs #7 and #9) remarked that connections with other HLLs changed their perspectives on past experiences that defined their self-esteem and identity. One participant connected the interpersonal connections they made with increased productive and metalinguistic skills:

“I think the most valuable thing for me was learning more about my culture and making connections with other heritage speakers. We often had similar experiences growing up and it was refreshing to have so many young women (my class was all women) with relatable experiences. I also think it was important to review the “basics” that I wasn’t taught. I made my Spanish stronger overall, especially in the written portions since that was my weakest category” (HLL #7).

A different participant responded similarly, but highlighted the most valuable aspect of HL coursework for them was found beyond their required academic work. They discussed:

“Arguably, the most valuable thing I learned from my Heritage language course was completely non-academic. We discussed amongst ourselves many times throughout class how being heritage speakers has left us feeling like not “fully” Hispanic/Latino, or not sufficiently. Being in the class allowed me to see that I was not alone in this experience and that, if they considered me sufficiently Hispanic, then I should see myself in that way too.” (HLL #9).

Contrastively, L2s commented their most valuable takeaways from Foreign Language (FL) coursework included learning about perspectives and cultures different from their own

(n=11), how to communicate with linguistically diverse populations (n=9), sharpening soft skills to be applied in other areas of life (n=5), improving their fluency in the language (n=4), and developing deeper metalinguistic knowledge (n=2). Although L2 students did not connect with their coursework on the same personal level as the HLLs, some identified they better understood perspectives of those who speak non-English languages after taking FL courses (L2s #2, 12, and 14). Potentially, the dearth of the impacts of FL coursework on L2 identities has inhibited their understanding of the impacts of restrictive language policies on multilingual individuals, as this group agreed most with restrictive language policies.

Based on the contrasting takeaways of HL and FL curriculums, HL coursework has tangible and specific benefits for HLLs, demonstrated by the gratitude of two students enrolled in such coursework at Kansas State University (HLLs #7 and 9). HLLs learned to express their identities in a new way and develop their writing skills—something identified by several participants as a motivation for enrolling in an HL course (n=5). Given this pattern, HLLs' connections between language and identity may signal that linguistic background factors play a larger role in the attitude formation of HLLs. Conversely, many L2s indicated their Spanish coursework was a vehicle for exposure to perspectives and cultures different from their own (n=11). Due to this common experience among L2s, the formation of some L2s' empathetic attitudes related to the restriction of language may coincide with multilingual themes present in second language curriculum.

Despite the second research question's convergence with the investigation's first objective, there were some discrepancies uncovered related to student evaluations of language courses and faculty perceptions of changes in the language teaching field. Both student groups presented similar perceptions of their personal objectives and takeaways in language courses. In

contrast, the faculty predictions on changes in the language teaching field over the next ten years did not fully reflect the students' self-reported motives for taking the courses or evaluations of their learning in the course. For example, most HLLs and L2s identified they took a language course to improve their productive abilities and metalinguistic knowledge in the language (n=18; 60%). In response to a question about anticipated changes in language education at the university level during the next decade, faculty identified an expansion of online materials and artificial intelligence tools in language curriculum (Faculty members #1, 2, 3, 4, and 6), innovative pedagogical approaches (i.e., Project-Based Learning, languages for specific purposes, immersive written language pedagogy) designed to maintain enrollment and promote effective learning (Faculty members #3, 5, and 6), and increased accommodations to support non-traditional students (Faculty member #6). Students did not specifically identify their reason for taking a language course was due to interest in technology use, the draw of innovative pedagogies, or support for nontraditional students. This is not to say these factors were not to some extent consequential in students' decisions to take a language course. Had students answered a question regarding future changes in language education, responses may have yielded more information about what factors attract students to language course enrollment at universities. As this information and the questions, it elicits are beyond the scope of the investigation, further implications will be reserved for the broader discussion of the applications of this report.

Collectively, the results of the questionnaire into participants' linguistic background, educational experiences, professional preparation, and attitudes towards restrictive language policies showed that linguistic background and educational experiences are intertwined. The overall disagreement pattern for the attitudinal statements was that faculty disagreed most,

followed by HLLs and L2s, respectively. In each group's reasoning for their stances on restrictive concepts, the need for valuation and recognition of linguistic diversity was mentioned. This similarity suggests that respondents may harbor underlying attitudes that triggered responses in favor of multilingualism, such as the desire to recognize linguistic diversity within the United States. In the case of some other respondents, particularly L2s, the acceptance of cultures different than one's own was not evoked in reasoning for agreement with language restriction, which tended to be higher than that of the other groups.

To this effect, although the literature suggests that identity factors are most impactful in attitude formation, the results do not necessarily come to the same conclusion nor disprove these suppositions. When comparing the L2 and HLL groups, factors of identity and upbringing differed most, other than age. Thus, linguistic, racial, and ethnic differences could account for their attitudinal differences. However, their level of disagreement, although showing slight differences, appeared to be more similar than when compared to the faculty group. Unfortunately, the results cannot conclude for certain whether this difference is statistically significant as there was no monolingual control group. However, the personal anecdotes students wrote to justify their levels of agreement varied highly between L2s and HLLs. This demonstrated that individuals in both groups have nuanced understandings of multilingualism and language restriction in the U.S. that were informed by their geographic location and educational experiences.

Upon examination of the faculty and L2 groups, the educational and professional differences are stark in contrast to the demographic information reported by participants. Although the linguistic and personal backgrounds of the faculty and L2 respondents are similar, faculty showed a wide gap from the L2 group in disagreement to the language policy statements.

To reiterate, factors of educational and professional experience may explain the differences observed between L2s and faculty, although statistical analyses cannot be performed to test the strength of either variable due to the lack of a monolingual control group.

Discussion

From the outset, an online questionnaire was administered in this study to examine how student and faculty upbringings or academic and professional preparation could impact attitudes towards restrictive language policies. In brief, the findings revealed a pattern of attitudinal differences between student groups (L2s and HLLs) and faculty groups which was observed both quantitatively and qualitatively, despite the similarities between the L2 and faculty groups in comparison to the HLL group. On the second objective of the study, investigating the links between educational experiences, professional preparation, and attitudes towards restrictive language policies, relationships between educational experiences and attitudes were found among all groups, while connections to professional preparation were especially strong among faculty respondents.

The first objective of this study, relating participants' attitudes to their upbringings, yielded mixed results among all participant groups. The second language learners (L2s) showed the most agreement towards policies restricting language (29% mean agreement); however, this percentage is only a minority of the second language learners. In contrast, sectors of L2s indicated high disagreement (54% mean disagreement) with the policies which demonstrates they do not all explicitly follow hegemonic discourses that could benefit their English-speaking privileges, showing resistance to monoglossic and standard language ideologies (Leeman, 2021, pp. 47-49). The disagreement of L2s suggests some conflict with Vidana (2020), which suggested that the perceived belief of dominant groups (i.e., English is and should be dominant in the United States) would be adopted by both dominant and minority linguistic groups. Some L2s even regarded the use of the word "unifying" as contradictory, stating that it does not have unificatory properties for all people groups within the United States. This assertion demonstrates

empathy among L2s towards minoritized linguistic groups who may regularly experience the lack of unity created by forced English use (García & Torres-Guevara, 2009; 2021). L2s' disagreement towards restrictive language policies also reflected the rise in positive attitudes towards bilingualism by King (2009). The positive discourse surrounding bilingualism may point to L2s' familiarity with the consequences of restrictive language policies or linguistic empathy fomented by the acquisition of an additional language, although this supposition should be considered tentatively. Despite the convergences between the L2s and dominant societal groups in the U.S., most of them (54% mean disagreement) adopted negative attitudes towards the restriction of language.

The heritage language learners that participated in the study demonstrated slightly less agreement (22% mean agreement) than the L2s; however, the percentage of HLLs in agreement represents a small group of participants (n=2.2) who took part. This decrease in agreement by the HLLs partially supports the findings of Shvidko (2017) that showed mixed views among students restricted in their language use, as most of the HLL responses to the policy ideas were negative. The HLLs in this study gave similar views as those in Shvidko (2017), like the punitive nature of language restriction. Unlike the respondents in Shvidko (2017), the HLLs in the present study did not yield high agreement on any of the five language policy ideas; however, they did comment on the utility of English in American society vocalized by Shvidko's (2017) participants. The responses in Shvidko (2017) indicated that English was important as a professional skill and for navigating life in the United States, and these were reflected even in the negative responses of HLLs. Perhaps, the HLL respondents still welcome the use of English in their daily lives, although not at the expense of eroding their competencies in Spanish.

Furthermore, the disagreement by HLLs supports Vidana's (2020) discussion of the implications of heritage language education on HLLs' identity formation (p. 109). The study by Vidana (2020) suggests that HLLs may resist hegemonic language ideologies when introduced to identity-affirming pedagogies in the Spanish heritage language classroom (p. 109). The HLLs included in this study had already received at least two full months of heritage language education, even if the SPAN 411 course was their first time in a heritage language classroom and despite indications by the instructor that restrictive language policies are not explicitly discussed in the curriculum. However, the instructor also specified that the HLLs taking said course do often share their experiences having to learn English at school when different discussion around their lives as multilingual and multicultural individuals. The students' responses that valued the interpersonal and cultural connections made in this coursework could signal the impacts of HL curriculum on HLLs' identities and language attitude formation. This would further support the unique benefits heritage language education may have on HLLs of Spanish and the need for further funding, research, and applications in heritage language education (García, 2002; Thomas & Collier, 2003; Valdés, et al., 2003; King, 2009; Vidana, 2020; Leeman, 2021).

Finally, none of the faculty agreed with restricting language by means of policies. The mechanism for this high, uniform disagreement appears to be the participants' education level as all of them have received doctoral degrees in a language concentration. Faculty members' high level of education and deep investment in the language field do partially support Showstack's (2024) assertion that instructors' policymaking decisions are informed by their personal background and professional preparation. This study did not examine the day-to-day practices of the language faculty, but future studies must explore the relationship between faculty attitudes and teaching practices to further detail the links between these constructs.

Toward the inclusion of the word “unifying” in one of the policy ideas (*Salazar Amendment*, 2006), both the HLLs and faculty expressed negative sentiments. Perhaps, participants implicitly recognized the relations between language and identity, which would support Sapir’s (1949), Bucholtz & Hall’s (2005) and Leeman’s (2021) hypotheses that an individual’s language is one of many factors in identity formation (Sapir, 1949, pp. 68-69; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) and attitudinal formation (Leeman, 2021). In responses from all participant groups, the problem with a national language was likened to forced assimilation, demonstrating the perceived personal and cultural costs of restricting language to create a strong national culture. Despite the costs discussed by those in disagreement, many L2s favored the establishment of English as the common and unifying language of the U.S. (n=18). They reasoned that English serves as a *lingua franca* among diverse people groups, noting it is widely spoken. The perceived costs of the term “unifying” partially expands upon Valdés, et al.’s (2003) finding that HLLs perceive challenges in the classroom when pedagogy is informed by standard language ideologies. Although many of the L2s, and some HLLs at times, found some agreement towards the restriction of languages, none of them agreed with the restriction of language in a K-12 public education context. Although this is a more explicit restriction than curricular underpinnings of standard language ideology in Valdés, et al. (2003), it further reflects students’ negative attitudes towards restriction.

Shifting gears to the second research question, it was found that educational experiences and linguistic background are two factors that highly overlap, supporting and expanding Showstack’s (2024) conclusions on characteristics that influence instructor policymaking. The student and faculty groups could be easily delineated by either demographic information or educational or professional experiences. Despite the overlap, education may be an additional

factor in determining the attitudinal differences between L2s and faculty. Moreover, both education and upbringing may play a role in determining the differences between HLLs and other groups. These mechanisms must be investigated further to confirm the tentative implications uncovered by the second objective of this study.

To prove or disprove the tentative nature of this study's implications, the inclusion of a monolingual control group, students in basic language courses, participants from other geographical regions, and observations of faculty policymaking decisions must occur. Principally, to definitively determine a link between bilingualism of all participant profiles and attitudes towards language policies, a monolingual control group from outside a university language department must be incorporated in future studies. Preferably, this group would include college students from the same university who (i) have not taken a language course, (ii) are English monolinguals, and (iii) were born in the United States. Data on students of this profile could directly contrast all the bilinguals surveyed in this report. Furthermore, to add more points along the continuum of participants, students in the most basic language courses could be questioned in future studies. This method could have implications on the relationships between students' levels of language proficiency, language education, and attitudes towards the restriction of language. Inclusion of both monolinguals and basic language students could also inform the impacts of language education at even the lowest levels of proficiency and exposure to cultural knowledge.

Future studies may also necessitate a geographical expansion to other regions of the United States. This could allow for a wider sample of Spanish heritage learners, if conducted in the Southwestern U.S. Increasing HLL sample numbers would allow for the incorporation of more personal anecdotes and experiences that aided in attitudinal formation and provide a more

reliable comparison between L2s and HLLs. Moreover, studies conducted in different areas of the U.S. would provide different implications related to the experiences of participants with respect to restrictive language policies.

As for an expansion on faculty policymaking, observations could be conducted by researchers in future studies prior to the administration of the questionnaires. This would allow for a study to document the ideological assumptions that may inform instructors' classroom teaching practices. These observations could be conducted at several levels of language education among diverse student profiles (i.e., HLLs, L2s, basic language courses, intermediate language courses, advanced language courses, undergraduates, graduates, etc.). Implementing a more diverse cross-sectional study could yield a more cohesive continuum and understanding of the intersection of identity, educational experiences, professional preparation, and language attitudes among different individual profiles.

Conclusion

The present study on the attitudes of second language learners of Spanish, heritage language learners of Spanish, and language faculty from a Modern Languages Department at Kansas State University yielded insights on the relationships between individuals' upbringings, educational experiences, and professional preparation in attitude formation. Overall, it was found that educational factors and individuals' upbringings are intertwined in the development of language attitudes towards restrictive language policies. Statistically, faculty disagreed most with the restriction of language, followed by HLLs and L2 learners, respectively, with only slight variation. Despite the statistical similarities between HLL and the L2 attitudes, both groups presented differing reasonings to justify their views. Connecting personal experiences with their attitudes, many HLLs justified their opinions with personal experiences, while one L2 cited their family's history of indigenous language erasure at Native American boarding schools. Throughout the study, among both student groups and faculty, the themes of "unification" and linguistic diversity consistently emerged. With respect to unity, each participant group identified that one reason in opposition to a national English-official policy is the inability of English to unite every people group within the United States. Furthermore, in order to safeguard purported American values of diversity and freedom of speech, an English-official policy at the federal or state level seemed incongruent to many participants. Despite the strong overall disagreement among all participant groups towards any restrictive language policy, some second language learners showed high agreement towards an English-official law. Such respondents stated that English could create one consistent communication avenue among people who speak many different languages; yet, some participants responded in a stronger manner, arguing that English *was* or *should* be the nation's official language, despite America's longstanding precedent of not

naming a *de jure* official language, as of the administration of this study's questionnaire. In future studies related to the formation and expression of language attitudes towards restrictive language policies, researchers must incorporate the views of monolingual students to measure the degree of the effects of education on attitude formation. Additionally, conducting observations on faculty surveyed in the questionnaire could allow for a more nuanced understanding between attitudes towards the restriction of language and instructor applications of such views in policymaking roles. To understand more profoundly the statistical and qualitative relationships between the education, identity and attitude formation of all students (second language learners, heritage language learners, and monolinguals alike) and instructors, further cross-sectional studies are warranted.

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Appendix A - Online Questionnaire

Appendix A.1. – Questions 0-11

0. What is your email address?
1. How old are you?
2. What is your gender?
- 3a. What is your race?
- 3b. Why do you identify as the race(s) you marked in Question 3a?
- 4a. What is your ethnicity?
- 4b. Why do you or do you not identify as the ethnicity you marked in Question 4a?
- 5a. Were you born in the United States?
- 5b. If you were born in the United States, in what state were you born?
- 5c. If you were not born in the United States, in what country were you born?
6. If you were not born in the United States, how old were you when you moved to the United States?
- 7a. Were your parents born in the United States?
- 7b. If your parents were born outside of the United States, at what age did they move to the United States?
- 8a. Do you or members of your family speak a language other than English in the home or the community?
- 8b. If you or members of your family speak a language other than English in the home or the community, what language is this?
9. What is the primary language you use daily?
10. At approximately what age were you first introduced to Spanish?

11. At approximately what age were you first introduced to English?

Appendix A.2. – Question 12

Appendix A.2.1. – Foreign Language Learners Question 12

12a. Have you taken or are you currently taking a foreign language course?

12b. If you have taken or are currently taking a foreign language course, where did you do so?

12c. How many foreign language courses have you taken, including the course you are currently enrolled in?

12d. Why did you choose to take a foreign language course?

12e. What is the most valuable thing you have learned from a foreign language course?

Appendix A.2.2. – Heritage Language Learners Question 12

12a. Have you taken or are you currently taking a language course specifically designed to support the linguistic abilities of Spanish Heritage language learners (a Heritage language course)?

12b. If you have taken or are currently taking a Heritage language course, where did you do so?

12c. How many Heritage language courses have you taken at K-State, including the Heritage language course you are currently enrolled in?

12d. Why did you choose to take a Heritage language course?

12e. What is the most valuable thing you have learned from a Heritage language course?

Appendix A.2.3. – Modern Languages Faculty Question 12

12a. What is your area of study?

12b. What is your current position?

12c. What are your main responsibilities in your current position?

- 12d. How involved are you in curriculum design in the Department of Modern Languages?
- 12e. Approximately how many students do you serve in the capacity of curriculum design?
- 12f. What changes do you anticipate in second language teaching at the college level in the next 10 years?

Appendix A.3. – Questions 13-20

- 13a. The federal government of the United States should preserve and enhance the role of English as the national language.
- 13b. Please explain why you answered as such in the text box below.
- 14a. English is the common and unifying language of the United States.
- 14b. Please explain why you answered as such in the text box below.
- 15a. Government proceedings and documents should be translated into languages other than English.
- 15b. Please explain why you answered as such in the text box below.
- 16a. Students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12 should only be allowed to speak English during the school day.
- 16b. Please explain why you answered as such in the text box below.
- 17a. English should be the official state language of Kansas.
- 17b. Please explain why you answered as such in the text box below.
- 18a. The federal government of the United States should preserve and enhance the role of English as the national language.
18. Please rate your familiarity with the following ideas.
- 18a. The federal government of the United States should preserve and enhance the role of English as the national language.

- 18b. English is the common and unifying language of the United States.
- 18c. Government proceedings and documents should be translated into languages other than English.
- 18d. Students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12 should only be allowed to speak English during the school day.
- 18e. English should be the official state language of Kansas.
19. How do you feel about the ideas listed above, and why do you feel this way?
20. Do you want to learn more about the ideas listed above? Why or why not?