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Critical Race Pedagogy for More Effective and Inclusive World Language Teaching

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To address racial inequity and the exclusion of African Americans in applied linguistics, second-language acquisition, and world language (WL) education, our field must reckon with social justice problems of racism and anti-Blackness. Theoretical frameworks of critical race theory (CRT) and critical race pedagogy (CRP) elucidate how such injustices are perpetuated, plus, propose solutions for them. This article discusses racism and anti-Blackness in WL curriculum, materials, and instructional practices. It presents a post-hoc CRT analysis of findings from two studies: (i) an ethnographic study examining Spanish curriculum and instructional practices at two minority serving postsecondary institutions and (ii) a participatory action research collaboration with Spanish instructors examining curriculum at a predominantly white institution—both studies linked by how they reveal endemic racism and anti-Blackness in WL programmes. Ultimately, this article addresses how African Americans can more authentically and successfully participate in WL programmes. It introduces to the field a proposal of CRP for more effective WL teaching to promote practices in antiracism, equity-mindedness, and inclusivity for greater retention and success of Black students.

INTRODUCTION

Racialized inequity fundamentally impacts experiences, institutions, and practices in world language[1] (WL) education in the USA. Such is the case of African Americans,[2] who are underrepresented and marginalized in WL programmes and understudied in broader areas of applied linguistics and second-language acquisition research (Anya 2020). To raise awareness and help remedy this unjust exclusion, one must reckon with race and address social justice problems of racism and anti-Blackness in WL learning, teaching, and research. Yet, little inquiry in this field has been conducted undergirded by the theoretical frameworks of critical race theory (CRT) and critical race pedagogy (CRP), which seek to systematically examine and elucidate how such injustices are perpetuated, plus, propose solutions to address them.

CRT and CRP posit that racism is deeply woven into all our educational institutions, practices, and interactions. Racism manifests in language education, for example, through raciolinguistic ideologies that lionize the bilingualism of White elite WL learners and problematize that of poor and racially minoritized English learners (Flores and Rosa 2019); through curricular

erasure of non-dominant groups (Ferreira and Camargo 2014; Guerrettaz and Zahler 2017); and presentation of White, upper class images and experiences as primarily representative of speaker populations (Taylor-Mendes 2009; Lee 2015). This article describes anti-Blackness in WL curriculum, materials, instructional practices, and contributes to the field by using CRT and CRP to show new ways of understanding, theorizing, investigating, and addressing racism and anti-Blackness.

The article presents a CRT-based post-hoc qualitative analysis of findings from a year-long ethnographic needs analysis study examining the Spanish language curriculum and instructional practices at two minority serving post-secondary institutions. The analysis compares them with findings from a participatory action research collaboration with Spanish language instructors examining curriculum and instruction at a predominantly white institution (PWI) to show how WL programmes exhibit the anti-Blackness found in broader society and often do not provide a meaningful learning experience for Black students. Goals of the article are to address how African Americans can authentically and successfully participate in WL learning and to propose a CRP for WL teaching (CRPWLT) that promotes meaningful inclusion, retention, and success of Black students in WL programmes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CRT is an analytical framework originating in legal studies to examine how racism and systemic bias disenfranchise individuals of colour in the USA (Crenshaw et al. 1995; Brown and Jackson 2013) with particular relevance to racial inequity in education (Ladson-Billings 1998). The six main tenets of CRT (Ledesma and Calderón 2015) and Lynn (1999) and Jennings and Lynn (2005) four principles of CRP form the framework upon which the *post hoc* analysis and proposal for CRPWLT presented in this article are based.

Theoretical framework

The first tenet of CRT is the preponderance of racism, so deeply and invisibly enmeshed into thinking, interactions, systems, practices, and institutions, that disparities between Whites and people of colour are assumed part of a natural and inevitable order. The second is a critique of liberal myths, like objectivity, meritocracy, and race neutrality. The third tenet of CRT posits Whiteness itself as property that confers privileges of exclusivity, preference, and authority. The fourth is the notion of interest convergence where gains in equity and uplift for people of colour are only made when they also benefit Whites. The fifth CRT tenet elevates voice and experiential knowledge of African Americans and others from racially minoritized identities as legitimate, authoritative sources of direct evidence, and theory generation through their personal stories—or counternarratives—that challenge the dominant paradigm of White, upper class, male voices as standard knowledge. Counternarratives

also shed light on the sixth CRT tenet, intersectionality, which posits that minoritized people experience racism in ways inextricably linked with and exacerbated by other forms of oppression such as sexism, classism, and homophobia.

Lynn (1999) and Jennings and Lynn (2005) recognized CRT's profound relevance in education and the need for a framework for its pedagogical application. They also sought to address the lack of meaningful consideration of race and racism in critical theory and critical pedagogy traditions popularized in the US academy since the 1980s (Lynn 2004). Thus, they developed a CRP guided by four main principles rooted in CRT: (i) An understanding of the endemic nature of racism and how deeply interwoven it is in all areas of education; (ii) the recognition of a 'culture of power' in schooling that reproduces societal racial hierarchies, which need to be acknowledged, understood, and negotiated; (iii) the importance of self-reflection or reflexivity for scholars and practitioners who engage in CRP; and (iv) the practice of liberatory forms of teaching and learning for equity and social justice. Principles of CRP do not prescribe specific paths or lessons for CRT-based instruction, but instead, lend to the elaboration of pedagogical techniques and strategies with an emancipatory CRT focus like, for example, using counternarratives of minoritized students as a tool for CRP in urban school curriculum (Taliaferro Baszile 2009) and counternarratives of instructors of colour for bilingual teacher education (Fránquiz *et al.* 2011).

CRT and CRP in applied linguistics research

A considerable gap in CRT and CRP is their lack of accounting for language, given how linguistic identities are racialized (Rosa 2019) and linguistic stigma stems from racism (Baker-Bell 2020). These considerations were made in applied linguistics by Crump (2014), who proposed a critical race and language theory, or 'LangCrit', and Rosa and Flores (2017), who introduced 'raciolinguistics', as frameworks for theorizing those inextricable links. Additionally, some work in applied linguistics is based on original CRT principles. Anya's (2017) monograph on African Americans in a study abroad showed the predominance of racism and anti-Blackness in policies, pedagogy, classrooms, and communities. Kubota (2004) and Chun (2016) in English as a second language (ESL)/English as a foreign language (EFL) and Michael-Luna (2009) in bilingual education critiqued liberal multiculturalism that reduces complex identities and hierarchical relations to superficial banality like 'celebrating diversity' through ethnic foods and festivals. Scanlan and Palmer (2009) and Palmer (2010) in dual language education also critiqued purported race neutrality and 'colourblind racism' in policies and educator practices used to justify excluding Black students from two-way immersion programmes. In EFL, Jenks (2017) and Ferreira and Camargo (2014) highlighted Whiteness as valuable property in English language teaching where White instructors get more jobs and higher pay, and curriculum presents White people as normative

representations of English speakers. Burns (2017) and Palmer (2010) showed interest convergence in how Latinx students gained access to dual language programmes that sustained Spanish language instruction only when also benefiting White families seeking Spanish immersion. Students and teachers' stories in Michael-Luna (2009), Ferreira (2015), and Fránquiz *et al.* (2011) presented counternarratives of marginalized identities and intersectionality as evidence against the dominant, racist paradigm that excludes them.

This article is situated within WL teaching where, with some notable exceptions like those featured in Kubota and Lin (2009) and Von Esch *et al.* (2020), there is little CRT-based inquiry. Promising inroads have been made with calls from Wesely et al. (2016) and Randolph and Johnson (2017) for critical and social justice pedagogy as an integral part of WL, which entails explicit considerations of race and racism. However, a CRT-based pedagogy has yet to be proposed for WL teaching in the USA. Hence, I will make recommendations for conducting more WL research guided by CRT and propose a CRPWLT to promote more effective and inclusive practice.

METHODS

Insights and pedagogical recommendations presented in this article are based on a *post hoc* analysis of findings from two studies (Table 1). The analysis asked the question: How do these findings illustrate CRT tenets of practicing racial realism (not harbouring illusions of racial equality), critiquing liberal myths, and prioritizing knowledge from counternarratives? Study 1 was a year-long ethnographic needs analysis (Long 2005) study that investigated the Spanish language and instructor training programmes (reported in Anya *et al.* 2020) at a Hispanic serving institution (HSI) and a historically Black university (HBCU). The study was a collaboration between the universities in an ongoing relationship where White Hispanic instructors, trained as MA and PhD level language TAs at the former, taught all-Black groups of undergraduate students at the latter. My role in Study 1 was co-investigator and training programme expert.

I conducted Study 2 at a beginner-level Spanish language programme in a large public PWI where, as the principal investigator, I facilitated, collaborated in, and examined a participatory action research (McIntyre 2008) project (reported in Anya and Fernández Castro 2019) that entailed critical engagement with instructors in collaborative inquiry and self-assessment using a language programme materials analysis protocol I developed (see Supplementary materials). In my role as both teacher trainer and researcher, I contributed to and observed workshop sessions of collaborative inquiry and self-assessment to conduct critical discourse analysis (Elissondo 2001; Wodak and Meyer 2009) examining the extent instructional materials (e.g. textbooks, learning websites, syllabi, lesson plans) demonstrated anti-racist, equity-minded, and inclusive practices that help Black students succeed in language study.

Table 1: Descriptions of the two studies

	Study 1	Study 2
Goals	Examine decline in African American student enrolment, why none continue in programme past requirement, and most instructors from HSI hired to teach at HBCU quit before contract ends	Determine extent programme utilizes equity-minded, anti-racist, and inclusive practices that help Black students succeed in language study
	Investigate Black students' interests in cultural connection with Spanish language communities, assess their real-life needs for communication to design curriculum and target tasks meaningful to their lives, contexts, and actual needs	Plan action for how programme policies and practices could be modified to become more equity-minded, anti-racist, and inclusive
Study site	HSI (large urban public university) HBCU (small urban private Christian university)	PWI (Large rural public university beginner Spanish programme)
Participants	Fifty Black students (African American, Caribbean, African), self-identified Nine White Hispanic instructors, one Black Hispanic instructor, self-identified	One White Anglo, four White Hispanic, one Black Hispanic instructor, self-identified
Design	Year-long ethnographic learning and teaching needs analysis study conducted in 2018	Six-month participatory action research project conducted in 2018
Data	Interviews, class observations, questionnaires, journals, language use audit, community visits, local job descriptions	Interviews, three-session workshop series with critical discourse analysis, programme instructional, promotional materials (textbooks, digital labs, online learning sites, syllabi, lessons, PowerPoints, brochures, website)
Analysis	Content analysis, discourse analysis, document analysis, task-based analysis	Participants conduct thematic, content and document critical discourse analysis using language programme materials analysis protocol

Studies 1 and 2 share a common focus on examining WL programmes and enacting change to improve experiences for Black students. The studies prominently feature collaboration in research and practice between institutions, researchers and instructors, and among instructors, exemplifying the central role of collaboration in applied linguistics for social justice and the importance of collective action that engages stakeholders who recognize their responsibility to promote change. Most importantly, both studies are linked by how their findings reveal endemic racism and anti-Blackness in WL programmes and provide powerful illustrations of the CRT tenets.

The researcher–teacher trainer

I am a Black American woman of West African and Caribbean heritage, working as a WL learning researcher and language teacher educator at a PWI. I studied and taught Portuguese and Spanish at three major US universities where I was the only Black student in my classes, and as an instructor, never had a Black colleague. My applied linguistics doctoral programme did not have Black students or faculty, and now, as a scholar in applied linguistics and WL education, I often attend professional gatherings with no or few Black faces among thousands. My eagerness to remedy the underrepresentation of Black people in this field comes from experiencing our marginalization firsthand.

RESULTS OF *POST HOC* CRT ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS FROM STUDIES 1 AND 2

CRT-based examination of Studies 1 and 2 demonstrated racial realism (contrary to illusions of racial equity) showing endemic racism impacting participation of Black students and instructors. Counternarratives highlighted Black experiences—and participants' critical interpretation of these episodes—challenging liberal myths of race neutrality, objectivity, and equitable, harmonious multiculturalism. CRT analysis provided key insights on anti-Blackness in WL, which is a social justice problem that may not be readable through different theoretical lens and cannot be addressed if not first identified.

Study 1: racial realism

In Study 1, Black student enrolment in beginner Spanish decreased significantly over eight years at both the HSI and HBCU. At intermediate level, it reduced from few to zero. Attrition was also noted among teaching staff, because 80 per cent of mostly White Hispanic Spanish instructors trained at the HSI and hired at the HBCU quit before their contracts ended. The instructors reported feeling unprepared to teach at a Black university, citing culture shock, distress, inadequate student preparation, and institutional capacity as reasons for leaving. This finding illustrated a tenet of CRT, which is how racism is so normalized in our thinking, that structural inequities seem natural. White instructors said

openly they could not work in an all-Black environment due to duress of being a minority—something Black people do almost everywhere in society while expected to be grateful for being integrated into 'mainstream' environments. In questionnaires and interviews, White instructors did not discuss if they considered remedying their lack of knowledge and preparation to work in this environment or altering instructional practices for specific needs of Black students. Instead, they focused on how Black students' deficits made them difficult to teach. White instructors also did not express efforts to understand inequitable funding, institutional marginalization, and other systemic causes of precarious resources at HBCUs choosing, instead, more facile and racist explanations of Black students and Black schools not being good enough.

Study 1: liberal myths

From the perspective of many Black students in Study 1, the programme did neither interest them nor adequately serve their needs. All reported negative classroom experiences due to poor instructional environments, and many expressed a common sentiment that Spanish class, in the exact words of one first year undergraduate, 'had nothing to do with me' or people like him, since teachers and materials did not present Black populations as important social and cultural agents. During current events activities, instructors did not discuss news about Black people or discrimination against them, and there were many such stories of local and national interest. Some students noted they would have wanted this, since topical presentations were about real life, and considerations of such issues were a fundamental part of being Black in the USA. The White instructors, however, did not know how to manage discomfort discussing racism in class, and they felt those matters did not belong in language courses based on liberal myths of race neutrality or 'we don't see colour' in multilingual and multicultural exchanges. However, no aspect of the Black students' lives was devoid of consideration of race, including their Spanish classes, which they did not view as race neutral, just simply another area of life and academic study that ignored their racial identities while highlighting other people's.

Study 1: Black Hispanic instructor counternarrative

The only Black Spanish language instructor at the HSI and HBCU—a doctoral candidate from Latin America—was open to discussing race, racism, and Blackness among Spanish-speaking populations but was still conscripted into delivering limited, standardized content. In his counternarrative, he tearfully and regretfully described an episode where he believed his strict adherence to course material contributed to harm against an African American student:

> We were doing the task to practice dates when I ask [African American student] to say what is Independence Day, like the answer was 4th of July, but in Spanish. But he said nothing, and I ask

> again, and he said nothing. And I think, maybe he doesn't know, and I try to help him. Then he say, no, it's not my day. I don't really understand what he means, and not so sure he understand me, but I say, repeat the date, and after I insist so much, he finally says Independence day is 4th of July. And he look real upset, but I don't know why, and I think maybe he's frustrated he didn't know the answer. Later I find out about this Juneteenth, and I never knew about it before, and I realize that he didn't wanna say the 4th of July was Independence Day because it was not the day of freedom for his African American people, you know, because Juneteenth is that day. And I feel so bad about this, it still get me so upset, I'm still so emotional about it, because I didn't know and I didn't realize, and I feel like I participated in the oppression of another Black man. I forced him to say something he hated, something he did not believe, just for Spanish class.

The Black instructor's story, which counters colour-evasive dominant narratives of race neutrality in WL, and his interpretation of the episode are valuable resources in a CRT analysis. His powerful counternarrative illustrates how racism is so embedded in instructional practices that one need not be aware or intentionally racist to perpetuate it. The counternarrative reveals key insights into Black students' reports of negative WL classroom experiences that a non-CRT analysis may not identify as rooted in racism, and racism cannot be addressed without first being recognized. As the instructor delivered planned course material, he did not ponder why a student resisted making the expected response, which was, for the student, an inaccurate, racially charged statement denying his people's heritage and struggle for liberation. The Spanish language curriculum posed a purportedly race neutral question asking people in the USA to name the day of their country's independence. However, what is considered race neutral, standard, or mainstream in a White supremacist country typically relates to the dominant White population. Hence, a question to a descendant of enslaved Blacks about the day his people gained liberty will not yield the answer corresponding to the day when White enslavers gained theirs.

Study 1: African American student counternarrative

In Study 1, Black students described how curriculum and materials failed to connect their identities with Afro-descendant Spanish-speaking populations. Such exclusion was hard to justify, since both universities were located in an area with a large Latinx population deeply tied to South American and Caribbean nations with considerable Black populations and cultural influence. However, the exclusion was easily situated within racism and anti-Blackness Hispanics also perpetuated, evidenced in experiences of a female African American student who recounted typical rejection Black students reported trying to speak Spanish in the community:

> I worked at an assisted living facility, and I experienced um, a little hardship in that setting. A resident, an older Hispanic lady was kinda going off. And I was like, *¿tú necesitas ayuda?* [Do you need help?] And, like, I tried to help her. I noticed she was cussing, but I was still being nice. And she like, turned her head, she was like, she asked me in Spanish, was I Dominican? And I said, no, I'm Black. In Spanish, I don't say *negra* [black], I say, *yo soy* Black [I am Black]. And she got back in her wheelchair, and she left. Went back up the elevator. I was like, what? And the worker was like, what? And the thing is, I knew the lady, and I knew she could speak English, understanding Black and all. She was understanding what they said, but decided not to Speak English. It was an experience where I felt like because I could not culturally identify with her as a Hispanic woman, she chose not to communicate with me. I feel like in this area in this region, Spanish is a language that identifies a group of people, and by me being Black, not even being a part of that community, it excluded me from having the benefit to, like, engage with her, like in her eyes.

The story of how a White Hispanic local community member treated this African American student was not unique in Study 1. Others also reported they found it difficult to use the language outside class as instructors encouraged them to do, because Hispanics in the local community whom they heard speaking Spanish and tried to engage in the language would scoff or laugh at them, or just respond in English. Visions of equitable, harmonious multiculturalism promoted in the programme, which assumed mere proximity to the target language community guaranteed access, were thwarted by realities of racism and intergroup hostility. Black student heritage Spanish speakers also reported difficulty accessing Spanish-speaking communities in the area. Many reported feeling they did not fit into the region's image of 'Hispanic/Latinx', which is the general US image of a White or European/indigenous 'mestizo' Hispanic.

Study 2: liberal myths and anti-Black erasure

Study 2 was participatory action research with beginner-level Spanish language instructors examining programme materials. I encouraged the instructors—all White (Anglo and Hispanic) except one Black Hispanic—to think about race, racism, their own racial identities and how their backgrounds, beliefs, and ideologies may influence their perception of the curriculum. First, when guided to identify references to race and to Blackness in the affirmative sense, they found notable colour-evasiveness in the 2017 edition of a commercial textbook and digital learning suite used by students and the programme-produced lesson slides. For example, vocabulary for students to describe themselves in Spanish did not give adequate possibilities for Afrodescendants, especially how Black people in Spanish-speaking countries typically describe themselves. The activity where a Black person would learn how

to identify themselves racially showed a Black woman and the word *morena*, which means 'dark'. Although Afro-Latinx people call themselves, *moreno/morena*, they also commonly use more racially unambiguous words *negro/negra* and *afrodescendiente*, meaning Black and Afro-descendant. A CRT analysis of this Study 2 finding of colour-evasiveness shows it did not result in equity it sought to represent. Instead, the supposed race neutrality of the materials demonstrated a racist, exclusionist White hegemony, because, perhaps, in a bid not to court controversy from people who view the terms *negro/negra* and *afrodescendiente* negatively, the materials avoided them, and in doing so, erased Black identity. The materials also did not provide the most precise way for someone learning Spanish to describe racial diversity, because, on the same list with pictures of representative individuals, a White man with dark hair was also called *moreno*.

Secondly, throughout the programme materials, instructors found pictures meant to represent US students learning Spanish included Black people and cartoon figures depicting them in a variety of activities and professions. However, as Elissondo (2001) observed 20 years ago in her analysis of Spanish textbooks, the vast amount of cultural and geographic information about different Spanish-speaking populations showed nearly zero representation of Black Hispanics. The cast of the videos and reality show storyline about Latin Americans for conversation exercises was entirely White. One White Anglo instructor mentioned that, before conducting the analysis, she had never noticed the only Black people in all the images accompanying cultural passages were two pictures of scantily clad women in carnival parades and one male sports star—both depicting racist tropes of hypersexualized and athleticized Black bodies.

Thirdly, when considering representation of Afro-descendants in Spanish-speaking populations, the instructors observed cultural texts and listening exercises did not mention or specifically highlight them. This exclusion was not due to their absence or insignificance, because a third of Spanish speakers worldwide are Afro-descendants. The instructors noted many missed opportunities to include Afro-descendants in both imagery and text, since passages describing regions in Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and Dominican Republic with large or majority Black populations and notable Afro-diasporic cultural influence were presented with no mention of such and only pictures of architecture and natural scenery.

A *post hoc* CRT analysis of the Study 2 findings reveals, not only Black erasure in the materials, but also a contrasting emphasis on Whiteness throughout, such as, multiple features of Spain's royal family, a focus on Spain disproportionate to how many Spanish language speakers worldwide reside there, numerous mentions and images of European art, cultural expressions, and architecture. Most illustrative of the absence of race neutrality and targeted focus on Whiteness were ubiquitous images of White families and Latin Americans appearing of primarily European ancestry in every topic and social context. In stark contrast to the exclusion of Afro-Latinx, White people were

presented as the most typical or 'normal' representation of Hispanics in the USA and Spanish-speaking world.

Study 2: Black Hispanic instructor counternarrative

The counternarrative provided by the only Black instructor in Study 2—a doctoral candidate from Latin America—describes the exclusion of Blackness in the Spanish language curriculum as an invisibility, which, in her analysis and interpretation, she says, also mirrors how African American students are ignored inside the classroom:

> Because, in class, Black students all sit in the back, since they don't think you want them, so you don't call, and they just sit there, and they are invisible. This invisibility that still exists, and this stereotype that Black kids can't do anything, that they're not the best, it's preventing us from really finding out how we can help them like Spanish class. And we're ignoring them in class and also in the curriculum and materials, it's a total invisibility. For example, if we had put something about Black Lives Matter, some kind of reading, just something, anything, but we have nothing. And the people here in the program, they don't understand how this invisibility in the curriculum is contributing to the Black students' their attitude or their feeling of like, they're not connected in class. But then we see this lack of connection, or interest, or motivation, or whatever you wanna call it, and interpret it as lack of ability. And that's not true.

In her counternarrative, this Black Spanish language instructor sharply rejects dominant ideas of WL language programmes being a place of equitable and harmonious multiculturalism. She rejects the liberal myth of race neutrality by recognizing unjust exclusion of Black people from the curriculum and classrooms, connecting this with racist assumptions of Black students' academic unfitness. Instead of the tired insistence upon Black students' deficits and lack of motivation, the instructor suggests how the programme could more meaningfully engage them.

A CRITICAL RACE PEDAGOGY FOR WORLD LANGUAGE TEACHING: PROPOSALS FOR PRACTICE

To address racism and anti-Blackness in our field, I propose a CRPWLT based on previously discussed principles elaborated by Lynn (1999) and Jennings and Lynn (2005). Step one in CRPWLT is to conduct inquiry and self-assessment of language programme policies, stakeholders, practices, and materials through the lens of CRT to determine if and to what extent they promote Black students' meaningful, equitable participation and success in WL. This entails race-consciousness in an affirmative sense (e.g. collecting data on programme participation by race; examining programme materials for how they represent different racial groups). Such sober, systematic assessment requires

language educators to adopt racial realism and recognize the endemic nature of racism in their instructional practice, because race neutrality does not exist, and colour-evasiveness promotes a racist status quo where what we actually ignore are inequity, White privilege, and injustice, not skin colour. Key in this self-assessment is understanding Whites constitute a racial group and are not devoid of racial identity. Therefore, a Spanish language curriculum that presents Whiteness as normative and images of White people as representative of Spanish language speakers when, in reality, there are large numbers from other groups, is not race neutral. It is White supremacist.

The second step in CRPWLT calls for a careful examination of power and inequity in language teaching. This requires educators' awareness of their racial identities and positionality in racial hierarchies, which influence their perception of materials, how they teach, and their attitude towards and treatment of their students. In an example from Study 2, a White instructor remarked how, although she taught with those materials for years, she never noticed there were only three images of Black people in hundreds of visual representations of Spanish-speaking populations. She had never felt anybody was missing, nor would it have occurred to her others may be disfavoured by a status quo favouring her, or may notice and benefit from her supplementing with more inclusive materials. In admitting this, the educator demonstrated self-reflexivity that encourages consideration of how privilege and advantaged positionality conferred by one's identities, knowledge, beliefs, practices—even if intended to be race neutral—can reflect and contribute to racism. Language educator self-reflexivity calls for the interrogation of their roles in gatekeeping that excludes African Americans from beneficial programmes, along with recognizing and rejecting myths and deficit mindsets about Black students' abilities in language learning. Most importantly, it requires active strategizing to recognize and work against the culture of power and structures of inequity in which language educators and students are positioned, as well as, assuming responsibility for change (see Liggett 2009; Picower 2009; Maddamsetti 2020 for examples of White teachers' critical self-reflexivity).

The final, most important step in CRPWLT is translating understandings from inquiry and self-reflexivity into a liberatory practice for antiracism and social justice. To begin, language programmes can seek out ideas on diversifying learners and educators as recommended in Anya and Randolph (2019). Programmes can reject the practice of not explicitly mentioning or considering race and racism in policies, materials, and instruction, because, as was shown in Study 1, Black students understand clearly the racist message sent by language programmes that ignore these considerations and do not address what is meaningful to them. Instructors can examine and diversify personal, professional, and online networks, since we do not stop being who we are or being influenced by outside circles of interaction just because we enter a classroom.

Spanish language programmes, specifically, can counter the racist exclusion of Afro-descendants as principal cultural agents of target language speaking communities, incorporating tasks that make explicit mention of race and

Blackness, and take into active consideration the cultural identities and social justice concerns of African Americans, following examples suggested in Abreu (2016), Elissondo (2001), Dahl (2000), Moeller and Ashcraft (1997), Ruggiero (2015), Watson (2013), and Anya *et al.* (2020). CRPWLT embraces antiracism work as a core component of language instruction and can, for example, incorporate references to and discussion on sociopolitical issues involving students in the WL classroom and members of target language speaking communities (e.g. current events related to immigration and xenophobia). To this end, programmes should orient instructors on facilitating safe, supportive spaces in classrooms for racism to be discussed, along with providing linguistic and cultural support for new learners to understand and describe their ideas and experiences. Guidelines for how to provide such support and hold these discussions are beyond the scope and space allowed in this present article and will be presented in future publications.

CONCLUSION

Applied linguistics is currently navigating a 'social justice turn' with scholars and language educators paying greater attention to how we can promote social justice and equity in sharing social resources, benefits, and power (Osborn 2006; Randolph and Johnson 2017). Proposals to address the racism and anti-Blackness that marginalize African Americans in WL study should be integral to the work currently being done to solve problems of social equity in research and practice. Such social justice approaches and action plans encourage WL education to do what Flores and Rosa (2019) argued is way overdue and meaningfully reckon with race and racial inequity in our field. My model of how to conduct CRT-based analysis of WL research and instruction through systematic examination of programmes and materials, along with my proposal of CRPWLT, move the field forward. They show new ways of understanding, theorizing, investigating, and addressing problems that have persisted for far too long.

SUPPLEMENTARY DATA

Supplementary material is available at *Applied Linguistics* online.

Conflict of interest statement. None declared.

ENDNOTES

1 WL refers to what was traditionally called foreign languages, because our field is moving past the idea that a language, like Spanish, which has been in what is now the USA for longer than English, is 'foreign'.

2 Black people in USA are African, Caribbean, Latin American, European, and from other ethnicities. In this article, I focus on those who ethnically identify as (US) American Afro-descendants, using 'African American' and 'Black' interchangeably for this population.

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