

DEVELOPMENTAL PATHWAYS THROUGH MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

*Rethinking Contexts
and Diversity as Resources*

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Beyond Demographic Categories:
How Immigration, Ethnicity, and “Race”
Matter for Children’s Identities
and Pathways Through School

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Demographic questions in the United States, whether on census forms or social science surveys, have long blended national origin, ethnicity, and “race” into a set of color-coded categories. In 1900, the U.S. census categories included White, Black, Indian, Chinese, and Japanese. The 1935 *Handbook of Social Psychology* offered chapters on the social histories of the “White Man,” the “Negro,” the “Red Man,” and the “Yellow Man” (Murphy, 1935/1967). However, recent demographic changes are pushing the limits of demographic categories for science, policy, and educational practice. By 2000, immigration to the United States rivaled the high levels of 1910, with

¹We put “race” in quotation marks to emphasize its historical and social construction—with powerful effects—and not a given of biology or nature. Ethnicity, social class, and gender are also social constructions but less prone to be understood as biological essences.

present-day newcomers coming principally from Mexico, Latin America, and Asia, rather than the Eastern and Southern European origins of a century ago. And by 2030, children classified as Hispanic, African American, Asian American, and Native American are expected to constitute half of U.S. children under the age of 17 (Herrández, 1999). Demographers have responded to these changes by adding open-ended questions to the U.S. census to capture the increasingly complex configurations of immigration, ethnicity, and "race." On the 2000 census, one question asked about "racial categories" of American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, and White; another question asked about ethnicity by differentiating Hispanic from non-Hispanic. In addition, adults responding for their families could also write in their own self-descriptions and check more than one category (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).

As U.S. schools and communities have become more ethnically diverse, children's immigration, ethnicity, and "race" have become more important for research as well as for practices and policies shaping children's developmental pathways. As with gender, academic journals and funding agencies now require demographic descriptions of research participants. Accordingly, scholars have proposed guidelines for doing so, primarily based on parents' reports (Entwistle & Astone, 1994). This marks a great improvement over writings about the "universal child" that permeated research in the early 20th century, when diversity reflecting immigration, ethnicity, "race," social class, and gender either was not studied or was portrayed in terms of deficiencies and deprivation (McLoyd, 1990; Valencia & Black, 2002). Although scholars, policymakers, and practitioners continue searching for general patterns in development and pursue universal rights for children, they also probe how inequalities related to factors such as immigration, ethnicity, and social class may shape children's developmental pathways (García Coll et al., 1996). However, using demographic categories to study children's development can introduce other difficulties.

This chapter tackles these issues, first, by considering the limits of demographic categories for understanding the role of immigration, ethnicity, and "race" in children's developmental pathways through school. We then argue for studying these issues as part of individual, social, institutional, and community processes. To illustrate this approach, we use four questions from our MacArthur Network studies based on interdisciplinary theoretical foundations. We interviewed individual children, observed them interacting with peers and teachers, analyzed institutional practices of schools, and watched community partnerships that sought to support children's pathways through school (see chapters in this volume by Cooper, Domínguez, & Rosas; García Coll, Szalacha, & Palacios; and Thorne, for details about individual studies). Finally, we close with reflections for research, policy, and practice.

LIMITS OF DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORIES FOR UNDERSTANDING IMMIGRATION, ETHNICITY, AND "RACE" IN CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

To advance science, policy, and practice, scholars seek to describe and predict continuity and change in persons, families, institutions, and communities and to explain what factors enhance and impede development (Cooper & Demner, 1998). Demographic variables such as national origin, ethnicity, and "race" are often used to sort children and families into categories, facilitating comparison on indicators such as health, social skills, emotional well-being, or school achievement. However, consistent with critiques by Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Whiting (1976), we argue that these categorical research designs may not fully serve descriptive, predictive, or explanatory goals.

With regard to descriptive goals, relying on mutually exclusive demographic categories for describing social groups neglects the growing numbers of children and families who describe themselves with more than one national, ethnic, or racial identity label (Lee, 1993; Nakashima, 1992). Further, larger sets of categories are often collapsed into dichotomies such as immigrant versus native-born, Black versus White, Hispanic versus non-Hispanic, or high income versus low income (Hirscheid & Gelman, 1994; Medin, 1989), obscuring variation within groups due to social class, immigration history, national origin, and so forth, while emphasizing differences and neglecting similarities between groups. In turn, these dichotomies can easily slip into hierarchies that imply one category is superior and the other inferior (Cooper et al., 1998).

Second, casting immigration, ethnicity, or "race" as fixed and stable qualities can convey that their meanings and related practices in one setting can predict meanings and practices across time and place. However, studies with adolescents and adults show these meanings change over time, vary across communities and geographic regions, and can also shift for individuals across the social contexts of their lives (Fernández, 1992; Root, 2002; Sanjeck, 1995).

Moreover, for explanatory goals, research that treats demographic categories as independent variables has been interpreted as if group membership provided causal explanations for group differences, such as in children's academic aspirations, school achievement, or intelligence (McLoyd, 1990). Such reasoning has been used to argue that such group differences are grounded in biology, although biological explanations of "race"-based differences have been discredited on scientific grounds (Barkan, 1992; Lewontin, 1982). In contrast, research on disparities in school funding and community economic resources points to these factors as central to children's academic pathways (see chapters by Blumenfeld et al. and by Stipek, this volume).

FOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT PROCESSES IN CHILDREN'S EMERGING IDENTITIES AND PATHWAYS THROUGH SCHOOL

These critiques should not be interpreted as an argument to eliminate or abandon using demographic variables in research, policy reports, or everyday talk. Rather, we seek to stimulate inquiry on how demographic categories are used as well as when they matter—and when they do not—for children's identities and pathways through school. To do so, we consider four questions that map the role of immigration, ethnicity, and "race" in children's development across four related levels of analysis: individual, relational, institutional, and community.

1. As individuals, how do children draw on their families' national origin and ethnicity in constructing their personal identities at school? Social psychologists argue that social identity provides a sense of group belonging that can contribute to a person's well-being (Deaux, Reid, Mizrahi, & Ethier, 1995; Tajfel, 1978; see Fuligni et al., this volume). Researchers have traced ethnic identity development among immigrant adolescents and described an "immigrant paradox"—that some immigrant youth excel in school despite their families' unfamiliarity with U.S. schools (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Viewing children's ethnic, racial, and gender identification, preferences, and attitudes as precursors of the multiple domains of adolescent and adult identity is consistent with Erikson's theory of identity development and adult identity process that occurs in families and other cultural contexts (Cross, 1995; Eccles, 1993; Erikson, 1968; Phinney, 1996; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990). The question of how ethnic identity is constructed by children of immigrants is illustrated in the study of Garcia Coll and her colleagues in Providence, Rhode Island (see Garcia Coll et al., this volume).

2. In their social relations and everyday interactions with peers, how do children in ethnically diverse schools construct and negotiate identity practices? This question reflects the sociological writings of Giddens (1979, 1991), who considered identity to be an ongoing process through which individuals negotiate a series of choices that emerge in relation to others. This view also highlights the social construction of immigration, ethnic, and "racial" divisions in identity. Research on social negotiations of identity among adults by Goffman (1959), on negotiation of gender boundaries among children by Thorne (1993), and on cultural practices by anthropologists Lave and Wenger (1991), prompted Thorne (chapter 3, this volume) to examine this question with an ethnographic study of an elementary school in Oakland, California.

3. How are demographic categories reflecting immigration, ethnicity, and "race" made more or less salient in the institutional practices of schools? Debates on schooling and diversity often center on children's racial-ethnic

9. BEYOND DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORIES

identity, their school engagement or alienation, and the links between families and schools. Orellana and her team (Orellana, 2002) drew on the premises of sociocultural theory, including the funds of knowledge approach, to view ethnically diverse families' cultural practices as assets (González et al., 1995; see also Lowe, Weisner, Geis, & Huston, this volume). Orellana's (2002) ethnographic work in the Pico-Union area of Los Angeles asked how families' national origin, ethnicity, and race were made more or less salient for organizational practices of schools as children entered school, and how such diversity was viewed and treated.

4. How does immigration matter for children's identities and community resources in building their pathways through school? Ogbu (1991) wrote that under cultural and historical conditions of inequitable access to education, ethnic minority families initially hold high hopes for children's school success. However, as they encounter barriers, parents can develop bleak views of their children's future while their children develop oppositional identities that affirm their solidarity with peers, thus defending against failure in mainstream schools and jobs. Mauter-Bianchi (1986, 1990) traced historical and structural antecedents of these patterns among Mexican high school students. Cooper and her team in Watsonville/Santa Cruz, California, drew on Ogbu's (2003) work and on Bridging Multiple Worlds Theory (Cooper, 2003; Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1991) in a longitudinal study of children participating in a community program that supports low-income youth going to college. Key questions involve how children's experiences in such programs shaped their cultural and career identities and how these in turn mattered for their pathways from childhood to college.

ALIGNING MIXED METHODS ACROSS THEORIES

Although each of the four research teams drew on different theoretical perspectives, they all traced individual, relational, institutional, and community levels of analysis with a mixed-methods approach. The four studies drew on quantitative analyses of interviews and surveys developed for children, parents, and teachers; institutional records like school transcripts; and school and national census data. They compared or aligned these data with inductive methods of ethnography, including participant observation in schools, neighborhoods, and afterschool programs, and with open-ended interviews with parents, children, teachers, and school and program staff. They also asked children to write about, draw, and photograph key places and people in their lives. This is especially important for studying identity development as a process of individual, social, institutional, and community meaning making to link standardized "outsider" or *etic* viewpoints with local "insider" or *emic* meanings (Cooper et al., 1998).

Demographics Across the Four Sites

Providence, Rhode Island. Garcia Coll and her team (this volume) conducted their research in Providence, Rhode Island, a small, light-industry city with an immigration stream of Portuguese, Dominican, Puerto Rican, African, and Southeast Asian families of Cambodian, Hmong, Vietnamese, and Laotian heritage. The research team focused on the Cambodian, Portuguese, and Dominican communities, the three largest immigrant groups in Providence. Ethnographic histories in each community traced historical meanings of immigration.

Most elementary schools in the study were attended primarily by children of color (from 37% to 76%). Public schools had higher proportions of children from immigrant families, from low-income families, and who were children of color, whereas private schools enrolled fewer children of immigrants and were more mixed in terms of social class. Figures 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3 show contexts of children's activities in the Cambodian, Portuguese, and Dominican communities of Providence.

Oakland, California. Thorne and her team (Thorne, this volume; Thorne, Lam, Orellana, & Chabrier, 1997) conducted ethnographic research in a mixed-income area in Oakland, California. Students in the medium-sized public elementary school that anchored the site were labeled by the school as almost 50% African American, 20% Asian (mostly Cantonese-speaking children of immigrants from Hong Kong, China, and Vietnam. Chinese families who came through Vietnam to the United States, along with speakers of Vietnamese), Hien (a hill tribe from Laos who spoke their own language) and Cambodian, 14% European American, and 15% Hispanic, mostly children of immigrants from Mexico and Central America. Comparing these school census data to 1990 U.S. census data revealed fewer European American students (12% vs. 48%) and more African American students (50% vs. 22%) attending the school compared to their numbers in the official school intake area.

Pico-Union, California. Orellana and her colleagues (Orellana, 2002; Orellana, Thorne, Chee, & Lam, 2001) conducted ethnographic work in the Pico-Union area of Los Angeles, in and around one of the largest elementary schools in the nation, with 2,700 students in kindergarten through Grade 5. The school was divided into three year-round tracks, two of which were in session at a given time. This was an enclave of immigrants primarily from Mexico and Central America. Children from these families made up more than 90% of students in the school, almost all qualifying for free or reduced-price lunches. This might appear to be a school with little ethnic and social class diversity. But as we detail in this chapter, there was greater within-group diversity than captured in the "Hispanic" label. There was also a



FIG. 9.1. Cambodian children and families at their Buddhist temple in Providence, Rhode Island.



FIG. 9.2. Portuguese children dressed as angels in the Holy Ghost day parade in Providence, Rhode Island.



FIG. 9.3. Dominican family celebrating with their national flag at the local Dominican festival in Providence, Rhode Island.

small, although diminishing, group of children of immigrants from Korea, and a very small number of others classified as African American, Native American, Pacific Islanders, and Asian.

Watsonville/Santa Cruz, California. Cooper and her team began studying a community program in Santa Cruz County in 1995 that serves nine schools by awarding scholarships to the local community college and offering tutoring and enrichment. The county schools reflected a geographic division by ethnicity and immigration: students in one elementary school in the "south county" agricultural town of Watsonville were classified as 93% Hispanic, 6% White, 5% Asian (mostly Japanese), and 2% African American. Of the 60% designated English Language Learners, almost all spoke Spanish. In an elementary school in the "north county" tourist and university town of Santa Cruz, students were classified as 63% White, 24% Hispanic, with small numbers of Asian, African American, and Filipino children. Among the 19% English Language Learners, most spoke Spanish and others spoke Japanese, Russian, Tagalog, and Portuguese (see Cooper, Domínguez, & Rosas, chapter 11, this volume).

Looking Across Sites at Local Meanings of Generic Ethnic-Racial Categories. Local meanings of Asian and Hispanic demonstrate how general categories can obscure local meanings. According to the U.S. census, in Providence, Rhode Island, Asian children were primarily Cambodian, and Hispanic children were primarily from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. In the Oakland, California, neighborhood, census data indicated that Asian children were primarily from Chinese families and Hispanic children were primarily of Mexican descent. In the Pico-Union site, Asian children were primarily children of Korean immigrants and Hispanic children were primarily from Mexico, El Salvador, and Guatemala. And in the Watsonville/Santa Cruz site, Asian children were primarily Japanese American and Hispanic children were primarily children of Mexican descent. These variations across sites suggest caution in generalizing from samples described with general categories, whether local or national.

ILLUSTRATIVE FINDINGS

As Individuals, How Do Children of Immigrants

Draw on Their Families' National Origin and Ethnicity in Constructing Their Personal Identities at School?

In Providence, Garcia Coll and her team interviewed first- and fourth-grade children of Dominican, Portuguese, and Cambodian immigrants as they chose identity labels, ranked their relative salience, and explained their

meanings (see Akiba, Szalacha, & Garcia Coll, 2003, for details). Children were asked, "are you _____?" in response to a list that included labels for gender, role (such as student), "race" (such as Black), nationality (such as Cambodian), and pan-ethnic group (such as Asian). The most salient identity was assessed by the first label children chose to describe themselves. The meanings of children's identities were assessed by asking them, "why do you think you are _____?" for each label they chose.

Even primary-grade children chose multiple identity labels, with older children choosing more labels than younger, and children most often choosing labels for their ethnicity, gender, and family roles. On average, children in the sample chose seven labels: all children interviewed chose at least one ethnic label and a gender label, 77% also chose a label for their family role, 36% chose a racial label, and 26%, a religious label. Thus gender, ethnicity, and family role seemed to be the most central to their identities. Fourth graders chose more labels as applying to them than first graders, both for the sample as a whole (7.7 vs. 6.6 labels, respectively; $t = 5.1, p < .001$), and within the Portuguese, Dominican, and Cambodian samples ($t = 5.2, 4.1, 10.5$, respectively, all $ps < .001$). Among the ethnic labels chosen, similarity across groups was seen in children choosing nationality labels most often (and more frequent among older children), followed by cultural and language labels like Khmer and Spanish, then "hyphenated American" labels like Portuguese-American, and finally, pan-ethnic labels like Asian or Latino.

The salience of ethnicity for children's identities was greater for Cambodian and Dominican than for Portuguese children. Ethnicity was the most salient dimension of identity for Cambodian and Dominican children, but gender was the most salient for Portuguese children, who were considered "White" in Providence, $\chi^2(12, N = X) = 23.5, p < .05$. These findings indicate that "minority" children in the United States who have "racial features" that are easily marked by society internalize these features as more salient aspects of their identity.

Children readily explained personal meanings of their multiple identity labels, with older children expressing more complex meanings. Children who chose ethnic labels cited language ("I am Cambodian American because I go to school, I talk English; I come back home and talk in Cambodian"), their own or their parents' birthplace ("I am Portuguese because even if I was born here, my parents were born there"), and cultural identity and practices ("I am Khmer [a Cambodian ethnic group] because that is my closest culture. My family believes in it. There is a [Buddhist] temple for Khmer"; see Fig. 9.1). Explanations by older children reflected their more advanced cognitive skills. For example, a 6-year-old girl and a 9-year-old girl, both from Portuguese immigrant families, chose "Portuguese American." The 6-year-old explained, "because my mom wanted me to come to Amer-

ica," and the 9-year-old said, "I understand when people talk to me in Portuguese even when they don't know I understand them." Overall, the research team was surprised at how easily children chose and explained multiple identity labels. For example, after Carlos, a fourth-grade Dominican boy, chose "Boy," "Dominican," "Dominican-American," "Latino," and "White," he explained as follows: "I am a boy, because God made me one; I am Dominican because my parents were born in Dominican Republic; I am Dominican American because I was born here; I am Latino because that's what they call here people who speak Spanish, and I am White because my skin is light."

Children Negotiated Identities Across Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Lines and Social Contexts. Children's explanations reflected both their family histories and their comparisons and social interactions with schools, families, and peers that reached across cultural, ethnic, and racial lines. One Dominican boy explained that he called himself "White" because even if he appeared mixed-race, his skin was lighter than that of many Dominicans. And the importance of social contexts and social negotiation in children's identities can be heard in the comments of Aisha, a fifth grader whose most salient identity was religious—being Muslim:

I am happy to be Muslim. It is a good religion for me. We [her family] pray and we give money to the poor. . . . I like that this religion is unique, because a lot of people practice it and other people know who you are because only Muslims wear this headpiece. So they know who are Muslims. . . . When I was in kindergarten, they [other children] used to tease me and try to pull my headpiece off. It made me feel very angry and sad because they treated me bad because I am different. I do not think they should try to be mean because they are different. You should try to be friends. . . . to learn about the difference.

In sum, the Providence study has revealed how even primary-grade children were actively constructing and negotiating multiple dimensions of their ethnic identities, including national, racial, and pan-ethnic meanings (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996), as revealed by their choices, explanations, and rankings. Age-related shifts in ethnic self-labeling and identity among immigrant youth have been reported, as have the links of identity to school engagement, achievement, and alienation (Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Ogbu, 2003; Phinney, 1996; Phinney & Rotheram, 1987). In studies of ethnic identity in San Diego and Miami (Rumbaut, in press), some immigrant adolescents shifted over time from national to pan-ethnic labels; García Coll's (this volume) longitudinal analyses will reveal whether such shifts occur during middle childhood.

In Their Social Relations and Everyday Interactions With Peers, How Do Children in Ethnically Diverse Schools Construct and Negotiate Identity Practices?

In their ethnographic research at the Oakland site, Thorne and her team (this volume) were especially interested in tracing children's social relations and interactions at school. The team observed children's identity practices—how they marked, muted, and negotiated the salience and meanings of identities related to nationality, language, racial ethnicity, social class, gender, and other dimensions of social life (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Thorne et al., 1997). Observations of children in classrooms, hallways, and especially the cafeteria and playground (where they had more latitude to create their own groups without adult intervention) revealed children's "borderwork"—interactions that marked and sustained social boundaries between groups set apart by social differences (Barth, 1969; Thorne, 1993). This was illustrated by Jessica, a sixth-grade girl, whose parents immigrated from China, as she explained how teams got chosen during physical education classes:

And so, whenever there are two Black people, and they are choosing teams, usually it's the fat people, and the Chinese and Mexicans who would stand on the side, and the other people, like those who know how to play and the tall ones, are chosen. We, usually the four of us [her friendship group, who were widely known as "the Chinese girls"] don't play well, but the teacher says they need to choose some of the other people, and then the captains are all quiet and ask the teacher if they really have to, and the teacher says they have to, so it's like nobody wants to choose us.

Thus, Jessica juxtaposed demographic categories (Blacks, Chinese, and Mexicans) with distinctions based on body type and skill in sports.

When Does a Difference Make a Difference? This classic question, posed by Bateson (1972), focuses attention on which differences are named and made salient, in what contexts, and to what effect. In the Oakland school, where Thorne and her team (chapter 3, this volume) observed, about half the children were called "African American" or "Black." Teachers and children used these labels interchangeably, although one boy insisted he was "Black but also part Indian." The next largest group was "Chinese," a label other children and teachers used for children of parents from Hong Kong and China, ethnic Chinese from Vietnam, Cambodia, Korea, Hien from Laos, and "mixed Asian." The "Chinese" label was made salient by the presence of two Cantonese bilingual classes. In the combined fifth- and sixth-

grade class that Thorne observed, "Blacks" and "Chinese" were also the racial-ethnic terms most often named in children's intergroup relations. As students chose seats, they clustered into a predominantly African American area, with much interaction between girls and boys; a predominantly "Asian" area, with more gender separation; and two tables with children of Mexican, Yemeni, Filipino, and Cambodian descent, three "mixed," and two "White" girls. But on the playground, these same children divided first by gender and less by ethnic-racial categories. Boys' basketball and soccer games tended to be more ethnically mixed than girls' activities, such as climbing on bars, jumping rope, and the turn-taking game of rock-paper-scissors. An exception was a group of older girls and boys—Black, White, Filipina, and "mixed"—who routinely played touch football.

When Can Differences Be Renegotiated or Contested? Children varied in how much they could redefine their social labels. Two girls called "mixed" by themselves and other children—one with a Jewish father and a Chinese American mother, the other with an Egyptian father and a White mother—were close friends. They used their multiple identities to avoid fights (Because "mixed" meant not on either side of ethnically charged conflicts), to avoid the slight stigma of being "White," and to build alliances ("I told the Black kids that I'm African American, because my dad is from Egypt, and that's in Africa"). Identities were signaled not only by labels but also by dress and speech. Yemeni Muslim girls, who wore headscarves, withstood teasing and being asked "Why do you wear that thing on your head?" by answering with the school discourse of multicultural tolerance ("It's my tradition").

Diverging Social Pathways in the Transition From Elementary to Middle School. Speaking a language other than English marked children as immigrants, and, if known to speak English, as deliberately setting themselves apart. Among "the Chinese girls," four were U.S.-born and bilingual and the fifth was a recent immigrant from Hong Kong not fully fluent in English. "The Chinese girls" maneuvered to sit and hang out together. They spoke Cantonese loudly and switched back and forth with English. When Eva Lam, a Cantonese-speaking fieldworker, asked them how they decided to speak Cantonese or English, Jessica replied, "We speak Cantonese when we want to talk about someone, and when it's more personal, and when we don't know some words in English." This led other children to worry they were being talked about and to make fun of them, imitating Cantonese talk with phrases like "ching chong." But the social pathways of "the Chinese girls" diverged the next fall when they entered the nearby middle school, known for racial divisions and fights among "the Blacks, the Asians, and the Mexicans." Janet, an immigrant from Hong Kong, spoke English with an accent

and had neither the interest nor means to buy the "cool teen clothes" the others began to wear. She started hanging out with a group of girls who also had recently immigrated from Hong Kong, and, like Janet, were in an English as a Second Language (ESL) track. The other "Chinese girls" connected with several Vietnamese girls, stopped speaking Cantonese at school, and began to identify themselves as Asian as well as Chinese.

Thus, the ethnographic fieldwork of Thorne and her team revealed that categories reflecting immigration, ethnicity, and "race" had greater impact in children's social lives at school under four conditions: if they were coded in local classification systems; if children seen as in a labeled category made up more homogeneous groups; if markers such as appearance, language, dress, food, family lineage, and birthplace were visible and consistent; or if categories were named in children's intergroup conflicts. Thorne saw children responding to each of these markers in the classroom, cafeteria, and playground, but she also saw children resisting and reworking social labels other children gave them as they negotiated identities within relations at school.

How Are Demographic Categories Reflecting Immigration, Ethnicity, and "Race" Made More or Less Salient in the Institutional Practices of Schools?

In each of the four research sites, research teams observed how institutional practices of schools defined but sometimes obscured categories reflecting immigration, ethnicity, and race, so their meanings became more or less salient in children's daily lives and consequential for their developmental pathways. For example, we saw how official school records and sorting practices could highlight language, ethnicity, "race," age, gender, language, or disability and ignore other distinctions and how these divisions could have consequences for enacting school policies.

School Enrollment Forms and Home Language Surveys. We were struck by the variation in how demographic information was gathered and interpreted from school enrollment forms, both within and across school districts. For example, when parents enroll their children in school they are asked to fill out a survey of languages spoken at home. This information was used primarily to identify children for language testing and program placement. But in practice, it was sometimes equated with the school's ethnic profile. As one school secretary in California said, "[the home language survey] tells us how many English we have, how many Hispanic, how many Korean."

Consequences for children's pathways could be seen in the Los Angeles school, which had no bilingual classes in any of the indigenous languages

