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## A Comprehensive Antiracist Framework for SLHS Education: A Sample Curriculum Related to Arab American Populations

### Cover Page Footnote

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## Introduction and Context

Kendi (2020) describes racism as a “marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities” (p. 18), whereby racial inequity and the white supremacist ideology at its core are substantiated by a collection of policies and de facto rules. The only solution to racist discrimination is *antiracism*, a “powerful collection of antiracist policies that lead to racial equity and are substantiated by antiracist ideas” (Kendi, 2020, p. 20). Antiracism necessitates both actively addressing past discrimination through its present manifestations along with devising a transformational future by means of institutional change. Institutional change is the most effective way to counter persisting systemic discrimination, which produces and perpetuates racial inequities, injustices, and traumas (Kendi, 2020). People who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) have been racialized, and white individuals have been socialized within these racist systems; therefore, both groups are susceptible to adopting harmful conceptualizations of society as a result of their lived experiences.

Universities are a microcosm of the society in which they are founded, and predominantly white institutions and professions in the U.S are particularly susceptible to perpetuating racial discrimination, inequities, and trauma in the lived experiences of BIPOC members of the university community whether intentionally or otherwise (Kendi, 2020). Ultimately, any positions and actions taken that are not explicitly antiracist will inherently support the continuation of racist ideas, practices, and policies (i.e., racism).

**The need for comprehensive antiracist curricula.** Students need to be provided with opportunities to engage with decolonized and culturally responsive research. Coloniality and colonial situations refer the “cultural, political, sexual and economic oppression/exploitation of subordinate racialized/ethnic groups by dominant racial/ethnic groups with or without the existence of colonial administrations” (Grosfoguel, 2011, p. 14). It represents the expansion of control beyond the control of land through a system that regulates the distribution of resources and organizational structure reproducing modern imperialism (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Coloniality is evident in westernized universities that reproduce colonized knowledge since all cultural and epistemic traditions guiding scholarly work in westernized higher educational institutions are rooted in Eurocentric modernity (Grosfoguel, 2013). Decolonization refers to “the process whereby colonial powers transferred institutional and legal control over their territories and dependencies to indigenously based, formally sovereign, nation-states” (Duara, 2004, p. 2). It is best understood as “decoloniality” which is the “comprehensive process that seeks to dismantle the “coloniality of power ... the dismantling of relations of power and conceptions of knowledge that foment the reproduction of racial, gender, and geopolitical hierarchies that came into being or found new and more powerful forms of expression in the modern/colonial world (Maldonado-Torres 2016, p.440). This definition addresses the fact that control of one group over another includes most importantly domination of the “mental universe of the colonized, the control through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world” (Ngugi, 1986, p. 16).

There are strong interrelations between decolonization and antiracism, since decolonization in essence is about terminating the relations of power in the way we conceptualize knowledge allowing the othering of the oppressed and the institutionalization of racial, gender, and class

hierarchies. To explicate racist ideas and the realities of racism, the mental universe needs to be liberated. Hence, decolonization – is part of paving the way for antiracist learning and research spaces in the field. Angela Davis (Davis, 1996; Tranchell, 2020) observed that work on diversity and inclusion in higher education is typically missing transformation and justice. To achieve that necessary component for meaningful transformative change, there is a need to design programs that explicitly address unequal power relations, and racial, gender, and class hierarchies. This means that standing up against racism is also standing up against xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and all forms of othering. Systematic decolonization through planned antiracist programming provides a pathway towards an inclusive and equitable scholarly and learning community. Such a vision is essential in light of the potential harms of the current practices that are focused on diversity and multiculturalism without any concomitant focus on transformation and justice within the increasingly business-oriented management models in higher education (Mohanty, 2004).

**BIPOC Lived Experiences.** Research into the lived experiences of BIPOC students in academic Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences (SLHS) programs is scarce. The few available research studies report on the particular challenges for BIPOC students to access SLHS programs, which accounts for the recognition of Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) as one of the whitest professions in the United States (US) (Fuse & Bergan, 2018; Ginsberg, 2018; Ellis & Kendall, 2020). White students in SLP on the other hand report limited awareness and/or denial of their white privilege (Ebert, 2013). Consequently, the lived experiences of BIPOC students in SLHS academic programs are characterized by alienation, marginalization, discrimination, and tokenism (e.g., Fuse & Bergan, 2018; Ginsberg, 2018). Recent attempts to desegregate and diversify the profession have failed (see Ellis & Kendall, 2020) and this discussion has been reintegrated, especially in light of increasing political and social awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020. Deliberately designed comprehensive antiracist curricula could transform the educational environment of SLHS programs and may increase the success of BIPOC students and faculty, while also better preparing students from all backgrounds to be culturally and linguistically responsive clinicians. Such curricula can play an important role in mitigating the negative impact of white privilege on the academic offerings, clinical services, scholarly work, and BIPOC members of our profession (St. Clair & Kishimoto, 2010; Ellis & Kendall, 2020). Such curricular transformation is increasingly necessary given the needs of the profession globally (see Hyter & Salas-Provance, 2019), and in light of the changing racial demographics and the increase in numbers of foreign-born and linguistically minoritized populations in the US.

**Professional Work Settings.** Initiatives taking on the transformation of curricula must become fundamental to SLHS programs, not only due to the limited racial diversity in our programs but also because the roles taken by speech-language pathologists (SLPs) are critically embedded in systems of education and healthcare. In fact, 53% of American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) members and non-members who are certified in SLP work in educational facilities, whereas 39.5% are employed in health facilities (ASHA, 2019). The institutional racism present in these sectors is well documented, broadly recognized, and has had a profoundly detrimental effect on the quality of healthcare and educational services provided for BIPOC individuals and their families with whom SLPs engage regularly (see Smedley et al., 2003; Pillay & Kathard, 2018). Our ability to serve as ethical clinicians who not only advocate for, but also

actively provide, equitable and culturally responsive services to BIPOC individuals is dependent upon addressing these inequities of access and responsiveness. Correcting these practices must be considered a central responsibility in order to provide the most effective services for those enduring these broader racially biased systems.

**Decolonization and Antiracism in Curricular Offerings.** Decolonized perspectives in clinical training programs should prioritize working in partnership with marginalized communities in order to improve the services provided to them. It is no surprise that deep societal inequities influence the way that knowledge is produced and treated in our clinical practices. The only way to counteract this interrelationship between power and knowledge in SLHS is through intentional planning and action toward instituting a decolonized and antiracist pedagogical environment that includes content regarding social constraints, inequities, discrimination, racism, and the power dynamics embedded in unearned white privilege.

A comprehensive decolonized antiracist curriculum should integrate classroom, service-based, and research-based learning activities. Such activities would contribute to antiracist discussions, learning, and the production of knowledge. Academic courses should be designed to facilitate culturally responsive practices and to provide explicit opportunities to consider race, racism, and their implications on a given field in the process. From there, antiracist content should transcend beyond university boundaries and provide built-in opportunities for service-learning opportunities that facilitate community engagement. These opportunities may be deliberately designed to address salient themes of colonization related to the profession, such as race and ethnicity, culture and context, metropolitan and international politics, among others (e.g., Le Sueur, 2003). Indeed, SLHS programs have long been using service learning as a high impact practice (See Ginsberg, 2007; Kent-Walsh, 2010; Mahendra et al, 2013; Peters, 2011).

Service learning is effective in servicing underserved communities making it ripe for application towards antiracism and social justice work (e.g., Abrahams, 2019; Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020). It can also be part of a service-in-return initiative to address the unequal partnership between researchers and those who are researched (e.g., Newkirk-Turner & Morris, 2021). This paper highlights how essential it is to design service-learning opportunities that center on the ongoing effect of racism and facilitate authentic community engagement as one type of service-learning within decolonized antiracist curriculum. Implementing such opportunities in the curriculum will facilitate both white and BIPOC students' understanding of how social factors influence communication. Additionally, such engagement opportunities address the common inclination of BIPOC students to connect with their own communities and the organizations active within them. Such experiences empower and facilitate BIPOC student's first-hand engagement with and understanding of the profession. For BIPOC students, the social barriers and cultural perspectives related to SLP services become resoundingly apparent while simultaneously navigating their communities in the role of a future provider. The inclusion of service-learning opportunities offers BIPOC students a chance to center their lived experiences and intrinsic understanding of their own diverse communities and reduces student isolation from the community.

Finally, a decolonized antiracist curriculum should provide access to decolonized literature, and experience in developing decolonized approaches to research. Students and faculty alike need structured opportunities to appreciate questions that have not been considered within the

medically-based, micro-level focused research inquiries that have typified our field (such as race, systemic racism, discriminatory policies). Students should take an active role in the production of decolonized knowledge in the field. A summary of the principles of this curricular design is shown in Table 1 below.

The following section includes a brief overview of some unique political, social, and economic lived experiences of Arab Americans in the US, to provide context for an antiracist curriculum sample for SLHS education. The selection of this population is based on the author's direct experience and expertise in working with this population, and serves merely to exemplify the suggested comprehensive framework.

### **An Example Comprehensive Antiracist Curriculum based on Work with Arab American Communities**

**Background Context: Arab American Population.** Arab Americans are defined as individuals who self-identify with countries of origin belonging to the League of Arab States. (Khamis-Dakwar & Khattab, 2014; Nassar-McMillan et al., 2015). Based on the 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS), there are an estimated 1.5 million Arab Americans in the US, which has steadily increased by an estimated rate of 91 percent since 1990 (Asi & Bealulieu, 2013). Arab Americans are not officially recognized as a minority group in the US (Arab American Institute, n.d.). Samhan (1999) examined the impact of externally-imposed systems of racial classification on Arab Americans, the development of their identity, and its historical connection to Arab immigration patterns; and found a recurring theme that Arab Americans were considered “not quite white” across the distinct time-periods examined (Samhan, 1999, p. 209). Such sentiments not only erase the physical diversity within the Arab community, but also cement whiteness as a superior classification to which Arabs should aspire.

Arab Americans do not constitute a unitary population, being widely heterogeneous with respect to country of origin, languages and dialects spoken, religious affiliation, and socio-economic status. Hence, there are vast linguistic and cultural differences within and between Arab Americans. Linguistic variations within the heterogeneous Arab American population are underpinned by dialectal variation, diglossic variation, and the contexts within which the Arabic language is learned and used. These factors are summarized in Table 2 below.

Within the field of SLHS, sources regarding Arab Americans commonly assume a homogeneity among them, despite these vast and well-documented variations. Additionally, such resources tend to overlook inherent linguistic and cultural differences between Arabs living in Arab countries and those living in the US. These distinctions often defer to colonized ideas, images and stereotyped representations of Arabs which impacts evidence-based practice service provision and should be critically questioned.

**Table 1**

*Antiracist Curricular Principles, Pedagogical Practices and Research Questions for SLHS Decolonized Antiracist Programs*

| Type of Offering   | Antiracist frameworks for research and community engagement   | Antiracist pedagogical practices  | Antiracist research questions  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Curricular Aspects</b>  | Emphasize social justice and transformation over diversity and multiculturalism.  | Core courses on antiracism, inclusion, and diversity. Offering academic courses designed to facilitate culturally responsive practices explicitly centered on race, racism, and their implications on a given field in the process. These courses facilitate discussions of the social, historical, and political realities of diverse populations and the role that SLPs play in maintaining these discriminatory circumstances. | How do we shift the perspective from a positivist biomedical approach to a more critical decolonized perspective?  |
| <b>Community engagement opportunities</b>                              | Partnership with marginalized communities through service-learning that empowers and connects BIPOC students with their own communities and exemplifies societal level of engagement to all students. | Service-based learning opportunities addressing social, cultural, political, educational, and economic contexts related to speech and language acquisition. Such engagements would provide learning opportunities for students to learn about key impacts of racism on SLP practices and norms, and to become professional advocates and agents of change to dismantle racism in the field.                                       | Critical appraisal of basic assumptions in service provisions (such as monolingual norm-biased framework versus super diversity in understanding language). The partnerships guiding questions offer students an opportunity to develop their own culturally responsive research based on their own interests and lived experiences. |
| <b>Access to decolonized literature and research-based engagements</b> | Critical analysis of medically based and colonized frameworks versus socially-based, decolonized frameworks.  | Critical thinking and self-reflection: Explicit planned integration of critical thinking and self-reflection as it relates to topics affected by racism. Such modules would facilitate students' ability to identify the impact of positionality, racist policies and social norms in the production of knowledge related to marginalized communities and the services provided to them.  | How do we work to address the limited racial representation among scholars in the field? How does positionality and overt and covert power dynamics, social norms, and colonized frameworks impact the formation of inquiry, data collection and analysis, and the interpretation of results?  |

**Table 2**

*Linguistic variation within Arab Americans: Description, consequences, and associated content for antiracist learning*

| Factor                                 | Description   | Consequence  | Content for antiracist curriculum  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Dialectal variation                    | Many Arabic dialects are not mutually intelligible. The closer two areas are geographically, the closer their respective dialects (Holes, 2004).  | An Arabic-speaking clinician may be proficient in their own native dialect, but that may not be mutually intelligible with the dialect spoken by another Arabic-speaking individual.   | Learning about dialectal variation may facilitate understanding and identification of reductionist perspectives on BIPOC communities.  |
| Diglossic variation                    | Diglossia is a sociolinguistic situation in which two language varieties coexist, with complementary functions. The Arabic-speaking community is a diglossic community. One variety, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is primarily imparted academically and used for formal communication, reading, and writing. The other is used for daily spoken communication and is acquired more naturally (Ferguson, 1959).   | Since MSA is mainly accessible through formal education, some Arab Americans may have limited or no proficiency in MSA. Hence, assumed knowledge of MSA has to be evaluated through ethnographic interview and collection of history of language learning and use. Moreover, generalizations about Arab Americans based on the structures or presumed usage of MSA may be irrelevant and/or inaccurate for working with some Arab Americans.   | Learning about the interrelationships between language, identity and the framing of literacy can lead to a deeper understanding of the importance of access to education and social norms in literacy achievement.   |
| Context of language learning variation | Heritage languages are ethnic minority languages or community languages (Montrul, 2012). The term “Heritage speakers” (HSs) refers to bilingual individuals from ethnic or immigrant minority language communities, whose acquisition of their language is either stopped or restricted by formal education in the majority language. The language of the majority takes over in communication, and HSs become at ease in the dominant/majority language while the parental/minority language undergoes attrition (i.e., loss/regression of language; Montrul, 2012). | Since Arabic is a minoritized language in the context of linguistic homogeneity in the US, distinctions must be drawn between HSs and those for whom Arabic is the majority language. These are entirely different contexts. For many HSs, exposure to the native language is reduced or ceases entirely once children start school. Such situations are less apparent in Arab American asylum seekers, refugees, and those settling in the U.S at later ages. (see Khamis-Dakwar & Khattab, 2014; Khamis-Dakwar et al, 2012). | Learning about the lived experiences of minoritized communities and the link between parental input and linguistic outcomes (e.g., Ortega, 2020) can provide insights into the dynamics affecting language development and the distinct yet interacting roles of the home, immediate community, and broader society. |



## Classroom-Based Initiatives Within Antiracist Curricula

**Opportunities and Challenges in Learning About Specific Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations.** In educating students to work as SLPs, educators must recognize that the curriculum with which students are engaged will perpetuate racism and colonialism, unless well-designed curricular opportunities are developed to question and critically process the presented materials. Such initiatives must be explicit in their discussions of the social, historical, and political realities of diverse populations and the role that SLPs play in maintaining these discriminatory circumstances. For example, while learning about Arab Americans, students may encounter erroneous or irrelevant representations intended to prepare them to provide culturally responsive services; this could risk fracturing any pre-existing rapport with the community (see Khamis-Dakwar, 2019). For instance, a renowned textbook in the field includes a paragraph about Arabs stating that 92 percent of Arabs are affiliated with the Muslim religion – while failing to recognize that the majority of Arab Americans are affiliated with Christianity. The textbook also incorporates literature that “others” Arab Americans and presents a collective portrayal of their communication styles as rapid, loud, and emotional, and marked by expansive displays of respect in greetings (see Paul & Norbury, 2012). Such misinformation exemplifies how learning about culturally and linguistically diverse population may be limited and may include low quality information that is comprised of irrelevant and damaging stereotypes. Despite the limited range of resources in SLHS, there are ample documents within health-related disciplines like social work (e.g., Sue, 2019) and psychology (e.g., Nassar-McMillan et al., 2015) that are more accurate and informative, and can be incorporated into learning units about diverse populations. Outlined below is an example of an antiracist curricular offering that makes use of such erroneous representations of diverse populations to facilitate students’ critical thinking and reflective skills, and their growth towards culturally responsive practice based in conceptualization of language skills that includes social, political, and economic contexts.

*An Example Antiracist Module Related to Learning about Arab Americans.* Khamis-Dakwar and Dilollo (2018) developed an instructional critical-thinking module based upon existing resources in order to guide clinicians working with Arab Americans. The module was designed to infuse critical thinking into cultural and linguistic diversity training, and hence was intended to be implemented as part of a critical thinking course or a course on cultural and linguistic diversity.

It includes three sub-modules, each targeting a component of critical thinking: interpretation, evaluation, and metacognition. In the first sub-module, students are introduced to sources within the field that were created to guide work with Arab Americans. The sources include information related to the Arab world such as religious affiliation, as well as stereotypical information about Arabs or Arab Americans. The students are asked to consider the impact of consuming these sources. The second sub-module guides students to reflect on their own preconceptions in order to better understand the associations between their socialized prior knowledge of, experiences with, and attitudes towards Arab Americans. Such an understanding enables students to identify how their own positionality that is bolstered by the biases in the available sources, and results in barriers to questioning or rejecting irrelevant and/or stereotypical information. In the third sub-module, the learned knowledge is discussed in relation to general professional guidelines and best practices in assessing, treating, and engaging with any individual from a marginalized background. A central

theme of this module is the coloniality of professional perspectives and resources in the field, and how this is associated with racism, orientalism, colonization and the general othering of BIPOC. Ultimately facilitating students understanding of the importance of explicitly using decolonized ethnographic interviews and dynamic assessment when working with individuals from diverse populations.

Hyter and Salas-Provance (2019) argue for deeper work with SLHS students on critical thinking and demonstrate ways to implement this in an academic setting. They state that critical self-reflection “is the first step to identify your own cultural values, beliefs, and assumptions in moving towards cultural responsiveness” (p. 23). Self-reflection in our profession is much needed, given the profession’s historically white majority and the extensive barriers to access (see Boulton, Whited, & Easley, 2021). A unit on critical thinking that explicitly teaches about the effects of racism and colonization within the current sources on Arabs and Arab Americans offers one way to address that need, while presenting information related to diverse populations in such a way that students are incentivized to be actively engaged. This approach therefore shifts the student’s consumption of the material from passive to active. Thus, targeting a transition from learning about a societally othered community to instead learning about themselves as immersed in a racist and structurally unequal society (Hyter & Salas-Provance, 2019).

These central themes can be taught by means of different approaches and topics, since racism is embedded across all SLHS practices and knowledge bases (e.g., Ellis & Kendall, 2020; Pillay & Kathard, 2018). The same goal of facilitating students’ understanding of racism and its relevance to their future professional practice can be achieved through other courses addressing general themes in the curriculum. For example, as part of an Interprofessional Education Collaborative workshop faculty in psychology, social work, and SLP are developing a course to cultivate learning about racism, structural systematic discrimination, and positionality within society by focusing on diverse populations. The course will focus on the core competency of ethics, which is less centralized in interprofessional education courses that usually emphasize roles and responsibilities, teamwork, and communication competencies (Abu-Ras et al., 2016). The first part of the course will focus on interprofessional education and interprofessional practice, sociocultural issues, and inequities in health provision. The second part of the course centers on ethical values through a problem-based learning framework. Students will be prompted to engage in self-reflective practices to develop a sense of their personal positionality regarding the reality of health care disparities and the underlying racist policies that maintain them. Students will also be given opportunities to apply their acquired knowledge and skills through roleplay and standardized patient simulation, which will encourage them to assume the role of agents of change.

It should be noted that these suggested modules, courses and teaching activities are potential expansions to the curriculum. Hence, their implementation depends on the capacity and expertise of the faculty, and their engagement in social justice work. Such additions cannot be effective without a well-designed core course on antiracism, inclusion, and diversity. Additionally, the unit must be adequately supported by the institution’s faculty and administration alike in order to most successfully transform both the curriculum and the working environment into a diverse and explicitly antiracist framework. Such a core course could be informed by disability studies and critical race theory (DisCrit) that is detached from the “multicultural” and “diversity” models (e.g., Horton, 2021; Yu et al, 2021). It would introduce students to crucial definitions in order to facilitate

discussions of unearned white privilege, systemic discrimination, and institutional racism through the perspective of critical race theory (see St. Clair & Kishimoto, 2010; Privette, 2021). These curricular changes do not need to be created as a separate set of courses but should be part of the general curriculum along with core courses on critical thinking, research, and cultural diversity that are offered in SLHS academic programs. Targeting these curricular changes as part of the general curriculum may address the risk of marginalizing BIPOC students through separate elective offerings on social justice work. This integration process would also reinforce the antiracist curriculum by demonstrating a commitment to equity, inclusivity, and antiracism at the core of academic programming in SLHS.

### **Service-based initiatives within antiracist curricula**

#### **Service-Based Learning in SLHS Academic Programs: Benefits and Implementations.**

Clinical practice is reflective of the frameworks used for scholarly inquiry. Traditionally, these frameworks are limited in addressing social and cultural diversity, due to both an insistence on “fixing” any deviation from some socially constructed norm, and a focus on the individual rather than examining broader systems. Hence, future innovative clinical practice should involve changing the one-on-one, deficit-based intervention to a reimagined “population-based as an expansion to the traditional dominant individual health care model” (Abrahams et al., 2019, p.8). Service-learning is a common instructional method in SLHS academic programs and can be integrated across different courses, while engaging different populations (e.g., Ginsberg, 2007; Peters, 2011; Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020). This approach has been shown to be effective in ameliorating biases, such as negative perceptions of individuals who have dementia (Kaf et al., 2011). One of the main reported benefits of service-learning is the opportunity to apply and integrate learned knowledge across different courses during students’ academic progress (Peters, 2011). Service-learning may also have more long-lasting effects, including strengthening communities and changing negative attitudes towards communicative differences and variations. It is an effective educational approach for students in SLHS programs since it taps into their interest in serving their own communities (Peters, 2011). Another benefit of service-learning is its potential to provide opportunities for students to learn about intangible concepts, such as humility, empathy, social responsibility, integrity, ethical morality, and solidarity with marginalized communities (see Veyvoda & Van Cleave, 2020). Therefore, service-learning aspects of SLHS curricula can contribute to the dismantling of systems of oppression by engaging students within communities that have been and are subject to that oppression.

***An Antiracist Service-Learning Experience with Arab Americans.*** The Language Environment Analysis (LENA) Start, a parent education program, was developed to prevent avoidable inequalities resulting from the perspective of linguistic homogeneity in the US, and to maximize potential bilingual advantages for children in minoritized communities (LENA, 2020). Children raised in minority language-speaking communities are considered heritage speakers (HSs); that is, individuals for whom the course of language acquisition is distinctive due to incomplete acquisition and/or attrition of their first language, the language of the minority (see Khamis-Dakwar & Khattab, 2014). This situation arises because, unlike typical language acquisition in monolingual or bilingual situations, the exposure and use of the home language is not maintained for HSs. As a result, their ability to use the minority language (e.g., Arabic), is reduced or even ceased entirely with the introduction of the language of the majority (e.g., English). Research has

shown that this early shift in the amount of exposure and use of a home language may impact language development and educational engagement down the line (Pena et al., 2011). Hence, parents from these linguistically minoritized communities would benefit from education and support to help them maintain continued exposure to both languages for their children and facilitate language growth and learning in the process. In LENA Start parent education program, parents meet weekly for 13 weeks and learn together about child's brain development, language development and literacy and practice developing the quantity and quality of their talk based on fourteen talking tips identified to be effective in the literature (Elmquist et al, 2020) In addition, parents use LENA recorders each week to measure the number of adult words, conversational interactions spoken to their child as well as the number of hours of which background noise was present during their interaction with their child on recording day. Using LENA Start, practitioners can gather much-needed evidence to support parents' education and support to maintain their minoritized language exposure and use, and take a more active role in language planning for their children. By offering these services in Brooklyn, NY, the author addressed a social need for enhancing the provision of evidence-based, culturally and linguistically sensitive services to these communities, while also providing opportunities for students to engage in service-based learning. This service-learning opportunity aims to facilitate students' awareness to the prominent evaluation and treatment of linguistic variation based on assumptions and principles from monolingual, middle class norms in SLHS, which at times deem linguistic variation and bilingualism a deficit or a challenge to social success (e.g., Canella, 1997; Horton, 2021). It also facilitates students understanding and professional engagement as advocates for educational and health care equity.

In partnership with nearby community-based organizations, LENA training can be expanded and made accessible to students as a service-based opportunity focused on maintaining children's heritage languages and empowering their parents as they navigate prejudiced societal and educational systems. Such service-based learning would facilitate students' abilities to identify linguistic homogeneity, explore the oppressive educational systems in which their field is engaged, and design actions to advocate for change. As Ellis and Kendall (2002) point out, having the field move to "deeper discussions and action centered on justice and the oppressive systems that disrupt equality...could result in practices that reduce racism in our higher education programs, clinical practice, and research enterprises and will consequently improve clinical outcomes and client satisfaction for all population that we serve" (p. 12). Such a discussion is highly relevant in light of positivist frameworks adopted by much of the professional community of SLPs that over-rely on "reductionist, psycholinguistic, and biomedical logic" (Mershen & Harsha, 2018, p. 145). Such frameworks can be useful when addressing biologically-based processes and cellular-based pathologies, but ought to be contested in professional SLHS research and practice with hearing, communication, and swallowing disorders (Pillay & Kathard, 2018). The LENA training is one approach to doing this. It was developed with the aim of empowering Arabic-speaking families to maintain the use of their racially minoritized language. As a result, engaging in this training and studying the associated processes and outcomes broadens students' conceptualizations, from a prescriptive focus on narrow technical language proficiency in individuals to a more expansive understanding of the complex interactions between language ability and socio-political and cultural contexts.

**Research-based initiatives within antiracist curricula.** The curriculum in SLHS programs should be systematically designed to provide students with opportunities to learn about decolonized research journeys, and to contribute to such research based on their own lived experiences and interests. These opportunities would facilitate students' ability to identify covert impacts of power dynamics, social norms, and colonized frameworks on the formation of inquiry, data collection analysis, and the interpretation of scholarly work and more nuanced socially just interpretation of the results. When implemented in the author's program, this approach offers a natural opportunity to share research on Arabic diglossia, the decolonization process, and power relations in research (Khamis-Dakwar, 2016). Students are shown how diglossic variation is either completely overlooked or is used to other those within diglossic speech communities. They are guided to explore how it is that BIPOC researchers often fall into these pre-established frameworks of study founded on unequal conceptualizations of different languages and dialects. Finally, a strong emphasis is placed on the importance of questioning basic assumptions in research designs and their guiding questions, because knowledge is, in fact, power and has often been weaponized as a tool for control.

A decolonized curriculum offers students an opportunity to develop their own culturally responsive research based on their own interests and lived experiences. Such opportunities should be offered to students at all levels: undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral level students alike. Previous students at the author's institution have developed several imaginative studies relating to diverse speech communities. These studies instantiate the power of such opportunities and the potential contributions of current students to the profession. For example, an undergraduate student developed a study on the correlations between self-related comfort/confidence and speech intelligibility/comprehensibility in English among speakers of Spanish as a first language from Central America (Canales et al., 2020). Such studies challenge preconceived notions of Standard American English as a desired norm, as well as the very nature of accent from a technical perspective. This research supports a deeper understanding of sociocultural dimensions to the study of accent. Other studies developed by graduate students have focused on the study of language acquisition in Haitian Americans (Tolès & Khamis-Dakwar, 2020) and Guyanese Creole speakers (Nashurdeen & Khamis-Dakwar, 2018). Each of these challenges the monolithic representation of speakers in non-dominant language communities by contributing detailed information about their respective internal linguistic and sociological profiles. These findings have great value when observing communicative, linguistic, and speech among individuals with these backgrounds.

While these are interesting examples, there is so much left to explore. Instead of depending on individual faculty members' willingness to donate their time and expertise to these endeavors, these opportunities should be implemented on a larger scale and deliberately built into curricula.

## **Conclusions**

This paper envisions teaching and learning practices for higher educational functioning "as it could [be] and not as it is" (Gannon, 2020, p. 19). After all, universities are microcosms of the larger society. Therefore, an awareness and acknowledgement of social inequities is a critical first step towards ending the reproduction of these systems in exclusionary higher educational institutions. Curricular transformation also includes offering courses that are designed to develop a culturally

responsive practice partially influenced by studies of racism in society and its exemplification in SHLS. Ultimately, these courses could facilitate the role of SLPs as change agents (see Abrahams et al., 2019). In addition to these courses, authentic community engagement opportunities are needed for BIPOC students in particular to connect with their communities, and to resist social barriers and cultural perspectives related to our services.

It is imperative that students engage in research that is decolonized and culturally responsive, whether it be focused on marginalized communities or addressing inequities in the services provided to such communities. The proposed examples for each of these three components are based upon scholarly and community-based work relating to Arab Americans, and are meant to delineate a potential pathway for instituting an effective antiracist curriculum. Such a curriculum would heavily rely on the preexisting scholarly work and lived experiences of BIPOC faculty members in each academic program. Based on their expertise and experiences, BIPOC faculty members will lead the curricular transformation process and design partnerships among the communities least represented at the university. BIPOC community members are knowledgeable leaders and should not be treated as tokenized commodities.

Finally, and perhaps most important, the kind of pedagogical transformation outlined here requires a commitment to the ongoing development of the curriculum. According to Kendi (2020), part of being antiracist is acknowledging that transforming an environment is an active effort. In working to support and empower BIPOC students and faculty who have been systemically marginalized, and it is necessary to set priorities for crafting an effective antiracist curriculum. The diversification of faculty and the student body is not effective alone since it does not necessarily alter the learning environment itself. Instead, such efforts must accompany substantive curricular resistance to systemic discrimination dominant within the SLHS professional field, whether intentional or otherwise. Developing antiracist environments and practices is a continuous process that evolves along a continuum (Kendi, 2020).

Lastly, these curricular suggestions should accompany key transformations in both administrative and curricular spheres of SLP and audiology academic training. There is a need for explicit antiracist interventions in both of these arenas in order to address the institutionalized racism and discrimination currently embedded in all aspects of SLHS training programs. These include bias in admissions, alienation in the classroom, and retention of BIPOC students and faculty. It is important to note that SLHS academic training programs are not designed to address social justice issues or the history of racism (Ellis & Kendall, 2020). Historically, the profession of SLP has adopted medical frameworks, resulting in a tendency to assume neutral positions which “can limit the possibilities for professional practice in its inability to recognize the profession as embedded in coloniality” (Abrahams et al., 2019, p. 2). The professional community’s penchant for neutrality ultimately results in a careless failure to address their positionality in a field dominated by white middle class women. Moreover, the scarcity of resources on cultural and linguistic diversity (e.g., Abrahams et al., 2019; Ellis & Kendall, 2020) renders professional training and conceptualizations of SLPs value-free, non-innovative, and unscientific.

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