Language of Identity, Language of Access

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Liberatory Learning for Multilingual Classrooms

Michelle Benegas

Natalia Benjamin

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FOR INFORMATION

Corwin
A SAGE Company
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320
(800) 233-9936
www.corwin.com

SAGE Publications Ltd.
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP
United Kingdom

SAGE Publications India Pvt. Ltd.
Unit No 323-333, Third Floor, F-Block
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New Delhi 110 019
India

SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific Pte. Ltd.
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China Square Central
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Preface

In July 2020, the Conference on College Composition and Communication Special Committee on Composing a Statement on Anti-Black Racism and Black Linguistic Justice published a list of demands. One of them called on educators to re-examine a long-held ideology and accompanying body of pedagogical approaches: "We DEMAND that teachers and researchers acknowledge that socially constructed terms such as academic language and standard English are false and entrenched in notions of white supremacy and whiteness that contribute to anti-Black linguistic racism" (Baker-Bell et al., n.d.[1]).

In a field that is dedicated to multiculturalism and personal empowerment, this demand cannot be ignored. To those of us who benefit from white privilege and other forms of privilege, it is time to take a hard look at our practices to see how we are participating in and perpetuating linguistic oppression. In order to build liberatory spaces in education, we must first begin with self-examination and determine the changes needed for our students to feel safe and empowered to express themselves authentically.

Language of Identity, Language of Access (LILA) builds on what has historically been called academic language instruction (Dutro & Moran, 2003; Zwiers, 2008) and embraces more modern approaches such as translanguaging (García, 2009) and language architecture (Flores & Rosa, 2015). It attends to two often polarized commitments in language education:

1. Teachers acknowledge that English is a form of social capital and it is their responsibility to provide students with this tool for social mobility.
2. Teachers acknowledge the importance of validating and valuing home languages and dialects and welcoming them into academic spaces.

As opposing perspectives, the rivaling commitments above are unhelpful. This book asks educators to simultaneously hold both positions, thus breaking the binary for the betterment of student learning. Rejecting the socially constructed hierarchy of languages and language varieties, LILA is centered on the concept of linguistically sustaining and expanding instruction. Educators create linguistically *sustaining* environments by welcoming the language of identity and criticality into the classroom (language that reflects students' full

[1]Since the list of demands was originally published in 2020, Baker-Bell et al. (n.d.) have changed the language of the first demand to "We demand that teachers stop using academic language and standard English as the accepted communicative norm, which reflects White mainstream English."

linguistic repertoires and language to both name and explain their experiences). Educators create linguistically *expanding* environments when they provide explicit instruction on the language of access (linguistic features that give students access to new concepts or spaces).

LILA promotes intentional multimodal opportunities for language use while also providing targeted language instruction on the language features that are needed to access content across the curriculum. This offers students a broader linguistic repertoire than would be possible if the teacher were to only ascribe to one of the above commitments. A broader repertoire means greater access, choice, and validation in a variety of contexts in and outside of the classroom. This will therefore result in a liberating language learning environment where students feel seen and are also challenged to develop the language skills needed for success in school and beyond.

From Michelle: I live in a country where the average white household earns twice as much as the average Black or Latino household (Aladangady & Forde, 2021). I live in a community where George Floyd was asphyxiated under the knee of a police officer. I live in a home where my Latino husband has daily racialized experiences that remind me of the two worlds we live in. I am white. My children struggle to navigate their own biracial identities. I work in a profession that is at a crossroads. This book is an attempt to make right my own contributions to an oppressive language ideology and *call in* the field of education to move forward toward not only equality but also antiracism, and not only equity but also anti-assimilationism when it comes to language in the classroom. We can no longer ignore the ties between racism and traditional approaches to academic language instruction. Taking action to build spaces where teachers center a liberatory approach to language development will benefit all students.

From Natalia: I was born and raised in a colonized country, Guatemala, where oppressive language practices are present in everyday interactions between the privileged colonial Spanish language and the other 24 Maya, Xinca, and Garifuna languages spoken by racialized communities. Rather than learning the original languages of my home country, I grew up learning European and Anglosaxon languages. In Guatemalan society and in my parents' eyes, these languages were deemed languages of access to economic opportunities. In fact, these languages opened the door for me to attend university in the

United States and to have access to a French education in high school. And with this, Mayan, Xinca, and Garifuna languages were left out of my language repertoire. Oppressive language practices exist across the globe, and educators can play an important role in elevating all languages in their educational spaces. As part of a bilingual family, my children have had to wrestle with their bilingual identity and figure out how it is an asset rather than a reason to feel othered by monolingual speakers in monolingual settings, especially those in education. Building the language of identity and criticality not only has been liberating for me as a Latina immigrant woman, but it has also helped my children feel pride of their language skills and it has helped my students feel seen and find joy in school.

Language of Identity, Language of Access: Liberatory Learning for Multilingual Classrooms is a guide for all teachers who are committed to linguistically sustaining pedagogies and seek to empower students with linguistic capital for social mobility.

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How to Use This Book

This book is organized in four sections. Part A: A Liberatory Approach to Language and Literacy in the Classroom includes Chapter 1, which provides the theories and foundations of the LILA approach. Part B: Language of Identity and Criticality: Linguistically Sustaining Instruction includes Chapter 2, which presents the foundations of instruction of the language of identity and criticality, followed by Chapter 3, which offers practical applications of theory (PATs) of translanguaging that help students develop the language of identity through the use of their full linguistic repertoire. In Chapter 4, the language of identity and criticality is developed with PATs of community cultural wealth, and in Chapter 5, teachers can find PATs of language orientations to build identity and criticality while developing language skills in all language domains. Part C: Language of Access: Linguistically Expanding Instruction begins with Chapter 6, which lays out the foundations of the language of access. Chapter 7 offers PATs for building word-level language of access in the area of morphology. Chapter 8 offers PATs for building sentence-level language of access. And Chapter 9 offers PATs for building discourse-level language of access. Part D: LILA: Putting It All Together includes Chapter 10, which shows how teachers can strategize how to design lessons that attend to both the language of identity and the language of access, as well as programmatic planning to ensure that multilingual learners grow in their home language development while building the linguistic skills needed to be successful in and outside of the classroom.

This book contains special features to call attention to important ideas and applications for educators:

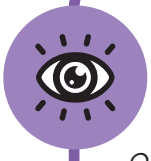
VOCES

Voces means "voices" in Spanish. This section narrates teacher experiences from the classroom.

Image source: istock.com/George lanta

REFLECCIÓN

Reflecciónes are used at the end of chapter sections to help the reader pause and think about how the principles and ideas relate to their current practice. *Reflección* is a cognate of *reflection* and is used as a reminder that educators can embed words from languages other than English in their lessons and model translanguaging. Cognates are words that carry the same root across different languages for the same ideas. Translanguaging is explained in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 3. It is used to engage with students using their full linguistic repertoires.



OJO

Ojo is the Spanish word for "eye." It is used in Spanish-speaking countries to note that something needs special attention.

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PATs

PATs are practical applications of theory and are embedded in Parts B and C to show educators how to put into practice the theoretical and conceptual frameworks discussed in each section. Each PAT has several sections presented in a table format:

- Theory(ies)
- Target domains
- Recommended grades
- Learning targets (criticality, identity, and/or access)[1]
- Materials and resources
- Instructions
- Printable and downloadable resources

[1]This section includes language of identity and/or language of access objectives depending on the focus of the PAT. Both are activated at all times. However, PATs in Part B highlight the language of identity, while PATs in Part C highlight the language of access. Since language is *taught* and identity is *developed*, the format for the identity focus and access language objective is slightly different.

END-OF-CHAPTER CONVERSACIÓN

Each chapter ends with discussion questions to help educators implement the concepts in each chapter in their classroom practice. *Conversación* is the Spanish word for "conversation" and reminds us to engage in dialogue with other educators in teaching contexts through professional learning communities. This helps to create coherence across teams and for students to be able to have consistent experiences across content classes.

Visit the companion website at
https://resource.corwin.com/LILA
for downloadable resources.

A Note on Terminology

We acknowledge that language is always changing and that language used to refer to speakers of languages other than English in the context of education in the United States continues to evolve. We use the term *multilingual learners* to refer to students in school systems who speak more than one language. This term extends to these students' communities and families that speak languages other than English, and we use the terms *multilingual communities* and *multilingual families* to refer to them. In the United States, students who speak a language other than English qualify to be screened for proficiency in the English language. Each state has its own unique criteria to identify students who need support in the English language in schools. Students who qualify to receive services to support their learning have the right to receive "English learner (EL) services." In this book, you will notice that some speakers who share their experience use this term. While this term is still found in legislative language and in various settings, it fails to uplift the gift of multilingualism and emphasizes only one side of the student experience. This term is also used when referring to the services students receive at school. When referring to language proficiency, the term *English language development* (ELD) refers to an individual's language development in English. We recognize that language is fluid and we strive to use terms that are asset based when referring to our students.

Acknowledgments

Language of Identity, Language of Access was born of the need to bridge a divide in our field. A great many colleagues, family, and friends met us at this intersection and supported us through the process of writing this book. We are honored to be members of communities who share our commitment to linguistic equity and who are willing to ask hard questions. We would like to acknowledge and thank the following:

We thank Jenna Cushing-Leubner for introducing us to each other. She generously stayed late after a research meeting to brainstorm the concept for this book. It is because of her academic matchmaking that this book exists. Thank you. Mil gracias. It was Jenna's work with J. Eik that introduced Natalia to the world of heritage language speakers, and this changed Natalia's professional practice in the classroom forever.

We are eternally grateful to the educators who shared their time, thoughts, and experiences with us. We would especially like to thank Amy Stolpestad, Nelson Flores, Myrna Jacobs, Kathleen Mitchell, Patsy Egan, Chelda Smith Kondo, and Muffett Trout for cultivating the seeds that would become this book. Thanks to Amy Hewett-Olatunde, Krista Schweppe, and Jeremiah Brown for sharing their expert applications of the language of access. Natalia's co-teacher, Courtney Peterson, made room to innovate in the classroom and develop lessons that involved identity and criticality development, making room for teacher creativity and student engagement. Other classroom teachers were also instrumental in sharing their ideas and work in their classrooms. Thank you, Malachi Johnson, José Martinez, and Will Ruffin II, for taking the time to make connections between your work with students and the language of identity and criticality. Thank you, Pang Yang, for being a fierce advocate for the field of heritage speaker education, especially Hmong teaching and for leading the way with other Hmong educators through the National Hmong Educators Coalition. Thank you, Mai Neng Vang, for sharing your poetry work with the multilingual learners in Natalia's class so they could have a model for writing. While teaching often takes place individually in many classrooms, it's the community of teachers who share with each other and support each other that develops the art of teaching in educators.

We would be remiss not to mention the tremendous support extended to us by Corwin. Now retired, Corwin program director and publisher for equity and professional learning Dan Alpert was instrumental in shepherding this book through conception to the final draft. We recognize how fortunate

we are to have been able to engage his vast knowledge of language, education, and publishing prior to his departure. We also wish to thank Megan Bedell, senior acquisitions editor, and Mia Rodriguez, content development editor, for their guidance. They were a steadfast source of support throughout the process of writing this book.

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Michelle would like to thank her parents, Drs. Steve and Suellen Campbell, for modeling how academics can use their careers for the greater good. Gracias to my husband, Rubén, for moral support in the process of writing this labor of love. Additionally, thanks to my daughters, Eva, Isabel, and Sofia, for embodying the spirit of this book—multilingual, beautiful, and proudly multicultural.

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Principal
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Neil MacNeill
Teacher, Mentor, Author
Ellenbrook Primary School
Ellenbrook, Australia

LANGUAGE OF IDENTITY, LANGUAGE OF ACCESS

Laura Metcalfe
School Administrator/Postsecondary professor
Grand Canyon University
Mesa, AZ

Catherine Sosnowski
Curriculum Consultant
Torrington Public Schools
Torrington, CT

About the Authors

Michelle Benegas began her career in the best profession on earth, teaching English in a newcomer high school and an evening adult basic education program in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Just as she had come into her stride, life threw her a curveball with the premature birth of her twins and then her third child with a complex medical profile. She found that higher education offered an opportunity to stay engaged with immigrant/language education while still attending to her children's personal and medical needs. In September 2010, she dropped her twins off at their first day of kindergarten, her two-year-old at her first day of daycare, and this mostly stay-at-home mom began a PhD in second language education at the University of Minnesota.

Now an associate professor of TESOL at Hamline University, Benegas prepares English language (EL) teachers, as well as general education teachers, to meet the needs of linguistically diverse students. She was the principal investigator of the English Learners in the Mainstream Project, a National Professional Development grant from the U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition from 2016 to 2022. Based on this work, she co-authored the best-seller *Teacher Leadership for School-Wide English Learning* (2020, TESOL Press) and launched the School Wide English Learning (SWEL) Professional Development Series for TESOL Education.

Benegas promotes an uninterrupted language learning experience for multilingual learners through harnessing the expertise of EL teachers to serve as site-based experts and coaches to their general education colleagues. Benegas has prepared over 600 EL teacher leaders across the country. Her scholarly interests include EL teacher leadership, teacher leader identity, systemic approaches to improving EL services, and etymology. You can connect with her via email at michelle@benegasconsulting.com or learn more at https://benegasconsulting.com.

Natalia Benjamin taught high school ethnic studies and multilingual learners at Century High School, in Rochester, Minnesota. After teaching for seven years in the classroom, she accepted a position to lead the department as the director for multilingual learning for Rochester Public Schools in 2022.

Natalia moved to the United States to attend college, and in 1999 she finished her bachelor's degree in molecular biology. She then pursued a master's degree in language acquisition and teaching from Brigham Young University, where she graduated in 2007. She is dually licensed in K–12 ESL and reading. Natalia grew up in Guatemala speaking Spanish and learning French in a French immersion school throughout her elementary, middle, and high school years. She was able to finish the Guatemalan high school diploma and attended Colegio Experimental Francés Julio Verne for an additional year to earn a French high school diploma. Throughout her education she was exposed to many language classes (Latin, Greek, and Russian) in addition to the core languages of school (Spanish and English).

When her family moved to Idaho, there wasn't an opportunity to access bilingual education or a way to sustain Spanish learning or other language learning for the family's young children. As a result, she opened a private business, Discovering Languages, to meet this community need. She taught Spanish and French to early childhood and elementary-age students in this setting for six years prior to working with multilingual students in public school settings. She also volunteered for bilingual story time at the local library, organized several cultural events for the community, and participated in community outreach. Her passion for language education inspired her to pursue a certificate in heritage speakers language education from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, where she has taught as a guest professor for the Race and Ethnic Studies course in the Heritage Education Program for practicing teachers.

She advocates for multilingual and multicultural education and, as a teacher, was involved in the teacher's union Education Minnesota Facing Inequities and Racism in Education–Racial Equity Advocates (FIRE-REA) program, where she worked on cultural competency trainings. She worked on advocacy in education with several organizations whose common purpose is to support teachers and students: Education Minnesota League of Latinx Educators; Employees of Color Resource Group for Rochester Public Schools, part of the Rochester Education Association executive board; and the Women Issues Committee for the National Education Association. She is also involved in the work of ethnic studies as part of the Minnesota Coalition for Ethnic Studies and Education for Liberation Minnesota.

Natalia was named the 2021 Minnesota Teacher of the Year. That same year, she was chosen to represent Minnesota as the 2021 California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence and subsequently received the 2022 NEA Foundation Teaching in Excellence Horace Mann Award. Natalia has also been recognized locally, receiving the Mayor Medal of Honor in 2019 and the Mary Diaz award from MinneTESOL in 2021. She is passionate about the liberation of marginalized students and works on important issues such as identity work, heritage speakers, language justice, ethnic studies, culturally responsive and sustaining education, and humanizing pedagogies. She believes that student-centered learning is vital for student success and embeds these teaching philosophies in the work she does with educators in her district and across the United States.

Dedication

From Michelle Benegas

*To **my daughters, Eva, Isabel, and Sofia,** who only know a life that is multicultural and multilingual. You are not half of anything. You are fully Latina and fully American.*

*To **my husband, Ruben,** for supporting me to grow into the best version of myself.*

*To **Amy Stolpestad, Nelson Flores, Myrna Jacobs, Kathleen Mitchell, Patsy Egan, Chelda Smith Kondo, and Muffett Trout**, for cultivating the seeds that would become this book.*

*To **Jenna Cushing-Leubner** for introducing me to Natalia and for your infectious commitment to linguistic equity.*

*To **ML teacher leaders—**You are my closest friends. You have taught me most of what I know about language teaching and learning. You are the real thing.*

From Natalia Benjamin

*To **my children, Miguel, José, Mario, and Amaliya,** who first taught me how important it is for young people to have opportunities that create positive multilingual and multicultural identities.*

*To all my students and the **young multilingual learners** who step into learning spaces every day.*

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*To **my teacher friends** who inspire me, listen to me, help me grow, and support me to overcome challenges and be resilient.*

PART A

A Liberatory Approach to Language and Literacy in the Classroom

CHAPTER ONE

It's Time to Do Better

Moving Beyond Either/Or Binary Thinking About Language in the Classroom

Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.

—Maya Angelou

AN EVOLUTION IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The reading wars. Inquiry-based versus direct instruction. New math versus old math. Every discipline evolves over time. In language education, the concept at the center of discussion is academic language. This book begins with highlights from an ongoing dialogue between two leading linguists that showcases this evolution in the field.

Jim Cummins: Canadian linguist who developed a predominant framework in language education that undergirds many of the current pedagogical approaches to academic language instruction. His work is centered on academic language instruction for equity.

Academic language became a predominant term in 1979 when Cummins conceptualized what he referred to as the two types of language:

1. Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)
2. Basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS)

This paradigm called out the possibility that a student could be strong in conversational skills (BICS) and need more support in classroom language (CALP) or vice versa. This resonated with teachers who noticed students who appeared to demonstrate the proficiency needed to engage with school tasks if measured by their ability to hold a casual conversation but their assessments told another story. It was a call for all teachers to be "academic language teachers" underscored by the shared understanding that all students are learners of academic language. Positioning the teacher as a critical component in students' language development was a move toward leveling the playing field for multilingual learners (MLs) who were still acquiring English. Cummins further hypothesized that failure to provide adequate language instruction for MLs results in semilingualism—a phenomenon in which a multilingual person is not fully proficient in any language.

Published in the *Harvard Educational Review*, Jim Cummins's (2017) article "Teaching Minoritized Students: Are Additive Approaches Legitimate?" delivers a haughty critique of the concepts of translanguaging (Garcia) and raciolinguistics (Flores and Rosa). Claiming that Flores and Rosa reject "instructional strategies to extend students' academic language repertoires in both their home language and the dominant school language" (p. 415), he also questions how raciolinguistic ideologies manifest in pedagogy. That is, he asks Flores and Rosa to demonstrate how teachers can *do* raciolinguistics.

Nelson Flores: Puerto Rican linguist whose research is in the areas of translanguaging and raciolinguistics. His work reveals ways in which learners and language are racialized, and he promotes an antiracist stance in language instruction.

Nelson Flores and Jonathan Rosa's (2015) publication of "Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Language Diversity in Education" ignited a reckoning in the field. In this article, they call out ways in which racism permeates the fields of linguistics and language education. In particular, they called out the concept of semilingualism as "a general theory of why elite bilingualism (bilingualism of affluent communities) appears to lead to improved cognitive ability while minoritized

bilingualism (bilingualism of marginalized communities) appears to lead to cognitive deficiencies" (p. 156). Both Flores and Rosa have since published widely on the impact of racialized ideologies on language teaching and learning.

Nelson Flores (2020a) published a blog post on his open-access website titled "Are People Who Support the Concept of Academic Language Racist? An FAQ." In it, he challenged Cummins's conceptualization of BICS and CALP:

> Not only does this sound like a dichotomy to me but based on this definition when somebody describes children as having BICS but not CALP they are essentially arguing that they only engage in cognitively undemanding language practices. This deficit framing isn't entirely surprising since Cummins had originally used the term semilingualism before introducing the BICS and CALP dichotomy. It also isn't surprising that this framing would lead to remediation. (para. 3)

Flores often references his own experiences as a multilingual child, in which teachers failed to acknowledge the assets that his multilingualism brought to the classroom. He asserts that the BICS and CALP paradigm is rooted in deficit-based ideology as it positions language related to family as "basic" and language used at school as "cognitive."

VOCES

"A mentor once told me: ELL is a system that makes you lose your language, and one day when you want to learn your language again, it is typically in college where you have to pay. Or in other words, the system makes you lose your language and then benefits from it once you attempt to relearn. While it may be unintentional, this is a cycle of capitalism, white supremacy, and cultural assimilation." (Vang, quoted in Dernbach, 2022, para. 22).

The ongoing dialogue between Jim Cummins and Nelson Flores has captivated the language education community. Many language educators have dedicated their careers to Jim Cummins's conceptualization of academic language instruction as a tool for social justice while also empathizing with Flores's position that language teachers should be in the business of expanding MLs' linguistic repertoires, not suppressing

them. These polarized commitments are the platform for this book:

1. Teachers acknowledge that academic English is a form of social capital, and it is our responsibility to provide students with this tool for social mobility.
2. Teachers acknowledge the importance of validating and valuing home languages and dialects and welcoming them into the classroom.

REFLECCIÓN

1. What is the language ethos of your workplace? When language is discussed in professional development and/or curricular planning, does it tend to align more with Commitment I or Commitment 2 above? What does this say about the beliefs and practices in your professional community?
2. Share your experience between these two commitments throughout your career. Have you felt more drawn to one or the other at a particular point in time? If so, why?
3. What problems could arise if an educator were aligned with just one of these commitments?

EMBRACING OUR POLARIZED COMMITMENTS: FINDING MIDDLE GROUND

At times, education researchers find themselves engaged in ideological rivalries that educators do not identify with. Teachers find the idea of choosing to be on Team Academic Language or Team Translanguaging to be impractical, unjust, and potentially absurd. *Language of Identity, Language of Access* (LILA) offers students a broader linguistic repertoire than would be possible if a teacher were to ascribe to only one of ideologies listed above. After all, we should offer students opportunities for social mobility while fostering cultural pride. Embracing both commitments offers students greater access,

choice, and validation in a variety of contexts in and outside of the classroom. LILA validates what teachers already know about language in the classroom and offers a catalog of promising practices that embrace both commitments.

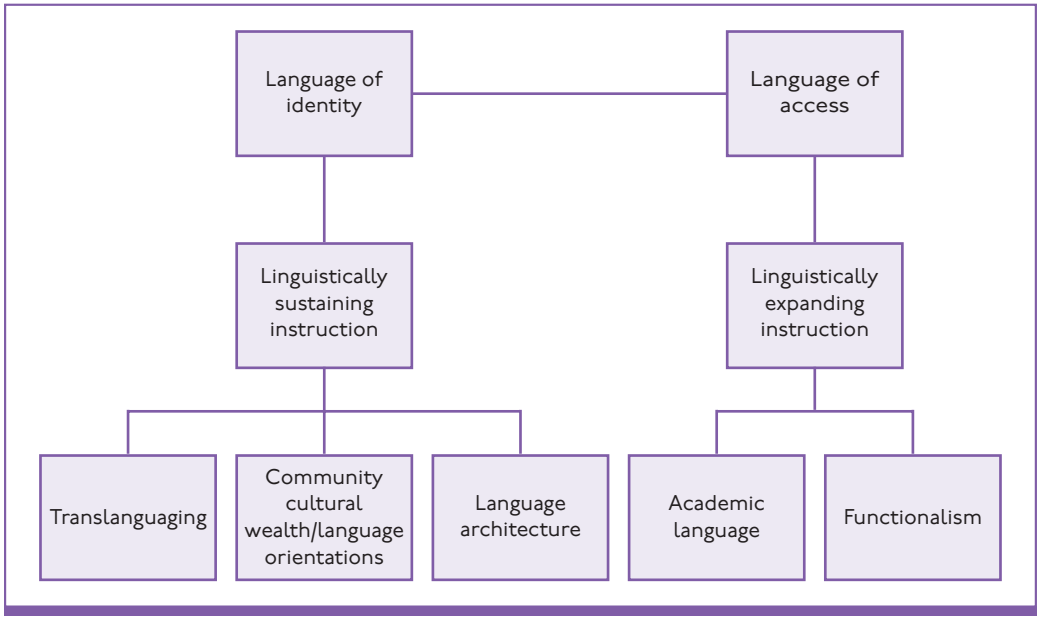
Current approaches to English language education in the United States are resulting in home language loss, which has subsequent cultural and identity ramifications for our students. If you were to ask a group of adults who learned English in U.S. schools, you would likely find someone who reports that the label "English learner" felt like a scarlet letter—a source of shame and a position to get out of as quickly as possible. Those same adults may also describe a feeling of not fitting in in either cultural group and regret for their limited proficiency in their first language. This regret often manifests as shame. Paris (2011) defines "language" not as a rigid, static structure, but rather as a dynamic, fluid set of practices inherently tied to identity. Horner et al. (2011) write that "language norms are actually heterogeneous, fluid, and negotiable. . . . [A] translingual approach directly counters demands that writers must conform to fixed, uniform standards" (p. 305). It is incumbent upon teachers to normalize multilingual brains so as not to suppress linguistic strengths that students bring into the classroom.

Dismantling the home language–school language paradigm, otherwise known as BICS and CALP, LILA rejects the socially constructed hierarchy of languages and language varieties. LILA asks educators to create linguistically liberatory spaces where students are welcome to activate their entire linguistic repertoire in the learning process and identify areas in which students' linguistic repertoires can grow, thus providing access to new contexts and conversations.

LILA builds on what is known about academic language instruction (Dutro & Moran, 2003; Zwiers, 2008) as well as more contemporary approaches such as translanguaging (García, 2009) and language architecture (Flores, 2020b). It is also informed by what scholars of linguistically and culturally responsive teaching show us about the value of knowing your students' cultural backgrounds (Gay, 2002; Hollie & Mora-Flores, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris, 2011). Similar to Bishop's (1990) framework of windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors, LILA asks educators to offer students mirrors to see themselves, windows to see new things, and sliding glass doors to move in between spaces.

Educators create linguistically sustaining environments by welcoming home language and language varieties into the classroom. In this book, we refer to the language that represents and affirms different linguistic communities as the *language of identity*. Educators also create linguistically expanding environments when they provide explicit instruction on the linguistic features that will give students access to new concepts or spaces. We refer to language that is outside of students' linguistic repertoires as the *language of access*.

Figure 1.1 • LILA Sources for Practical Applications of Theory



For the purposes of this book, *theory* means a set of principles on which the practice is based. Built on decades of theoretical foundations, LILA is a practitioner-focused approach underpinned by the belief that all linguistic codes are valuable and expanded access to codes means expanded access in society. Through promoting intentional multimodal opportunities for language use, this book offers educators tools to provide targeted language instruction on the language features that are needed to access content across the curriculum.

REFLECCIÓN

1. This section begins with the following sentence: "At times, the scholarly community find themselves engaged in ideological rivalries that educators do not identify with." Why do you think this is?
2. LILA is a theory-based approach to language education. What is the value of considering theory in instructional planning?
3. Which theories or theorists guide your approach to teaching (language or otherwise)?

POSITIONING LILA: CHALLENGING A FEW OF THE "FUNDAMENTALS" OF LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

This book positions language of identity and language of access as equally important and directly challenges three fundamental understandings in the field: additive approaches to multilingualism, code-switching, and use of the term *academic language*.

Additive Approaches to Language Instruction

Early American approaches to English education were subtractive in nature; that is, they sought to replace home language or home language varieties with what was known as "academic English." In my ESL teacher licensure program more than twenty years ago, I (Michelle) learned about the transition away from a subtractive to an additive bilingual model. I was taught to encourage parents of MLs to speak with their kids and read to them in their home language and

assured them that their children could both have rich instruction in academic English and maintain home language with their support. I was proud that our field had made such great strides toward developing multilingual minds and multicultural identities.

However, without methodologies to support home language usage in the classroom, these additive approaches were ideological in nature and often yielded the same subtractive result. In retrospect, I can see that my conversations with parents at conferences urging them to use home language with their children was in direct conflict with the visible space of my classroom—a space where English print adorned the walls, English was the sole language of instruction, and English was prioritized over all else. I assume that learners who came of age in my classroom are now adults with gaps in their home language and literacy. García (2009) corroborates the myth of additive bilingualism and offers the term *dynamic bilingualism* as an alternative. Dismantling policies (written or unwritten) that relegate certain language varieties to the home and others to school is a step toward the dynamic multilingual space that García envisions.

Code-Switching

Language is the multifaceted human system of communication. However, there aren't clear lines where one language or language variety ends and another begins. Even the words *dialect*, *variety*, and *language* aren't clearly defined by linguists, who opt to use the term *named language* to refer to any language with a name. Not only do named languages like English and Spanish borrow from each other, languages change over time. If we can't identify where one language ends and another begins, and we reject the idea of languages being discrete codes, how can we consider turning one off and turning another on? The school of thought behind code switching is that each language exists in isolation. This is how the concept of code-switching has been explained and has been accepted as truth until recently.

Thanks to the work of García (2009), we now know that our brains are hardwired to be indiscriminate repositories of language and learners naturally have access to their full linguistic

repertoire. It is society, not our brains, that tells us which language is "appropriate" in a given setting. Flores and Rosa (2015) refer to this as *discourses of appropriateness*, which implies that there is an appropriate time and place for different languages. Teachers can actively inhibit language suppression in their classrooms. Translanguaging refers to multilinguals activating their full linguistic repertoire. In contrast to code switching, translanguaging acknowledges the ways that multilingual brains actually work.

Use of the Term *Academic Language*

Modern-day scholars in the area of raciolinguistics point out how the concept of academic language is inherently rooted in white elevation and Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) suppression (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Rosa and Flores (2017) write that the existing model in education implies that multilingual learners are "in need of linguistic remediation to provide them with access to the subject of the so-called 'academic language' required for complex thinking processes and successful engagement in the global economy" (pp. 626–627). Certainly, justice-minded educators will take issue with the home/school and basic/cognitive dichotomies when it comes to student capacity for learning and engagement. And while we can't influence all corners of society, we can make changes in the classroom knowing that translanguaging is the default for multilingual brains and that MLs have their full linguistic repertoire (García, 2009) available to them at all times. Seltzer and de los Ríos (2018) write

> Pedagogy that takes up a translanguaging lens views students' language practices as interconnected and inseparable, and organizes classroom learning so that students can draw on all their linguistic resources—as well as other external resources—at all times in order to make meaning. (pp. 53–54)

How can we create learning spaces where our learners' full linguistic repertoires are welcome, even celebrated? This is a call to action for teachers to change our verbiage. For this reason, LILA uses *language of access* in place of *academic language*. A more in-depth explanation of the language of access can be found in Chapter 6.

OJO

Wait a minute! Aren't you just rebranding academic language and calling it by a new name?

Not exactly. Just as disciplines and ideologies evolve, language does too. While code switching and translanguaging both present the same, they have significant epistemic differences. Epistemology refers to the knowledge that a concept is grounded in. That knowledge informs how we determine what is true, what we believe, and how we justify our beliefs.

Code-switching is grounded in the knowledge that languages exists as discrete codes that can be turned on and off. Translanguaging is grounded in the knowledge that humans have one linguistic repository to draw from at all times. For both terms, the presentation is the same—they describe what happens when someone uses more than one named language in discourse.

Now let's try that with academic language. Academic language is grounded in the knowledge that there is a specific language that is necessary for success in school that is different from, and higher in status than, the language used at home. Language of access is grounded in the knowledge that all spaces (even nonschool spaces like an auto body shop, gaming convention, or sailing expedition) have language that is needed to gain access but this language is all of equal status. When used in a school setting, the presentation for both terms is the same—they describe the language that is needed to be successful in school.

Epistemology, my dear Watson!

REFLECCIÓN

1. Why is the concept of additive bilingualism challenged today?
2. The language that we use often indicates to others what we believe and how we understand the world around us. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the political landscape. Consider the following examples:
    a. The war "in" Iraq versus the war "on" Iraq
    b. Government subsidies versus corporate welfare
    c. Obamacare versus the Affordable Care Act

Discuss the epistemic differences in the terms above. What knowledge/beliefs do they convey? Can you think of other examples outside of linguistics and politics?

The Halley's Comet Effect in Education

A contemporary of mine and I recently had tea with our elder professional mentors. Sitting on the patio surrounded by flowers on a sunny summer day, we updated them on our now grown children who were small when we used to work together. Among the updates, we told them about the exciting cutting-edge work we were doing across the country through TESOL SWEL, preparing aspiring ML teacher leaders. Like any good mentors, they cheered us on. With a knowing smile, one of our mentors said, "That sounds just like TEAM Up." TEAM Up was a federal grant in the early 2000s that we had both worked on as doctoral students. As I drove away in the glow of the setting sun and the embrace of these matriarchs, I remembered the Halley's Comet effect in education. My colleague's professor, Dick Nunnelly, had explained that old ideas often come back as new ideas if we wait long enough. Our innovation is often reminiscent of that of a bygone time or another geographic location.

Sure enough, as we shared this book manuscript with colleagues, they reminded us of this cosmic phenomenon. Bunch (2006) offers the term *language of ideas* as an alternative to academic language in an effort to flatten the hierarchy. Beeman and Urow (2013), scholars in the field of dual language immersion, present the concept of *bridging*, which refers to "when teachers bring the two languages together, guiding students to engage in contrastive analysis of the two languages and transfer the academic content they have learned in one language to the other language" (p. 9). Mulcahy's (2018) work, *Learning In-between Languages and Cultures (LILAC),* advocates for supporting learners to expand their multilingual repertoires as well as their critical metalinguistic awareness. Similarly, Seltzer's (2019) research on the critical translingual approach elevates the critical and agentic components of students' language learning experience. While the language of access and language of identity camps are often polarized in the literature, there are also some glimmers of agreement among the scholarly community.

In the following chapters, we take what we have learned from the linguistic titans (and those in the middle) and offer pedagogical strategies to sustain the language of identity and build the language of access. Part B: Language of Identity: Linguistically Sustaining Instruction includes practical applications of theory (PATs) on translanguaging, community

cultural wealth, and language orientations. Part C: Language of Access: Linguistically Expanding Instruction includes PATs on word-level, sentence-level, and discourse-level language of access instruction.

END-OF-CHAPTER CONVERSACIÓN

1. What are some areas of tension in other disciplines? If you are in a discipline other than ESL, do you align with one side or the other? In the middle?
2. How have you benefited from learning the language of access? In academic settings? Professional settings? Social settings?
3. Share an example of a time when you experienced your language of identity validated in a new space. How did it make you feel?
4. When it comes to your instruction, what are possible outcomes of attending only to the language of access and not the language of identity? What are possible outcomes of attending only to the language of identity and not the language of access?

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