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M. Kaya: Translanguaging at Work: Approaches to Dynamic Bilingualism
The *Journal of Multilingual Education Research (JMER)* is a publication of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education. Its distinct orientation reflects what is most important to researchers, specialists, and educators in the fields of multilingualism and multilingual education. *JMER* is a vehicle to disseminate changes and growth of knowledge in a variety of national language education issues that have local and regional relevance. It responds to the emerging needs and interests of teachers, administrators, teacher educators, researchers, counselors, psychologists, advocates, and community leaders whose work focuses on the successful education of multilingual students.

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# Journal of Multilingual Education Research

*The Power of Voice: Contributions of Ofelia García to Language Education*  
Volume 9, 2019

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Our sincere thanks to Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García’s husband (y compatriota [and compatriot]), for his time and guidance in preparing this tribute.
Editorial

Ofelia García: A Life Dedicated to Giving Voice

Zoila Morell
Lehman College, CUNY

Patricia Velasco
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Keywords: bilingual education, giving voice, Ofelia García, translanguaging

Those of us who fled the Cuban revolution carry the indelible imprint of forced immigration. Whether immigration is forced or chosen, it elicits complex emotions. The experience is one of sudden loss and displacement, and in the case of Ofelia García, it began to craft an interior narrative about freedom and voice that will fuel a lifetime. The work of García in sociolinguistics manifests the deep influence of her own immigration story marked by feelings of wonder, displacement and perseverance. It is certainly about the power of voice. First, “voice” as in the literal freedom to express ideas and be heard, but specifically, to be heard in one’s chosen voices -- one’s languages.

Ofelia García arrived with her family to New York City at the age of 12. She eventually obtained her Bachelors from Hunter College and continued for a dual Masters in Spanish and Education. Though practicing as an ESL and bilingual teacher during the 1970s, there were no real models to guide the work with a growing population of Spanish-speaking children. In an interview with Estrella Olivares Orellana (2012) for Esteem Magazine, García describes those times:

I always say that I started being a bilingual teacher before there was formal bilingual instruction. I was teaching in a progressive school and suddenly all of my students were Puerto Rican, all of them, and I thought, “Well, this doesn’t make too much sense, they don’t speak English, I speak Spanish, why I’m I teaching them in English only?” I started experimenting with bilingualism in education before bilingual education was even something that one could study. In those days there were no programs in bilingual education. I actually did a doctorate in what came closer to bilingual education, which was Spanish literature and Spanish semiotics. I was pursuing Spanish language education, and the only doctorate available to me was a doctorate in Spanish language and literature, so that’s what I did. I had always been a bilingual teacher. At the end
of studying, I didn’t know how to put those two things together: my intellectual interest and my commitment in what I was doing practically (Olivares-Orellana, 2012).

Inspired by the insistence of one of her professors, Ofelia García applied for a doctorate at the CUNY Graduate Center. Fluent in three languages, she studied French surrealism under the direction of Angela Dellepiane and eventually found the works of the Argentine poet, Oliverio Girondo (1891-1967). By then, or perhaps because of Girondo, García became interested in semiotics, the quest for how meaning is created and communicated. García was intrigued with Girondo’s inventive artistry. She described his poetry as “a joyous act of enunciation” in the Spanish language (García, 1981, p. 48; 1982). His poem Tataconco (1922) illustrates not only Girondo’s talent for playing with the visual and sound characteristics of words, but also how easily someone who cannot be heard can be discounted:

soy yo
dí
no me oyes
Tataconco
soy yo sin vos
sin voz
it is me,
tell me
can you not hear me
Tataconco
it is me without you
without a voice
[Translation: Patricia Velasco]

In an almost unimaginable, brilliant, presage of translanguaging, Ofelia García (1981) wrote her dissertation entirely in Spanish having conducted all her doctoral course work in English and studying surrealism in French. She focused on Girondo’s hidden words and meanings. In what resulted in a major event in García’s professional life, she continued as a post doc student at Yeshiva University.

It is safe to say that Ofelia García was the student Joshua Fishman was looking for and Joshua Fishman was the mentor and advocate that she needed. Their relationship lasted decades and it was as engaged and authentic as the ones that García eventually created with her own doctoral students. It became a mutually beneficial professional relationship that led to García becoming the editor of the International Journal of the Sociology of Language, created by Fishman.

The second, pivotal moment in García’s career came in 2012 when Colin Baker invited her and Ricardo Otheguy, her husband, to Bangor University in Wales. This was a particularly important trip and one that was specifically planned by Baker to introduce Cen Williams -- a Welsh poet and teacher who coined the term trawsieithu -- and Ofelia García. In his diary for June 26, 2012 Baker describes this meeting as an awaited and trepidatory encounter:
Simple introductions. Both Ofelia and Cen rarely shy, but this time a little. Some degree of mutual awe. Room full of smiles. We all realize this is an historic occasion.

According to Baker, the conversation started with García asking Williams to describe the story of the birth of the term trawsieithu, a pedagogical practice in which the input takes place in one language and the output in another. Williams, a nationally acclaimed poet from a quiet, rural Anglesey village, reported that it was during a coffee break at a teachers’ conference in the late 1980’s in Llandudno. The first stab at translating the term into English was crosslinguifying, which seemed an awkward term. Baker thought of the term translanguaging and it stuck. Williams started to spread the concept of trawsieithu on courses for teachers and its practice grew (Baker, 2018, Diary Notes).

Since then, various scholars in the United Kingdom and North America have popularized the term (Baker, 2001; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Hornberger & Link, 2012). García has defined it as “bilingualism without diglossic functional separation” (García, 2007, p. xiii) and as inclusive of—but not limited to—the practice that linguists coined code-switching (García & Sylvan, 2011). A positive outcome from this definition is that the negative associations that the term code-switching elicited have been obliterated. Most importantly, it has been under Ofelia García (2009) that the term translanguaging has gone beyond classroom contexts and practices to refer to the flexible use of linguistic resources across various everyday contexts. According to García (2009), translanguaging is the communicative norm in bilingual and multilingual communities that also garners an ethical and political dimension by positioning it as a practice that reflects social justice in education (García & Wei, 2014).

Across the world, colleagues like us have changed directions, assumed roles as advocates, and dared to transgress against systems that silence children literally and figuratively, because we were irrevocably moved and influenced by García’s work. Here too, it was like finding our voice. It is our honor as colleagues and sister exiles to highlight Ofelia García’s accomplishments in academia at the moment of her retirement. To do so in the Journal of Multilingual Education and Research (JMER) has particular significance. JMER was launched in 2010 under the auspices of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE). JMER’s creator and senior editor, Aida A. Nevárez-La Torre, invited Ofelia García to contribute the opening article to its first volume, Bilingualism in Education in Multilingual Apple: The Future of the Past (García, 2010). Nine years later this same journal has put together this special volume celebrating and recognizing the work of Ofelia García.

Patricia Velasco, longtime friend and colleague, and Zoila Morell, proudly Ofelia García’s first Cuban doctoral student, called upon the many contributors in this issue to help us in the task. We asked authors for thoughtful consideration to the following questions:

- What has García’s work meant to the field?
- What are García’s areas of greatest impact?
- How has García impacted policy at the state or national level?
• Describe the theoretical concepts in García’s work that has most influenced your own work.
• What is most memorable to you about García’s career?
• What has been García’s lasting impact on your scholarship?

Ofelia García’s intellectual capacity is only matched by her charisma and the care she takes in advancing the professional careers of her students and colleagues. The articles that conform this issue are grouped to honor two dimensions of García’s work. Ofelia García as a scholar and Ofelia García as a mentor. The first group of articles authored by Valdés, Cummins, Fu, Flores, Cenoz and Durk, Helot, and Solorza center their contributions on the influence that Ofelia García has had on their scholarly work. The second section captures the testimonies of Espinosa; López; Ascenzi-Moreno and Vogel; Kleyan and Seltzer; and Sánchez and Menken, all members of the CUNY New York State Initiative for Emergent Bilinguals (CUNY NYSIEB) about García’s guidance as a mentor. The primary goal of this New York State funded initiative is to describe and create pedagogical practices based on translanguaging, for teachers and by teachers. The CUNY NYSIEB initiative represents a cohesive group of bilingual education scholars who are bound to make strides in the field. CUNY NYSIEB has been directed by Nelson Flores, Maité Sanchez, Kate Seltzer, and Ivana Espinet. The third and last section in this issue presents Colin Baker’s journal notes that document the García-Williams meeting as well as Baker’s relationship with García throughout many decades. Meral Kaya reviewed García, Johnson, and Seltzer (2017) *The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning*, a recent volume for teachers and teacher educators on translanguaging.

Even though this special issue is mainly divided into García as a scholar and García as a mentor, the reality is that these two realms merge into one. García’s intellect and empathy are equally expansive and intertwined. To be a colleague or doctoral student working with Ofelia García has meant meeting her husband, Ricardo, their children Eric, Raquel and Emma; their spouses Mónica, John and Tim, as well as, their bilingual grandchildren, Gia, Charli, Gabo, and Isabel. We have each grown as she elevated the voices of bilingual students, in work that is powerful, transformative, and close to home. True to her Cuban roots, it has meant being fed picadillo with black beans and rice while translanguaging about translanguaging.

**References**


Critical Research with an Eye on Monday Morning: La Investigación Comprometida de Ofelia García

Guadalupe Valdés
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Guadalupe Valdés, in this essay, reflects on the “engaged research” of Ofelia García, which has profoundly influenced the field of bilingual education.

**Keywords:** bilingual education, critical research, Ofelia García, translanguaging,

I am delighted to have been invited to submit an essay for this important volume honoring the work of Ofelia García. I am an ardent fan of Ofelia García, an enthusiastic reader and indebted user of her work, and an admirer of her unswerving commitment to social justice. She is quite possibly the researcher who has most contributed to our knowledge about the educational challenges faced by emergent bilingual children around the world. Indeed, the very term *emergent bilingual* was proposed by García, Kleifgen, & Falchi (2007) and García (2009b) as an alternative to commonly used deficit labels such as limited English proficient (LEP) and English language learners (ELLS). She argued that both of those labels and others like them ignore the bilingualism that “can and must—develop through schooling in the United States” (García, 2009b, p. 322). Her focus on bilingualism and her insistence on its value in the lives of minoritized youngsters all over the world is both a central and a driving theme in her research, her writing, and her work with scholars, teachers, and students.

I first met Ofelia García in the early eighties at the *Symposium for Spanish and Portuguese Bilingualism* held in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. The yearly symposium (established by the late Juan C. Zamora, a professor of Spanish linguistics at UMass, Amherst) brought together scholars focusing on the study of bilingualism from a variety perspectives. I remember being impressed with a young scholar who could so clearly examine what bilingual education in Miami ethnic schools could and could not tell us about the education of non-elite children. Listening to her talk, I discovered that we had much in common. Spanish and its place in the world mattered to both of us, and we were both influenced by the work of Joshua Fishman and by the, then, current work in the sociolinguistic study of bilingualism.

In the years that followed, I drew from García’s work on Spanish in the United States, on bilingualism and multilingualism, and on bilingual education. Our paths crossed occasionally at various conferences and our articles were often published in the same volumes (e.g., in the following volumes: C. Faltis & P. Wolfe (Eds.), *So much to say:*)
Adolescents, bilingualism, and ESL in the secondary school (García, 1999); M. C. Colombi & F. Alarcón (Eds.), *La enseñanza del español a hispanohablantes: Praxis y teoría* (García & Otheguy, 1997), and H. Byrnes (Ed.), *Languages for a multicultural world in transition: 1993 Northeast Conference Reports* (García, 1992). From Fishman, who spent winter quarters at Stanford during many years, I heard a lot about Ofelia García. He praised her often and, at times, made me aware of work they were involved in together. I valued such recommendations immensely.

One such example of their collaborative work is the volume titled *The Multilingual Apple: Languages in New York City* (García & Fishman, 1997). For many years I assigned her article from that volume “New York’s multilingualism: World languages and their role in a U.S. city” in my yearly seminar on bilingualism at Stanford. The article documents, describes, and analyzes New York’s multilingualism arguing that it deserves its rightful title as the most multilingual city in the world. For my students, it has served as a rich example of the ways in which historical evidence, census data, and anecdotes can be used in scholarly research on the presence and use of non-societal languages in cities across the world. In my view, the article remains a very discerning example of fine-grained sociolinguistic research. Specifically, it provides important data about language policies over time in large urban areas such as New York and examines businesses, government institutions, and schools. Today, more than 20 years after it was published, the article offers answers to questions that we are currently asking as a society about the place of native and foreign-born Americans in our society. Ofelia García concludes the article (García, 1997, p. 44) by saying:

More than any other nation in the world, the United States has the world and its languages within its territory. The potential for bilingual and multilingual Americans is in our midst. To activate this potential, we would need to understand that English monolingualism can no longer be the sole holder of our economic and social stability. We would need to trust the LOTEs of our bilingual citizens, and to understand that LOTEs can be valuable resources to negotiate our national and international welfare and to protect our interests.

In the 1990s and 2000’s, García’s scholarly voice provided important examples for my students of ways that *investigadoras comprometidas* (the feminine is deliberate here) [engaged female investigators] can contribute to both theory and practice by engaging in critical scholarship and in what some (e.g., Grace, 2002) would term humane scholarship and inquiry. A cursory look at her CV makes clear that even the titles of her articles were provocative, for example, “From Goya portraits to Goya beans: Elite traditions and popular streams in U.S. Spanish language policy” (García, 1993), and “Que todo el pluralismo es sueño, y los sueños, vida son: Ethnolinguistic dreams and reality: A response to John Edwards” (García, 1994), and “Livin’ and teachin’ la lengua loca: Glocalizing U.S, Spanish ideologies and practices” (García, 2009c).

The themes on which García’s writing has focused include: New York City and its students and teachers, bilingualism/multilingualism in the world, and the education of disadvantaged, minoritized populations. Over the years, my students and I read her work on bilingual education, the teaching of Spanish in the United States, the
preparation of teachers, and the labeling of minoritized learners of the societal language. We learned much from her writings on language and identity, language and ethnicity, and toward the end of the 2000’s about translanguaging, the topic for which she is currently most well-known. In the last ten years, moreover, we have benefited greatly from her work as the editor of the International Journal of the Sociology of Language and as a first editor of numerous edited volumes on key issues. The volumes have provided us with a body of work that made legitimate the work of young scholars (some of whom were her own students) who strongly and courageously are now interrogating the racialization of language.

What is especially outstanding about García’s work is her tireless commitment to working through important ideas that have the potential of changing educational practice in fundamental ways. As I have pointed out in the title of this essay, she has her eye on Monday morning, that is, she is deeply concerned about teaching and learning in classroom settings. Her work with CUNY-NYSIEB on the Translanguaging Guides is one example. Another is her recent volume The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning (García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2016) for which I wrote the forward. In that forward, I pointed out that in the case of teacher preparation, theoretical and research articles may do little to help teachers change what they do in their classrooms. While teachers may read about new perspectives and transformative practices, the translation of theory to pedagogy is a difficult one. Teachers cannot imagine what they have not seen. They cannot change their practice unless they have a solid understanding of the alternatives. They may agree that what we have done to date has not been effective but moving from that conclusion to a clear understanding of what to do and how to do it requires detailed descriptions of steps to take as well as models of actual practice accompanied by commentaries relating particular pedagogies to the broader beliefs about children’s abilities, curricular demands, policy expectations, and assessment challenges.

The book provides precisely this important link between new theoretical perspectives on bilingualism and actual classroom practice. I have predicted, moreover, that, because of this book, the ways in which both researchers and educators view the use and role of language in the education of all children, and especially minoritized children, will change dramatically as the ideas and practices presented are discussed, debated, and implemented. I refer to the book as both ground-breaking and daring because the conceptualizations of language that underlie the pedagogical practices presented in the book draw from García’s work on translanguaging, and they are both new and unprecedented for many educators. Moreover, views and perspectives on linguistic multicompetence that support the use of translanguaging in classrooms directly challenge established orthodoxies about bilingualism, bilingual children, and the use of two languages in education. Quite simply, Ofelia García with her work on translanguaging, has revolutionized the ways that language and language instruction is now being talked about around the world. Importantly, she continues to revise, redefine, and rethink fundamental issues that surround the practice and theory of translanguaging and to engage in challenging and important conversations and debates about the ideologies that are uniquely present in this very important work.
As a consumer of García’s writings and publications, I have profited much from her work and from her thinking. I have also been fortunate in the last several years to interact with her frequently as a board member of two organizations on which we both have served. In those two contexts, I have seen, not only Ofelia García the scholar and advocate about whom I already knew a great deal, but also Ofelia García the warm human being whose quiet power can influence the most resistant of individuals. A smile and a hug from her can move mountains, but when they do not, when deeply ingrained ideologies prevent others from engaging sincerely with her theoretical and pedagogical vision, she stands her ground. *Sabe quien es y sabe lo que sabe.* [She knows who she is and what she knows.] Her integrity and her commitment to equity and excellence and to the future of multilingual youngsters around the world is unassailable.

In 2017, I had the pleasure of chairing the committee that selected the recipient of the lifetime achievement award for the Bilingual Education SIG for AERA. In introducing García as the recipient of the award, I pointed out that she has written 24 books (authored or edited) and over 162 articles or book chapters. Her book *Bilingual Education in the 21st century: A global perspective* (García, 2009a) is a key contribution to our knowledge about bilingual education and has had a huge impact on a new generation of researchers, policy makers, and practitioners world-wide. I also pointed out her central role in pushing the profession to rethink language. As Li Wei pointed out in his Keynote presentation at AAAL in 2017, this rethinking has the potential of focusing attention on the “entirety of the learner’s linguistic repertoire, rather than knowledge of specific structures of specific languages separately” (Wei, 2017). García, in numerous keynote talks, articles, and now books, makes the case for replacing monoglossic language ideologies with heteroglossic language ideologies that treat bi/multilingualism as the norm. Most notably she argues for moving away from the strict separation of language toward embracing translanguaging as a pedagogical tool that both affirms and builds on the fluid language practices that characterize bi/multilingual communities.

I feel confident that as she moves on to life’s third act, we will continue to learn much from her and from her students whom she has prepared well to follow in her footsteps. In these brief comments, I have wanted to communicate that in my contact with Ofelia García and her scholarship, both from afar and at a closer distance, I have felt a deep sense of gratitude for what she has done for the profession, for teachers, and for children. I also feel great pride, *un orgullo profundo de que se reconozca y se valorice mundialmente a una Latina estadounidense* [a profound pride, that around the world a Latina from the United States, is recognized and valued] who is both a distinguished scholar and a champion of underserved children, a dedicated teacher and mentor, and to me personally, an exceptional colleague and friend.
References


The Emergence of Translanguaging Pedagogy: A Dialogue between Theory and Practice

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My goal in this paper is to contribute to the process of bringing practice and theory into active dialogue. Initially, I review some early instructional examples of crosslinguistic pedagogy involving emergent bilingual students. I then focus on more recent examples from the Canadian context that illustrate the emerging role of classroom teachers as knowledge-generators. Through their practice, these educators have challenged the assumption that schools serving multilingual students have no option but to be English-only zones. Finally, I explore some of the ways in which these instructional innovations illuminate theoretical understandings of translanguaging and crosslinguistic pedagogy more generally.

Keywords: cross-linguistic pedagogy, emergent bilingual students, home language, instructional innovations, instructional strategies, multilingual students, Ofelia García, practice and theory active dialogue, translanguaging pedagogy

Several years ago, at a national conference for Canadian French immersion teachers, I sat in the audience listening to a presentation by my colleague Sharon Lapkin on pedagogical strategies in immersion programs. Sharon focused on research carried out by Merrill Swain and herself, and several other researchers (reviewed in Swain & Lapkin, 2013), suggesting that ‘principled use of L1’ was a legitimate instructional strategy in French immersion. While emphasizing that teachers should give priority to the use of the target language (L2, French), Swain and Lapkin advocated purposeful use of students’ home language (L1, English) “to illustrate cross-linguistic comparisons or to provide the meaning of abstract vocabulary items” (p. 123). They also suggested that students should be permitted “to use their L1 during collaborative dialogue or private speech in order to mediate their understanding and generation of complex ideas (languaging) as they prepare to produce an end product (oral or written) in the target language” (pp. 122-123).

The reactions of French immersion teachers who listened to Sharon Lapkin articulate these ideas in October 2013 ranged from surprise to confusion. Sharon provided several opportunities during her presentation for participants to discuss the ideas in small groups. I sat at a table with about 10 teachers, most of whom expressed strong skepticism about permitting students to use English for classroom tasks, let alone encouraging teachers to use English to point to linguistic comparisons or explain...
complex aspects of French grammar or vocabulary. These teachers, as well as generations of French immersion teachers before them, had been socialized into believing that it was *never* pedagogically acceptable for French immersion teachers to use English and that students should be strongly encouraged to use only French in the classroom. In their eyes, even so-called ‘principled’ use of English by teachers or students would open the door to serious dilution of the French ambiance they strove so assiduously to maintain in their classrooms. Their pedagogical convictions were identical to those articulated by Wallace Lambert, in many ways the principal pedagogical architect of French immersion programs (e.g., Lambert & Tucker, 1972):

> No bilingual skills are required of the teacher, who plays the role of a monolingual in the target language ... and who never switches languages, reviews materials in the other language, or otherwise uses the child’s native language in teacher-pupil interactions. In immersion programs, therefore, bilingualism is developed through two separate monolingual instructional routes. (Lambert, 1984, p. 13)

This monolingual instructional orientation, which reflects what I have termed the ‘two solitudes’ assumption in relation to bilingualism and the instruction of bilingual/multilingual students (Cummins, 2007), remains dominant in most bilingual education and L2 immersion programs, as well as programs designed to maintain or reinforce national minority languages (e.g., French in English-speaking regions of Canada, Swedish in Finland).

However, there are exceptions. For example, I had the opportunity in November 2017 to observe classroom instruction across several grade levels in the Finnish/English bilingual program in Suvilahti School in Vaasa, Finland (labeled as Content and Language Integrated Learning [CLIL])¹. In the grade 6 class that I observed, students were reading biographical information about the life of Charles Dickens, in preparation for going to a play the following week (in English) based on Dickens’ novel *Oliver Twist*. The biographical texts were challenging, as illustrated by words such as *insurmountable, incarceration, prolific, denomination, premonition*, etc. After reading the texts, students were asked to write answers to 10 questions such as *What is Charles Dickens famous for? What is Mesmerism?* and to provide meanings (in English) for 17 difficult words in the text. In contrast to typical instructional practice in Swedish-language programs in the same city or in French immersion programs, the teacher encouraged students to discuss their responses to the questions with partners in either Finnish (L1) or English. In other words, ‘principled use of L1’ and ‘translanguaging’ were encouraged.

These examples illustrate the range of instructional practice and theoretical beliefs in relation to the use of L1 and L2 in bilingual and/or L2 immersion programs aimed at developing L2 skills among speakers of the dominant societal language. In monolingual (L2) programs for emergent bilingual students from immigrant backgrounds, a similar range of beliefs and instructional practices is evident. For example, Orhan Agirdag’s (2010) research in Belgium documented the fact that educators continue to prohibit students from using their L1 within the school, thereby communicating to students the inferior status of their home languages and devaluing
the identities of speakers of these languages. Pulinx, Van Avermaet, & Agirdag (2006) documented the fact that 77 percent of Flemish teachers were of the opinion that immigrant-background students should not be allowed to speak a foreign language at school and almost a third believed that students should be punished for speaking their L1 in school.

As Pulinx et al. (2016) point out, these teachers are well-intentioned. They believe that emergent bilingual students require maximum exposure to and encouragement to use the school language. In light of this assumption, it is not surprising that they view students’ use of L1 in the school as counter-productive.

There is an enormous amount of research, theory and instructional practice that refutes both the ‘two solitudes’ and ‘maximum exposure’ assumptions (see, for example, Cummins [2000] and García [2009]). As the articles in this special issue illustrate, translanguaging pedagogy, broadly understood as the instructional mobilization of students’ full linguistic repertoire and the promotion of productive contact across languages, is now widely endorsed (with some qualifications) among the research community and is being actively explored by educators and students in classroom contexts (e.g., Celic & Seltzer, 2011; García & Kleyn, 2016).

Even in the context of Canadian French immersion programs, researchers and educators have cautiously begun to explore the possibilities and boundaries of ‘principled use of L1’ (e.g., Ballinger, 2013; Ballinger, Lyster, Sterzuk, & Genesee, 2017). Ballinger and colleagues, for example, discuss “how crosslinguistic pedagogy can be adapted for immersion contexts in ways that achieve its stated goals while maintaining a separate space for more complex and sustained use of the minority language” (2017, p. 50). These researchers opt for the term crosslinguistic pedagogy because of what they view as a certain vagueness in the term translanguaging as a result of the multiple ways in which the term has been used. In the present paper, I use these terms interchangeably, together with terms such as multilingual or bilingual teaching strategies and teaching through a multilingual lens (Cummins & Persad, 2014). The term interlingual teaching has also been proposed (Gallagher, 2008). I view the multiplicity of terminology as a positive feature of this emerging instructional landscape because of the nuance and texture that multiple terms provide.

The emergence of translanguaging pedagogy over the past decade has been fueled by active dialogue between practice and theory. Ofelia García’s (2009) book Bilingual Education in the 21st Century served as the catalyst for this ongoing practice/theory dialogue. García’s theoretical elaboration of both translanguaging interactional practices and translanguaging pedagogy stimulated a process of systematically documenting existing translanguaging instructional practices (e.g., Celic & Seltzer, 2011) and also encouraging educators to explore the pedagogical possibilities opened up by this theoretical construct (e.g., García & Kleyn, 2016). These emerging instructional practices, in turn, informed and expanded the theoretical scope of the construct.

García’s (2009) elaboration and expansion of the construct of translanguaging from its original Welsh instructional roots (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012) reinforced the legitimacy and necessity of bilingual education for minoritized students but also
represented a radical critique of prevalent instructional and theoretical assumptions in both bilingual education and monolingual English instructional programs. She argued cogently and persuasively that bilingual education is the only option to teach all children in the 21st century in equitable ways. She claimed on the basis of the research evidence that bilingual education “is good for the rich and the poor, for the powerful and the lowly, for Indigenous peoples and immigrants, for speakers of official and/or national languages, and for those who speak regional languages … [and] is important for hearing children, as well as Deaf children” (p. 11). She pointed to the linguistic complexity of our global community, increasingly in contact across linguistic and cultural boundaries both directly and through electronic communication, as a major reason why “monolingual schooling seems utterly inappropriate” (p. 16).

However, García (2009) also critiqued the pedagogical assumptions underlying many bilingual programs, on the grounds that they were based on monoglossic rather than heteroglossic assumptions. These bilingual programs adhere to an implicit ‘two solitudes’ pedagogical orientation that assumes the two languages should be kept rigidly separate for instructional purposes. In opposition to these pedagogical assumptions, García argued that there is only one linguistic repertoire and bilingual students should be seen as positioned at different points of a bilingual or multilingual continuum and free to draw on the totality of their linguistic resources in carrying out academic tasks, whether they are in bilingual or English-medium programs. Thus, the construct of translanguaging, as elaborated by García, disrupts the normalized instructional assumptions of both bilingual and monolingual programs and promotes social justice by affirming the legitimacy of the language practices of students and their communities. García expressed this point as follows:

Translanguaging recognizes and values the language diversity and multilingualism of the community, while enabling students to practice their home languages and literacies. Actually translanguaging, more than any other practice or pedagogy, sustains home language practices. Notice that we’re here speaking of sustainability of language practices, and not of simple language maintenance. (Bartlett & García, 2011, p. 4).

My goal in this paper is to contribute to this process of bringing practice and theory into active dialogue. Initially, I review some early instructional examples of crosslinguistic pedagogy involving emergent bilingual students. I then focus on more recent examples from the Canadian context that illustrate the emerging role of classroom teachers as knowledge-generators. Through their practice, these educators have challenged the assumption that schools serving multilingual students have no option but to be English-only zones. Finally, I explore some of the ways in which these instructional innovations illuminate theoretical understandings of translanguaging and crosslinguistic pedagogy more generally.

**The Emergence of Translanguaging in Instructional Practice**

Three examples from the United States illustrate the emergence of translanguaging approaches to teaching learners of English in the 1990s. These examples focus on classroom contexts involving diverse groups of learners and make no assumption that teachers understand or speak any of the languages represented in
the classroom. Auerbach's influential 1993 paper, focused primarily on adult learners of English, highlighted the fact that English-only instructional approaches had no basis in empirical reality and were essentially ideological biases masquerading as established research. Lucas and Katz (1994) documented the many ways in which teachers of emergent bilingual students in exemplary schools enabled students to draw on their multilingual resources to complete classroom tasks and to engage academically. Their purpose was to ‘reframe the debate’ from the entrenched oppositions of bilingual education versus English-only to the broader issues of how and why teachers should engage students’ multilingual repertoires as a normal component of classroom instruction. Finally, DeFazio’s (1997) documentation of crosslingual instructional practice at the International High School at LaGuardia Community College in New York City illustrated both the feasibility and academic affordances of transforming classroom spaces from English-only to multilingual instructional zones. Each of these contributions is briefly described in the following sections.

**Auerbach:** “[T]he issue isn’t whether to leverage students’ primary linguistic resources, but how” (2016, p. 937). This quote comes from Auerbach’s reflection on her original article that appeared in *TESOL Quarterly* in 1993. She summarized the main points in that article as follows:

My goal in “Reexamining” was to problematize the then widely accepted axiom that English is the only acceptable medium of communication in ESL classes. I argued that this taken-for-granted insistence on using only English was rooted in regimes of ideology rather than in evidence-based findings regarding its effectiveness for English acquisition. ... My argument was not that teachers should indiscriminately enable use of learners’ first language, but that they should be selective, mindful, and respectful in their approach to this issue. (pp. 936-937)

In her original article, Auerbach reviewed evidence showing that “L1 and/or bilingual options are not only effective but necessary for adult ESL students with limited L1 literacy or schooling and that the use of students’ linguistic resources can be beneficial at all levels of ESL.” (1993, p. 9).

**Lucas & Katz:** “[T]he uses of the native language is so compelling that it emerges even when policies and programs mitigate against it” (1994, p. 558). Lucas and Katz (1994) describe nine exemplary K–12 programs in which English was the primary language of instruction but in which students’ L1 was used in multiple ways for instructionally productive purposes. The following examples illustrate the range of bilingual instructional activities that were observed:

- At one site the teacher devised a group writing assignment in which students used their L1. At another site, students read or told stories to each other using their L1 and then translated them into English to share with other students.
- Students from the same language backgrounds were paired together so that students who were more fluent in English could help those less fluent.
The Emergence of Translanguaging Pedagogy

Students were encouraged to use bilingual dictionaries as a resource to understand difficult text.

Students were encouraged to discuss school work and get help at home in their native languages from family members.

Books in students’ L1s were provided and students were encouraged to read them.

Awards were given for excellence in languages that are not commonly studied (e.g. a senior award in Khmer language ability).

The authors cite Auerbach’s (1993) arguments for mobilizing students’ L1 resources in concluding that “monolingual English speakers or teachers who do not speak the languages of all of their students can incorporate students’ native languages into instruction in many ways to serve a variety of educationally desirable functions” (p. 558).

DeFazio: “Students use both English and their native language for all phases of learning and assessment” (1997, p. 103). The International High School (IHS) in La Guardia Community College, New York City, was founded in 1985 and offers learners of English a four-year comprehensive program where they can satisfy state mandated subject matter requirements while they are learning English (DeFazio, 1997; DevTech Systems, 1996). The school web site outlines the current philosophy and program at IHS as follows:

IHS offers a rigorous college preparatory program for limited English proficient students in a multicultural educational environment. IHS gives priority to students of limited English proficiency who have been in the United States fewer than four years at the time of application. ... students maintain and further develop their native language skills by engaging in peer-mediated instructional activities using materials and textbooks in English as well as their native languages. [http://www.ihsnyc.org/]

Since its inception, the IHS has pursued numerous instructional innovations including portfolio rather than standardized test assessment, interdisciplinary curriculum, career education across the curriculum, collaborative peer-supported learning, close contacts and collaboration with the wider community, and a focus on language awareness and engaging students’ multilingual repertoires across curricular tasks and projects (DeFazio, 1997). Students’ first languages are integrated into all phases of learning and assessment. For example, in developing their portfolios in the various interdisciplinary programs, students write in both their first language and English, according to their choice. Other students or members of the wider community assist in translating material that has been written in a language the teachers do not know. Among the other instructional initiatives noted by De Fazio are the following:

- Students write an autobiography or a biography of another student using their choice of English, L1 or both languages.
- Students work in groups to carry out comparisons of English and their L1s including topics such as the sounds in different languages (using the
International Phonetic Alphabet) and crosslinguistic differences in syntax and other aspects of the languages.

- Students write multilingual children’s books on some aspect of language or linguistics (e.g., ‘How the Chinese Got Language’ or ‘The Monster that Ate Polish Words’).
- Students interview community members about social dimensions of language such as dialect, language prejudice, bilingual education, etc.

The academic outcomes of the instructional program at IHS are impressive. According to DeFazio (1997), entering students score in the lowest quartile on tests of English proficiency, yet more than 90 percent of them graduate within four years and move on to post-secondary education. DevTech Systems (1996) reported that the dropout rate among limited English proficient students at IHS was only 3.9 percent compared to almost 30 percent in New York City as a whole.

The Canadian examples of multilingual pedagogy outlined in the following section and in Appendix 1 developed largely independently of initiatives elsewhere. Although these projects emerged in the context of university-school collaborations, educators rather than researchers typically took the lead in pursuing these initiatives. Researchers supported and documented the process and outcomes of these initiatives, but the knowledge-generation is rooted in teachers’ instructional practice rather than in research or theory.

**Canadian Initiatives: Teaching through a Multilingual Lens**

A significant number of multilingual teaching initiatives focused on emergent bilingual students who are learning the dominant societal language have been implemented across Canada during the past 20 years. A detailed listing of these initiatives is provided in Appendix 1. In the following sections, I describe three of these initiatives: *Linguistically Appropriate Practice* (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012), the *Dual Language Showcase* (Chow & Cummins, 2003), and the *Multiliteracies Project* (Cummins & Early, 2011).

**Linguistically Appropriate Practice**

Roma Chumak-Horbatsch (2012) of Ryerson University in Toronto has identified and implemented a range of multilingual instructional practices at the preschool (and primary grades) level. Drawing on the dynamic bilingualism framework proposed by García (2009), Chumak-Horbatsch describes *Linguistically Appropriate Practice* (LAP) as follows:

LAP is a new classroom practice that extends current inclusive practices and reflects the principles of dynamic bilingualism. ... LAP views immigrant children as emergent bilinguals, acknowledges their unique language and literacy needs, focuses on the social and communicative aspects of language, encourages translanguaging, promotes bilingualism, and builds partnerships with families. (p. 57)

Examples of each of the following five themes, used to organize LAP activities, are provided below.
• Charting home languages;
• Using home languages in the classroom;
• Linking the home and classroom;
• Bringing the outside world into the classroom; and
• Sharing books and newspapers with the children.

**Create home language graphs.** First, working with the children, make a colour-coded home language chart, listing on a large sheet of construction paper the different languages spoken by children in the classroom. The languages should be listed in alphabetical order. Update the chart as new children arrive in the classroom throughout the year. Children could also add their drawings of the flags of their families’ countries of origin, corresponding to the languages they speak, using the information contained in the world flag database (www.flags.net/mainindex.htm). Finally, the teacher could work with the children to create visual representations using bar graphs, pie charts, etc. of the number of children in the classroom who speak each language.

**What do you see?** Using picture books with brightly coloured illustrations (e.g., of food, body parts, furniture, etc.), the teacher, parent, or child points to each object and asks the children “What do you see?” This can be done not only as a way of building vocabulary in the classroom language but also to promote transfer of knowledge across languages. After asking “What do you see?” in the classroom language, the teacher can ask children to name the object in their home languages. The teacher and the other children try to repeat and learn the names of objects in different languages. Parents can also take part in this game in the classroom and the teacher can encourage them to play the game at home with their children in their home languages.

**Parents and grandparents in the classroom.** Parents and/or grandparents together with the teacher can read aloud dual language books together, with the parent/grandparent reading a page in his/her home language followed by the teacher reading the same page in the classroom language. Another activity involves the children with the help of parents and grandparents creating a chart that lists the ages of the children and their grandparents. Other information can also be added to the list, such as the languages spoken by children, parents, and grandparents.

**Bringing the outside world into the classroom.** Children can be encouraged to notice signs in multiple languages in their neighbourhoods and in the neighbourhood of the preschool centre. While they are out walking with their child, parents (or grandparents) could take digital photographs of home language signs in their neighbourhoods and either bring the digital copies or electronically send these signs to the preschool teacher for discussion in the classroom. The child (with the help of the parent) could explain to the teacher and other children what the sign says. The teacher could then compile a collage of the signs in multiple languages that defines the children’s landscape.

**Sharing books and newspapers with children.** Among the activities suggested in *Linguistically Appropriate Practice* for socializing children into the world of books and literacy are the following:
• **Talk to children about books and newspapers.** Describe features of books such as author(s), illustrator(s), publisher, front and back cover, table of contents, text, font, and page numbers. Similarly, describe newspaper components such as name, size, black and coloured print, advertisements, etc.

• **Story time.** As the teacher reads books to the children, s/he can invite children to provide home language translations for words or phrases. In a classroom context where children’s languages are actively welcomed, children will respond enthusiastically to this invitation to showcase their expertise and linguistic knowledge. Family members can also be invited to participate in story time and to use similar cross-lingual strategies in reading books in L1 at home to their children (e.g., asking for the meaning of words or phrases in the school language).

• **Visiting the public library.** These visits alert children and their parents/grandparents to the presence of public libraries and the fact that many libraries have books and other materials in a variety of languages. The teacher can encourage children and other family members to join the public library and borrow books in the languages of both the home and classroom.

• **Create multilingual newspapers and dual language or multilingual books.** Children and their parents can be encouraged to create individual or group dual language books such as those created in the Early Authors Project (Bernhard et al., 2006, 2008). These dual language books can be modelled after similar books read to the children in the classroom. Similarly, children and their parents can participate in creating a multilingual newspaper modelled after the newspapers that teachers have read to children in class.

**The Dual Language Showcase**

The **Dual Language Showcase** emerged from a collaborative project (Schecter & Cummins, 2003) initiated in 1998 in which university researchers (Schecter & Cummins) worked collaboratively with educators in two highly diverse elementary schools (Thornwood & Floradale) in the Peel Board of Education near Toronto to explore effective pedagogical practices in multilingual and multicultural contexts. The Dual Language Showcase project was initiated by Thornwood grade 1 teacher Patricia Chow as a way of engaging students actively in literacy activities that involved their home languages as well as English. An additional impact of the project was the active involvement of parents in helping their children craft stories in the L1 and, in some cases, to translate between L1 and English.

Over the course of 15 years, Thornwood students in grades K through 5 have created dual language texts in multiple languages that are posted on the school’s website ([http://schools.peelschools.org/1363/DualLanguage/Documents/index.htm](http://schools.peelschools.org/1363/DualLanguage/Documents/index.htm)) (Figure 1). In some cases, newcomer students or those who had developed L1 literacy skills wrote initially in the home language but more frequently students drafted their stories in English and then worked with parents (and sometimes teachers who spoke their L1) to create their L1 version.

The Dual Language Showcase exerted a very significant impact on both Ministry of Education and school district policymakers and educators in demonstrating that
teachers could expand the instructional space beyond simply an English-only zone to include students’ and parents’ multilingual and multimodal repertories even when they themselves did not speak the multiple languages represented in their classrooms. It opened up pedagogical possibilities for many of the subsequent multilingual pedagogy projects that are listed in Appendix 1. As noted by Cummins and Early (2011) in their book on Identity Texts “Many of the case studies in the book owe their inspiration to the Dual Language Showcase” (p. v). Students in these projects (and their parents) took enormous pride in their creative dual language writing and illustrations, which were frequently shared on school or university websites or in the school library as hard-copy books displayed on the same shelves as the ‘real’ authors whose books they were reading in their classrooms.

Figure 1. The Dual Language Showcase created by Thornwood Public School teacher Patricia Chow ©Chow/Thornwood 2001. Used with permission. http://schools.peelschools.org/1363/DualLanguage/Documents/index.htm
The Multiliteracies Project

This cross-Canada project (2002-2007) involved educators and university researchers working together to explore pedagogies that prepare students for the literacy challenges of a globalized, networked, culturally, and linguistically diverse world (http://www.multiliteracies.ca). A number of the case studies focused on translanguaging pedagogies, although that term had not yet emerged into common usage as a descriptor of multilingual educational practices. Several of these case studies have been described elsewhere (e.g., Cummins, 2007; Cummins et al., 2005; Cummins & Early, 2011; Giampapa, 2010; see also http://www.multiliteracies.ca) and I will therefore not attempt to summarize these descriptions here. Instead, I will convey the perceptions of students and teachers who were involved in these projects by means of a series of quotations focused on how teacher-student identities are negotiated between teachers and students in the context of translanguaging pedagogies, specifically the writing of dual language books. Teacher and student perceptions regarding other themes (teaching for transfer, inclusion, and assessment) can be found in Leoni et al. (2011).

Teacher Lisa Leoni

The way I see it everything has to relate to the identity of the students; children have to see themselves in every aspect of their work at school. My overarching goal as a teacher is to uncover all that is unknown to me about my students–linguistically and culturally, and especially to understand the community they are part of (their parents, their friends, their faith) and the list goes on. So, when a student enters my class, I want to discover all that I can about that student as a learner and as a person.

What I love about using identity texts as a teaching strategy is that it validates students’ cultural and linguistic identities. They also help connect what students are learning in the class to their prior lived experiences and when these connections happen, learning becomes real for them because they are using their language and culture for purposes that have relevance for them. Most importantly, they end up owning the work that they produce.

Grade 7 student Kanta Khalid

How it helped me was when I came here in Grade 4 the teachers didn’t know what I was capable of. I was given a pack of crayons and a coloring book and told to get on coloring with it. And after I felt so bad about that--I’m capable of doing much more than just that. I have my own inner skills to show the world than just coloring and I felt that those skills of mine are important also. So when we started writing the book [The New Country], I could actually show the world that I am something instead of just coloring. And that’s how it helped me and it made me so proud of myself that I am actually capable of doing something, and here today [at the Ontario TESL conference] I am actually doing something. I’m not just a coloring person—I can show you that I am something.
Grade 7 student Sulmana Hanif

When my grandma came here last Sunday, and I told her about the book, first of all she couldn’t believe it and then I said, “Wait grandma, I’ll show you proof.” And I showed her [the book]. She was so surprised and so happy that her granddaughter is so popular, that her books are all around Canada and after she saw the whole thing she was like “Wow, you’re great,” and she started kissing me.

Grade 7 student Madiha Bajwa

I am proud of The New Country because it is our story. Nobody else has written that story. And when we showed it to Ms. Leoni, she said it was really good. She said, “It’s about your home country, and family, and Canada, it’s all attached, that’s so good.” I like that because it means she cares about our family and our country, not just Canada. Because she cares about us that makes us want to do more work. My parents were really happy to see that I was writing in both Urdu and English; my mother was happy because she knows that not everyone has that chance.

Grade 6 student Tomer Shahar

With Tom Goes to Kentucky it was easier to begin it in Hebrew and then translate it to English and the other thing that made it easier was that I chose the topic. Because I love horses, when I’m writing about horses it makes me want to continue to do it and do it faster.

I think using your first language is so helpful because when you don’t understand something after you’ve just come here it is like beginning as a baby.

It makes it more faster to be able to use both languages instead of just breaking your head to think of the word in English when you already know the word in the other language so it makes it faster and easier to understand.

The first time I couldn’t understand what she [Ms. Leoni] was saying except the word Hebrew, but I think it’s very smart that she said for us to do it in our language because we can’t just sit on our hands doing nothing.

Practice and Theory in Dialogue

The examples of translanguaging practice outlined in this paper and in the appendix contribute to the elaboration of translanguaging theory in several ways. First, the forms of crosslingual practice initiated by educators in the IHS in New York City and across Canada in the 1990s and 2000s predated the recent theoretical elaboration of the translanguaging construct. Teachers in these multilingual contexts were aware of research highlighting the relevance of L1 for the development of academic proficiency in the school language but were not in a position to pursue formal bilingual education programs due to the multiplicity of languages in their classrooms and, in many cases, a political and legislative context unsympathetic to bilingual approaches. However, through their innovative practice, these teachers generated knowledge about the possibilities and constraints of crosslinguistic instruction. In short, the examples
described in this paper highlight the role (and the power) of educators as knowledge-generators.

Second, the instructional initiatives serve to clarify the role of researchers in contributing to knowledge generation in collaboration with educators. In most of the examples profiled in the appendix, researchers observed teachers’ instructional initiatives, documented them, analyzed the principles or claims underlying the observed practice, and synthesized these principles across diverse contexts in order to assess the extent to which they could account for the observed data. At that point, the theoretical intuitions, hypotheses, and potential insights that derived from this process were brought into direct dialogue with instructional practice, resulting in practice and theory serving as reciprocal catalysts for each other.

Third, the instructional initiatives automatically embody a critical element in so far as they explicitly challenge the exclusion of minoritized students’ L1 from the school. Auerbach (1993, 2016) pointed to the fact that language learning and teaching are located in broader relations of power: “it is particularly important that languages which are devalued in the broader social context be valued and respected in the ESL classroom” (2016, p. 936). Thus, in societal contexts characterized by subtractive orientations to students’ bilingualism, an additive orientation to students’ languages challenges coercive relations of power (Bartlett & García, 2011; Cummins, 1986).

Fourth, although translanguaging pedagogies automatically imply some degree of critical orientation, this orientation may be somewhat superficial. García (2017), for example, has called for more explicit attention to the development of critical multilingual language awareness that would include awareness of histories of colonial and imperialistic oppression as well as awareness that language is socially created, and thus socially changeable. In the Canadian context, Marshall and Toohey (2010) documented an intergenerational literacy project that involved Grades 4 and 5 students from Punjabi, Hindi, and Malay linguistic home backgrounds interviewing and audio recording their grandparents telling stories about some aspect of their childhoods. While acknowledging the success of the project in enabling students to produce dual language books “in a resolutely monolingual school” (p. 238), they note that the project was seen by teachers, parents, and students as ‘not really school’ and the pedagogical potential of the stories to promote critical literacy was not actively pursued in the classroom:

Bringing this critical consciousness into dialogue with others who might feel or think differently is what education is supposed to be about. It is important to try to create some kinds of critical pedagogies around these funds of knowledge projects. Otherwise, we run the risk of keeping the institutional violence of schooling in place through literacy and language practices that pay only lip service to the lives and experiences of children and their families (p. 238).

The examples of translanguaging pedagogy from the 1990s and 2000s described in this paper should not obscure the fact that these initiatives, albeit inspirational in many cases, represented only a tiny fraction of instructional practice, which remained predominantly rooted in monoglossic assumptions. The immense contribution made by Ofelia García’s theorization of translanguaging has been to inject the construct into
mainstream discussions of effective pedagogy for minoritized students in educational contexts around the world. Not only has there been an explosion of academic books and articles focused on translanguaging since *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century* was published, the term has also entered the discourse of teacher education programs and professional development not only in North America but also globally. The expanded heteroglossic instructional practice that is being stimulated by García’s theorization of translanguaging will undoubtedly generate new insights that, in turn, will act as a catalyst for further refinement of theory in the education of multilingual students.

**References**


Appendix

A Sampling of Crosslinguistic/Translanguaging Instructional Initiatives Implemented in Canadian Schools 2000 - 2017

- The ÉLODI project (Éveil au Langage et Ouverture à la Diversité Linguistique—Awakening to Language and Opening up to Linguistic Diversity) ([http://www.elodil.com/](http://www.elodil.com/)) has developed a variety of classroom activities to promote students' awareness of language and appreciation of linguistic diversity. This project has been undertaken both in Montreal (Dr. Françoise Armand, Université de Montréal) and Vancouver (Dr. Diane Dagenais, Simon Fraser University) (Armand & Dagenais, 2012; Armand, Sirois, & Ababou, 2008).

- The Dual Language Showcase ([http://www.thornwoodps.ca/dual/index.htm](http://www.thornwoodps.ca/dual/index.htm)) was created by educators at Thornwood Public School in the Peel District School Board to demonstrate the feasibility of enabling elementary grades students who were learning English as an additional language to write stories in both English and their home languages (Chow & Cummins, 2003; Schecter & Cummins, 2003).

- The Multiliteracies project involved a series of collaborations between educators and university researchers Dr. Margaret Early at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and Dr. Jim Cummins at the University of Toronto ([www.multiliteracies.ca](http://www.multiliteracies.ca)). Drawing on the construct of multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996), the projects focused on broadening conceptions of literacy within schools both with respect to modality and language.

- The Multiliteracies Pedagogy project initiated in 2003 by Dr. Heather Lotherington of York University in Toronto involved a range of collaborations between educators in Joyce Public School and researchers at York University to explore how the concept of plurilingualism could be translated into pedagogical design. The professional learning community at Joyce Public School worked with students on a variety of multilingual and multimodal projects including rewriting traditional stories from a critical perspective using their multilingual linguistic repertoires (Lotherington, 2011; Lotherington & Paige, 2017).

- Linguistically Appropriate Practice (LAP) is an approach to working with immigrant-background children in preschool and primary grades. Pioneered by Dr. Roma Chumak-Horbatsch (2012) at Ryerson University in Toronto, LAP consists of both an educational philosophy and a set of concrete instructional activities that build on children’s home language and literacy experiences in order to encourage them to use their home languages in the classroom, take pride in their bilingualism, and continue to develop their home language as they are acquiring fluency and literacy in the dominant language of instruction.

- The Dual Language Reading Project was initiated by Dr. Rahat Naqvi of the University of Calgary and colleagues in the Calgary Board of Education. It documented the impact of teachers and community members reading dual language books to students both in linguistically diverse schools and in the
Calgary Board of Education’s Spanish-English bilingual program (see www.rahatnaqvi.ca and Naqvi et al., 2012).

- The *Family Treasures and Grandma’s Soup* dual language book project was initiated by Dr. Hetty Roessingh at the University of Calgary in collaboration the Almadina Language Charter Academy. Its goal was to enable Kindergarten and grade 1 students to create dual language books to enhance their early literacy progress (see http://www.duallanguageproject.com/ and Roessingh, 2011).

- At Simon Fraser University, Dr. Diane Dagenais and Dr. Kelleen Toohey have collaborated for many years with educators in the implementation of projects focused on developing students’ awareness of language and promoting their multilingual and multiliteracy skills (see, for example, Marshall & Toohey, 2012). This work has resulted in the website *ScribJab* (http://www.scribjab.com), which is described on the website as follows: “*ScribJab* is a web site and iPad application for children (age 10 – 13) to read and create digital stories (text, illustrations, 4 and audio recordings) in multiple languages (English, French, and other non-official languages). *ScribJab* creates a space for children to communicate about their stories, and come to an enhanced appreciation of their own multilingual resources.” (Dagenais et al., 2017) provide a detailed account of the origins and impact of *ScribJab*.

- The *Storybooks Canada* project (http://www.storybookscanada.ca/about.html) is described as follows on its website: Storybooks Canada is a website for teachers, parents, and community members that aims to promote bilingualism and multilingualism in Canada. It makes 40 stories [derived from Africa] available in the major immigrant and refugee languages of Canada, in addition to the official languages of English and French. A story that is read in English or French at school can be read in the mother tongue by parents and children at home. In this way, Storybooks Canada helps children to maintain the mother tongue in both oral and print form, while learning one of Canada’s official languages. Similarly, the audio versions of the stories can help beginning readers and language learners make the important connection between speech and text. Students can also compose stories using the images on the *Storybooks Canada* site.


**End Note**

1 A description of the “English Line” [CLIL] program can be found at https://eduvaasa.sharepoint.com/p/r/sites/kasvatus/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourceDoc=%7B667bbb3a-d50f-4592-8f75-08b43f6c3d1e%7D&action=edit. I am grateful to Dr. Mikaela Björklund, of Åbo Akademi University, Vaasa, for arranging the visit to Suvilahti School and also to the teachers who welcomed me into their classrooms.
Ofelia García: A True Pioneer and Leader in Bilingual Education

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In this article I trace my growth as a bilingual educator: how Ofelia García’s work has educated, humbled, and enlightened me. In this tribute to her retirement, I will focus on a few of Ofelia García’s publications that have had a great impact on me as a scholar. With her work I will examine my own scholarship development, which demonstrates my growth conceptually as a scholar in bilingualism and a teacher educator in bilingual education.

**Keywords:** bilingual education, Ofelia García, leader, pioneer, scholarship, translanguaging concept, translanguaging pedagogy

When I started my work in New York’s Chinatown schools two decades ago, I knew little about bilingual education and its theory or practice. It was through working with emergent bilingual students and bilingual teachers that I first gained experience and knowledge of bilingual education. My first two books: *My Trouble is My English* (1995) and *An Island of English* (2003), did not focus on bilingual education, though all the student participants in my studies had been, in fact, emergent bilinguals. In late 2003, I first met Ofelia García when we both served on the National Distinguished Advisory Committee for New York Bilingual & ELL Education. I have never forgotten her and what she expressed at that meeting. One committee member complained about the current ineffective ways of teaching ELs, saying: “I don’t understand why we cannot teach English to ELLs as we teach a foreign language by letting them memorize idiomatic expressions, phrases so they can speak and write with fewer errors such as where to use prepositions like ‘in’ or ‘at’ properly.”

I was shocked to hear this but kept quiet. Ofelia García, however, was not so reticent: “Now I am going to speak: why should we drill students like that, to speak perfectly? I have been speaking English my whole life, and I am still making mistakes with those ‘in’ or ‘at’ propositions in my English speaking and writing. Why do we have to make those students who are new to the language speak perfectly?” Her words silenced the whole table. I cannot remember anything else about that meeting, but her words have never left my mind since that day.

It is through reading García’s work that I have become more knowledgeable regarding bilingual education. Her work has educated, humbled and enlightened me, and it continues to do so. In this essay, I would like to focus on a few of her publications that have had a great impact on me as a scholar.
I was first struck by Ofelia García’s work published in 1999 on Latino high school students with little formal education, in which she made the following four suggestions in education for these students:

1. The focus of the educational program would not just be the development of Spanish literacy, rather using literacy, both in Spanish and English, to gain social and science knowledge.
2. Subjects would not be compartmentalized, and school would not be departmentalized. A single teacher working with fewer students in small groups would provide most of the instruction.
3. Students would earn high school credit whenever they achieve appropriate competencies and/or pass the required exams. The educational programs would not attempt to graduate students in four years, but rather would be available for as long as it takes.
4. School would not follow the conventional time frame of 9:00 to 3:00, but would offer flexible and compact schedules, making it possible for students to work while attending school (p. 79).

In my experience, these represented the most fundamental changes any scholars had ever proposed for educating SIFE (Students with Interrupted Formal Education) emergent bilingual students at the secondary level. These students have been branded by teachers as the biggest challenges in our teaching and count towards the highest dropout rates in our schools. My first major study was on Southeast Asian refugee adolescents, most of whom were SIFE students. My main recommendation from that study was: focus on students but not on grade curriculum. However, in her work, García asked for transformational changes: deconstruction of the traditional structure at the U.S. secondary education, and reconstruction of the education system with regards to class size, teacher’s role, school time and length of high school education. She understood that in order to provide SIFE students with successful formal education, changes at the instructional level or in individual classrooms by individual teachers cannot be enough. Schools have to make fundamental, structural changes to meet these students’ needs: they need more time, different schedules for schooling, and different structures of education. I wished I had read her work when I studied my Southeast Asian students, and I would have seen more of what hampered their study in our schools.

Today, SIFE students continue to enter our schools from all over the world, and they still have the highest dropout rates and present substantial challenges to our teaching (Custodio & O’Loughlin, 2017). A recent report by Sugarman (2017) from the Migration Policy Institute, states:

Immigrant and refugee youth who enter the United States during their secondary school years face a daunting set of challenges. In addition to learning a new language and adjusting to U.S. classroom norms, they must quickly fill gaps in their subject-matter knowledge and pass the courses required to graduate high school before aging out of the system” (Sugarman, 2017, p. 2).
We should re-visit García’s suggestions made nearly two decades ago, which ask schools to go beyond the instructional levels to restructure our schools and education to benefit these students.

Ofelia García’s scholarship always advocates for high quality education for bilingual students. In her study on bilingual writers (2002), she analyzed the consequence of remedial English education for bilingual Latino students. She stated that the remedial education these students received in the U.S. high school or colleges not only hampered the development of their English writing competency but also diminished their writing ability and confidence in their home language. She defined this as a backward transfer in biliteracy development and called for culturally authentic, meaningful, and rich contextual literacy education for bilingual students. This is one of the few studies I read among bilingual scholars that pointed out the “writing backwards across languages” (p. 248) caused by the low-quality education in the biliteracy development of bilingual students, which taught writing not for authentic communicative purpose, but as isolated academic activities dominant in English. Her scholarship always pushes norms; she sees good bilingual education as promoting advanced biliteracy development rather than restricting students’ potential as bilinguals.

It was through reading Ofelia García’s 2009 book on *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century*, that I have gained a more intimate understanding of bilingualism and bilingual education. This book has presented not only a historical and comprehensive overview of bilingualism and bilingual education in the United States and throughout the world, but also the author’s new vision and theory on bilingualism, which shakes the foundation of current bilingual theories and pedagogy. As Tove Skutnabb-Kanga’s comment made for this book: “Ofelia (and Hugo) have unemployed a lot of researchers. After this book, there is no need for another book in bi/multilingual education for a decade” (García, 2009, back cover of the book). García has challenged the traditional monolingual orientation dominated in current bilingual, language and literacy education for bilingual students, including the terms describing bilingual students, their home languages, and the labels used for them in education such as *mother tongue* and *second language learners*. I am profoundly intrigued by the following quote in this book:

> In the globalized context of the twenty-first century, the concept of a second language learner must be replaced by the concept of the bilingual whose communicative practices including translanguaging. ...

> The concept of a second-language speaker is also problematic. Is a second language speaker someone who speaks with an accent? When does one stop being a second-language speaker? Terms such as “second-language learner” and “second-language speaker,” when studied from a heteroglossic and bilingual perspective, make little sense. Instead, we should speak about “bilinguals,” giving the term a full range of possibilities, and taking away the negative connotations associated with being second, and not first (p. 60).

Her critique for the term *second language speaker* also reflects my own current situation. As a native speaker of Chinese, I am considered as second language speaker...
of English. But after studying and working in the United States for over three decades, my English, especially in reading and writing, is much stronger than my Chinese reading and writing. Every piece I have written to the Chinese audience is first written in English and then translated to Chinese with the help of my doctoral students or friends. My English writing, especially academic writing, is more fluent and sophisticated than my Chinese writing. But I am always considered as second language speaker of English, even though my first language is much weaker than my second one in many aspects.

However, despite my own situation as a bilingual, I never thought of questioning the term of second language learner or speaker but live with the established label and concept. That is what I have realized: she is truly a pioneer and leader in bilingual education. I love the image and metaphor she used to explain dynamic bilingualism: a banyan tree (growing to multi-directions) or all-terrain vehicle (with flexibility and mobility), which positively portray and value the complexity and appropriation of everyday practice of bilinguals. Her view of dynamic bilingualism has gone beyond all the conceptual theories that stress the importance of home languages of bilinguals and the recursive bilingual practice such as additive bilingualism (Lambert, 1975), L1 and L2 transfer theory on common underlying proficiency (Cummins, 1979), and translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2005).

In her book, Bilingual Education in the 21st Century (2009), Ofelia García, as a visionary, leads readers to reimagine and expand bilingualism and bilingual education, and forcefully advocates that bilingual education is not just for non-native English speaking students but for “all children and language learners in the world today” (p. 9), where the majority of the population is bilingual/multilingual. Not just in presenting theories or policy for bilingual education, she proposed translanguaging as a promising pedagogical practice for educating emergent bilinguals. Her translanguaging theory proposes a transformation in thinking and practice for not just bilinguals, but for all students in the 21st century.

Ofelia García with her colleague, Li Wei (2014) from London, has given a full discussion on translanguaging theory and practice in their book, Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education (2014). They believe that bilinguals are not “two monolinguals in one person” (Grosjean, 1989, p. 3), with distinct language repertoires for each of the languages they know. Rather, they suggest that bilinguals have a single language repertoire that gives them more tools, richer resources, and more flexible ways to learn new knowledge, to express themselves, and to communicate with others.

Their conceptualization of translanguaging was both enlightening and intriguing as it provided a compelling, well-fitting framework for my evolving understandings of emergent bilinguals’ language and literacy development, which had come a long way from my days of trying to forget my Chinese so I could truly master English (this monolingual belief truly has contributed to weakening my Chinese). As such, translanguaging provides a welcomed theoretical respite from monolingual perspectives that are single-mindedly focused on the acquisition of a target language, which has continued to dominate language instruction throughout the world. Translanguaging, not only theorizes and names the natural communicative practice of bi/multilinguals but also challenges the monolingual notions underlying the policies,
curriculum, and practice of current second language, foreign language, and bilingual programs across the world. It even goes beyond the concepts of language interdependence, codeswitching practice, and linguistic hybridization, which, though giving value to all the languages of bi/multilinguals, are still grounded in a monolingual perspective: seeing languages as separate entities in a bilingual’s brain. She grounded her thinking with a multilingual theory, shifting her focus on bilinguals and their communication practice from linguistic codes to reconceptualizing the instruction of bilinguals with a translanguaging pedagogic approach.

Like all bilinguals, I translanguage all the time in my everyday life. At home, I speak mostly English to my Caucasian, English-speaking husband, and switch automatically to mostly Chinese, or mixed languages when I speak to my son and my daughter-in-law, who are native Chinese speakers but also proficient in English. When I chat with my Chinese students, we switch back and forth frequently between English and Chinese about their studies. In the past, I used to define this practice as codeswitching. However, translanguaging helped me understand even though we learn different languages with different codes, once they are stored in our brains, these language codes integrate into a new, single linguistic system, mixing and complementing like greens in a salad bowl.

This new system of mixed languages, like a salad of mixed greens, functions together to benefit human lives and activities. If we fail to recognize this unified linguistic repertoire in a bilingual, we will tend to give different spaces in pursuing the separate development of their languages or we would use one to serve the other, rather than letting them work together synergistically to strengthen bilingual development as a whole entity of becoming. García’s translanguaging theory helped me understand that the two terms of code-switching and inter-language I used to define emergent bilingual’s writing developmental stage not only indicate an emphasis on language codes rather than practice, but also imply that using bilingual’s first language should be temporary and disappear once proficient in English. From a translanguaging perspective, I re-examined the writing samples I collected from young emergent bilinguals to bilingual doctoral students and I could see the translanguaging practice in their writing as they do in their oral communication throughout the whole spectrum of becoming and being literate bilingual beings. Translanguaging is part of living as bilinguals.

Translanguaging concept and pedagogy challenges the English-only practice in English programs, the language separate practice in bilingual and dual language programs, and the 99% target rule in foreign language instruction (Moeller & Catalano, 2015). This innovative stance invites all teachers to create space and opportunity in their classrooms for all students to use all their linguistic resources. This action can maximize the students learning potential and break restrictions so that all students enhance their academic knowledge learning. García is truly an intrepid pioneer as a scholar in bilingualism, campaigning for a promising bilingual education for all students in the globalized 21st century.

As a scholar in general literacy, I have been an outsider to the bilingual world for a long time. I remember the first time she invited me to speak to her class at Columbia
University after she read my work about New York Chinatown schools. Then she recommended me to give keynote speeches at other bilingual research conferences in New York City, and later on she invited me to serve on the National Advisory Board for New York State Bilingual Initiative Committee. I truly appreciate her for valuing my work with emergent bilinguals, though my work clearly showed a lack of bilingual theory and scholarship. It was through her recognition and invitation that I gradually entered the community of bilingual scholars.

During a recent meeting with her in January of 2017, I said what I had on my mind for a long time: “You must be so annoyed by my definition of writing stages of emergent bilinguals and advocacy of code-switching in their learning to write English in my book. I am so embarrassed to imagine how you would react to my work when I read your work on translinguaging. How could you still value me and invite me to speak and serve on the committee that consisted of renowned scholars in bilingual field?” Her response was: “We all started from a monolingual perspective; that is the starting point for us all and grow to understand bilingualism more and better. You are a good writer and know how to speak to teachers. I should learn from you.” Wow, her words encouraged me so much.

At that time, I was struggling with my third revision of writing a book proposal with Teachers College Press. From what she said, I decided to revise my writing by tracing my scholarship development from monolingual to translinguaging perspective in a narrative style that speaks to teachers. The revision went successfully, and the book proposal was finally accepted. Ofelia García has been a mentor to me: from reading her work, listening to her words, and having personal contacts with her, I have grown as a scholar in the literacy field. With confidence and knowledge, I am better prepared today to work as a teacher educator and a researcher in the bilingual field.

Ofelia García’s scholarship has impacted the bilingual and literacy education field throughout the world. Her numerous publications have influenced and will continue to influence generations of bilingual and literacy education researchers, educators, teachers, and policy makers globally. She has been and continues to be our leader in the field to guide and mentor us to improve our research and education for all children, and she will never retire from us or from the bilingual field and world!

References


Translanguaging into Raciolinguistic Ideologies: A Personal Reflection on the Legacy of Ofelia García

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The term translanguaging has received a great deal of attention in recent years in applied linguistics. Originally coined to describe a bilingual pedagogical approach Ofelia García extended the definition to encompass the multiple discursive practices of bilingual communities. This broader definition has been taken up in many different ways by scholars seeking to challenge dominant conceptualizations of bi/multilingualism. In this article, I describe the ways that translanguaging offered me a point of entry for better understanding my own experiences as a US Latino. In addition, I discuss how it has equipped me with theoretical tools for speaking back to the deficit perspectives that I inflicted on my students as an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. I then trace the ways that these theoretical tools eventually led me to develop a research agenda, which point to the raciolinguistic ideologies that lie at the core of these deficit perspectives.

Keywords: bilingual education, governmentality, legacy, raciolinguistic ideologies, Ofelia García, translanguaging

The term translanguaging has received a great deal of attention in recent years in applied linguistics. Originally coined to describe a bilingual pedagogical approach in which one language is used for receptive communication and another language used for productive communication (Williams, 1994), the use of the term increased exponentially when Ofelia García extended the definition to encompass the “multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of the world” (García, 2009, p. 45, italics in original). She used this broader definition as a point of entry for challenging dominant approaches to language education that insist on the strict separation of languages arguing that the translanguaging of bilingual communities should be treated as a resource in classrooms (García, 2014a). This work has culminated in calls for incorporating translanguaging into the language allocation policies of bilingual programs (Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2017) as well as in efforts to imagine a more explicit role for the home language in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms (García, 2014b).

While the thrust of García’s work has prioritized questions of language education, other scholars have utilized her definition of translanguaging to further theorize the nature of bilingualism beyond the classroom. In line with García’s call to
take a global perspective, Creese and Blackledge (2010) have connected translanguaging to conversations pertaining to superdiversity that seek to document the fluid language practices of increasingly multilingual urban centers. Taking to heart García’s insistence on the ideological construction of named languages and the borders between them, Li Wei (2018) has proposed a translanguaging instinct to describe the human tendency to transcend the boundaries of culturally defined linguistic categories in their interactions with one another. While coming from different disciplinary perspectives that are not always completely aligned with one another, at the core of the take up of the term translanguaging have been efforts to challenge previous conceptualizations of bilingualism that have used monolingualism as the norm.

In this article, I seek to explore a thread of García’s original conceptualization of translanguaging that I have found productive in my own work—her critique of additive bilingualism. I begin by describing my own personal journey into translanguaging as a child of Latina/o (im)migrants to the United States. I use this autobiographical portrait to contextualize the questions I had related to the intersections of language, race, and language education upon my arrival into graduate studies where I had the opportunity to work with Ofelia García. I describe how her theorization of translanguaging, alongside the broader framework of dynamic bilingualism in which she situated it, offered me words to make sense of my own lived experience as a US-born Latino as well as provided me with tools to speak back to deficit perspectives of the Latina/o students that I worked with as an ESL teacher. I then describe the ways that this counter-narrative provided the foundation for my entire research agenda. In particular, I describe the ways that her critique of additive bilingualism equipped me with the initial tools I needed to develop the concept of nation-state/colonial governmentality, which would eventually lead me in collaboration with Jonathan Rosa to develop the concept of raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

My Journey into Translanguaging

My journey into translanguaging did not begin at the theoretical level but rather from my personal experience as a US Latino. My mother arrived in New York City from Puerto Rico in 1962 when she was twelve years old. She does not really remember learning English. She kind of just learned it along the way in school even as she continued to use Spanish at home with her mother and her siblings and with many of her peers both in and out of school. My father came to New York City when he was seventeen years old in 1968. Unlike my mother, my father came to work and not to attend school. As a result, while my mother would eventually feel comfortable using both languages, my father always felt more comfortable using Spanish leading them to prefer to use Spanish with one another.

My oldest brother was born in 1973 in New York City. Because they lived in a predominantly Spanish speaking neighborhood and my parents preferred to speak to one another in Spanish, as a young child my brother also preferred speaking Spanish over English. This quickly changed when my parents decided to move to Philadelphia in 1977. The neighborhood they moved into was a predominantly White neighborhood. They were the only Latina/o on the block. My older brother began to prefer English over Spanish and eventually stopped using Spanish completely once he began school.
By the time I was born in 1981, English was the primary language used by my siblings and would, in turn, be the primary language I used. This did not mean that Spanish disappeared from our home. My parents continued to communicate with one another primarily through Spanish. In addition, they typically communicated with us bilingually, with my father typically using more Spanish than English and my mother more English than Spanish. Though I did not have a word to describe it at the time, I now realize that translanguaging was the norm in my household, where my parents would use both English and Spanish with us and we would answer them primarily in English. This translanguaging has remained the norm in my family throughout my life.

As a young child, I assumed that everybody communicated the way that my family did. It was only when I began to attend school that I realized that my family was different. I would sometimes use a word from home that I assumed to be a word that everybody knew. I quickly found out it was actually a Spanish word that most of my friends and teachers did not know. I remember the confused look on a friend’s face when I told him I was running away from the “cuco” (the boogey-man) and the blank stare from my teacher when I told her that my favorite show was the “novela” (my mother’s soap opera). While I was soon able to reserve these words for home and produce “pure” English with friends and teachers, something about my English was still deemed strange. Many of my peers continued to insist that I had a “funny accent.” My attempts at producing “pure” English were an apparent failure due to continued “contamination” from Spanish.

My apparent lack of Spanish language abilities baffled people even more than my funny English. Students in my high school Spanish class often complained that because I was Latino I had an unfair advantage because I already spoke Spanish. When I told them, I did not speak Spanish they looked at me quizzically and demanded to know how I could be “Spanish” and not speak the language. When they realized that I understood most of what the teacher was saying they accused me of lying, insisting that I did know Spanish. They could not believe that it was possible for somebody to understand a language that they could not speak. But it was not just my classmates who thought this. One day a substitute teacher chastised me for not wanting to expand my horizons by learning an actual foreign language. Could Spanish not be a foreign language for me? Was English, therefore, my foreign language? After all, my peers continued to insist that I spoke English with an accent.

Despite, or perhaps because of, these experiences of linguistic marginalization, I became a fierce advocate for bilingual education in college. As an education major, I learned that the language attrition I had experienced as a second-generation US Latino was a product of what Lambert (1975) termed subtractive bilingualism. I was taught that subtractive educational approaches denied many Latina/o students the opportunity to develop academic language in either English or Spanish, which led them to experience academic challenges (Cummins, 2000). I was also introduced to the concept of additive bilingualism, that described contexts where children had the opportunity to learn a new language while maintaining their home language (Lambert, 1975). I was taught that in contrast to subtractive educational approaches, additive approaches ensured that Latina/o students had the opportunity to develop academic language in both Spanish and English thereby ensuring their academic success.
The contrast between subtractive and additive bilingualism did not completely map on to my own lived experience. While English was my primary language as a child, which would suggest subtractive bilingualism, I was always a successful student and never struggled academically. Nevertheless, the pains of language attrition that critics of subtractive bilingualism pointed to resonated with me. I began to realize how little my schooling had affirmed my bilingualism and the ways that this likely influenced my decision to prefer English over Spanish.

I began to imagine what my life would have been like if I had experienced additive bilingualism. Would I have been a more confident user of Spanish? Would I have felt more connected to my Spanish speaking grandmothers? I felt that additive bilingualism provided me with words to describe the type of future I wanted for Latina/o children. I did not want future generations of Latino students to feel the pain and embarrassment of not feeling confident using Spanish even as their English was deemed accented. I wanted them to have the opportunity to develop both languages in ways that would ensure their academic success and affirm their Latina/o identity. With this in mind, I continued to study Spanish in college with the hopes of becoming a bilingual teacher who could promote additive bilingualism in my future classroom.

My plans changed a bit after I graduated. Having studied Spanish for several years had made me more confident in my Spanish speaking abilities. Nevertheless, I continued to feel uncertain about whether my Spanish was good enough to be a bilingual teacher. Using my interpretation of the additive bilingual framework to analyze my bilingualism, I decided not to pursue bilingual education as a career because of what I perceived was my continued lack of competency in academic Spanish. I concluded that while for many of my peers my Latina/o background provided me with an unfair advantage in Spanish class, that in reality it had placed me at a disadvantage. In particular, while my peers were only exposed to the academic Spanish of formal classrooms, I had been exposed to Spanglish on a regular basis in my home. This led me to sometimes use terms such as *rufo* for *roof* that my Spanish teachers insisted were incorrect because these terms were not used by monolingual Spanish speakers in Latin America or Spain. I concluded that my Spanish was still not academic enough for me to be an effective bilingual teacher. I, therefore, opted to become an ESL teacher, instead of a bilingual teacher, and accepted an ESL position at a high school in the Bronx soon after graduating college.

When I accepted the job, I imagined that most of my students would be recent arrivals to the United States who were learning basic communication skills in English. Instead, the majority of my students had been born in the United States and felt quite comfortable communicating in English, with many even reporting to me that they felt more comfortable communicating in English than in Spanish. A few even claimed not to speak Spanish at all. After doing some investigating, I learned that many of my students were what the New York City Department of Education referred to as “Long Term English Language Learners” or “LTELLs”—students who had been receiving ESL or bilingual services for six or more years and who have failed to pass the language proficiency exam required for exiting from official ELL status. Using the knowledge that I had learned in my college courses, I assumed that because of subtractive educational programming these students had not been provided with the opportunity to master
academic English or Spanish. I concluded that while many of them used Spanish on a daily basis socially, English-only instruction had denied them the opportunity to master academic Spanish. In a similar vein, I concluded that despite the fact that many of my students reported feeling more comfortable in English than Spanish, subtractive educational programming prevented them from gaining a strong mastery of academic English because they were not able to transfer skills learned in Spanish into English. I determined that my job was to provide remediation to support their developing of this academic language. Essentially, this job was for me to fix their language deficiencies.

As I think back to my teaching experiences, I cannot help, but reflect on the real damage I likely inflicted on my students through the adoption of such a deficit perspective. What troubles me the most are the ways that I was able to couch this deficit perspective within social justice discourses. I insisted that their linguistic deficiencies were a product of poor instruction made possible by institutional racism rather than anything intrinsic to the students themselves. I convinced myself that teaching my students the “codes of power” (Delpit, 2006) was the most effective way of countering this legacy of poor instruction and ensuring their academic success. That is, while I acknowledged the existence of institutional racism, I continued to identify the locus of change in fixing the language practices of my students. This deficit narrative made it difficult for me to notice the linguistic dexterity involved in their fluid use of English and Spanish on a daily basis. Ironically, I had gone from being a Latino child whose English and Spanish was deemed not good enough to a Latino adult insisting my Latina/o students’ English and Spanish was not good enough. Perhaps it was my own personal experiences with linguistic marginalization that gradually made me begin to question this narrative. I began to wonder how it was possible for students who I observed using English and Spanish on a daily basis to be simultaneously ELLs and deficient in Spanish. Why was the bilingualism of my students deemed not good enough? How did this connect to my own experiences as a US Latino who had always been made to feel that my bilingualism was not good enough? It was these questions that would eventually lead me to pursue doctoral studies in Urban Education at the CUNY Graduate Center, in New York City.

**Embracing Translanguaging as a Doctoral Student**

In my second year of doctoral work, as I was still trying to make sense of the questions that had brought me into the program, Ofelia García joined the faculty of the Urban Education program. In Fall 2008, I took my first course with her entitled “Language in Urban Education Policy and Practice.” In this course, she shared with us page proofs of what would become her groundbreaking book *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*. Reading those pages for the first time, I felt like I finally had a theory to make sense of my own experience while also having analytic tools to re-frame the bilingualism of my former students.

I was particularly taken in by her identification of the monoglossic language ideologies that lie at the core of dominant conceptualizations of bilingualism. These monoglossic language ideologies take monolingualism as the norm and evaluate the language practices of bilingual communities from this monolingual perspective. Unsurprisingly, she included subtractive bilingualism as a product of monoglossic
language ideologies. More provocatively, and more fruitful for my own thinking, she also included additive bilingualism as a product of monoglossic language ideologies. At first glance the suggestion that both subtractive and additive bilingualism are informed by the same language ideologies may seem odd. After all subtractive bilingualism seeks to eradicate bilingualism while additive bilingualism seeks to promote it. However, her argument was that while subtractive bilingualism sought to promote monolingualism, additive bilingualism often sought to promote double monolingualism (Heller, 2006).

It felt for the first time in my life that I could put words to the marginalization that I felt my entire life and the marginalization that I had since inflicted on my students. Since college I had theoretical tools to help explain the ways that Spanish had been quickly replaced by English in my family. Yet, I continued to lack theoretical tools for legitimizing the bilingual language practices we as a family continued to engage in on a daily basis. Relatedly, I also lacked theoretical tools for legitimizing the bilingualism of the students I had worked with as an ESL teacher. Additive bilingualism was inadequate for these purposes. After all, it was ideas associated with additive bilingualism that made me reluctant to pursue a career as a bilingual teacher—in particular my supposed lack of academic Spanish. It was also ideas associated with additive bilingualism that pushed me to frame my students as lacking this same academic language in either English or Spanish. Understanding additive bilingualism as being produced by monoglossic language ideologies, allowed me to begin to challenge the deficit framings that lied at its core.

García (2009) proposed dynamic bilingualism as an alternative to additive bilingualism. Additive bilingualism, through its adoption of monoglossic language ideologies typically frames languages as bounded and distinct and language learning as the process of adding one bounded language to another. García used the metaphor of a bicycle to illustrate the ideological assumptions of additive bilingualism with each wheel representing one language and the two never interacting with one another. In contrast, dynamic bilingualism adopted heteroglossic language ideologies that, taking bilingualism and multilingualism as its starting point, embrace the translanguaging that is the norm in bi/multilingual communities. In contrast to a bicycle, García used the metaphor of an all-terrain vehicle with all of the wheels interacting with one another as they adapt to the terrain in which they find themselves.

I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work on a research team led by Kate Menken focused on LTELLs as I was first beginning to think through how to challenge the deficit framings associated with additive bilingualism through adopting dynamic bilingualism. As a team of researchers who had all worked with Ofelia García and shared her commitment to affirming the bilingualism of Latina/o students, we struggled with the deficit-laden discourse that typically characterized the literature on LTELLs (Olsen, 2010). As we documented the dynamic bilingualism of the students we were working with, we began to question whether our initial description of them as lacking academic language and in need of additive educational approaches was doing more harm than good. As a culmination of this work, we developed a critique of the LTELL label by focusing attention on the dynamic bilingualism of Latina/o students classified as LTELLs and illustrating the ways that these students were adept at using their bilingualism in strategic and innovative ways (Flores, Kleyn, & Menken, 2015).
We pointed to the ways that institutional racism marginalized these language practices in ways that positioned these students as lacking proficiency in either English or Spanish. We advocated a re-framing of the language practices of LTELLEs so that they are treated as a resource for learning.

While I was, and still am, proud of this breakthrough, I felt like something was missing from my analysis. It was not proponents of subtractive bilingualism, whose frameworks I have rejected for many years, whose deficit discourses we were critiquing in this work. Instead, it was proponents of additive bilingualism, whose frameworks I had accepted for many years, whose deficit discourses we found ourselves critiquing. Was it possible that in our desire to promote additive bilingualism that we had inadvertently reproduced the same deficit perspectives that we purported to critique? By positioning the bilingualism of students who had not participated in additive educational programs as subtractive, were we devaluing the home language practices of these students and their families? As I began to raise these questions about additive bilingualism, I began to reflect on how deeply entrenched deficit perspectives of Latina/o students were in the dominant ways that their language practices are represented in scholarly and policy debates. While dynamic bilingualism offered me an alternative way of framing these students, it did not provide answers to how these deficit discourses came to be. It was a passing reference to the concept of governmentality in García’s book Bilingual Education in the 21st Century that offered me a more robust answer to these questions.

**Extending Governmentality into a Dissertation Project**

The concept of governmentality provided me with a point of entry for thinking about the broader political and economic context that allowed for the emergence of monoglossic language ideologies and the deficit perspectives associated with them. In my dissertation project, I developed the concept of nation-state/colonial governmentality as a general framework for analyzing the production of governable national and colonial subjects that fit the political and economic needs of modern society (Flores, 2013). At the core of nation-state/colonial governmentality was the production of deviant populations who were positioned as a threat to the integrity of the national polity (Foucault, 1978; Stoler, 1995). In my dissertation, I explored the role that monoglossic language ideologies played in the production of these deviant populations. Specifically, I examined the ways that these monoglossic language ideologies contributed to the production of true Americanness as reflected in the work of Noah Webster and John Pickering, with both early US leaders framing the idealized language practices of White male property owners as the true voice of the American people (Flores, 2014).

Developing this historical understanding of the origins and function of monoglossic language ideologies in US society, allowed me to also denaturalize more contemporary framings of the bilingualism of Latina/o students. In my dissertation, I traced these contemporary framings to the emergence of the concept of the so-called “semilingual”—bilingual students who tested as not fully proficient in either of their languages. The concept of semilingualism was first proposed by Scandinavian scholars as a way of explaining the academic challenges confronted by Finnish migrant children.
attending Swedish schools. These scholars hypothesized that Finnish migrant students had failed to develop full competency in either Finnish or Swedish and were, therefore, not able to successfully engage in school-related tasks (Skutnabb-Kangas & Toukoma, 1976). These scholars were careful to point to societal factors as the root cause of semilingualism, with schools that failed to provide adequate education to these migrant students being seen as the primary culprit (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981). Yet, despite this societal framing of the origins of semilingualism, the solutions proposed by scholars focused on addressing the supposed linguistic deficiencies of these children. The most specific recommendation made by scholars was for students to be offered mother-tongue education in the early years of schooling that would allow them to develop a strong linguistic foundation before they were introduced to a second language (Skutnabb-Kangas & Toukoma, 1976). This framing was soon taken up in scholarly and policy related discussions outside of Sweden, including scholars and policymakers advocating for bilingual education in the United States (Cummins, 1979).

Though the term semilingualism has disappeared from scholarly and policy discussions, in my dissertation I examined the ways that its specter remains firmly entrenched in dominant framings of the bilingualism of Latina/o students. I argued that what was once term semilingualism has more recently been referred to as lacking academic English and Spanish. What I had come to realize as I did my dissertation research was that this framing did not fundamentally challenge the concept of semilingualism but rather simply introduced new terminology to describe the same ostensibly objective linguistic phenomenon. As was the case with scholars proposing the term semilingualism, proponents of the academic language framework argued that subtractive approaches to language education had denied Latina/o students the opportunity to develop a strong linguistic foundation in either English or Spanish. Also, in line with proponents of semilingualism, proponents of the academic language framework pointed to societal and institutional factors related to the marginalization of minoritized languages as the ultimate culprit in preventing Latina/o students from developing the academic language needed for school success (Cummins, 2000). Nevertheless, at the core of this framework remained the idea that the supposed linguistic deficiencies of Latina/o students were at the root of their academic challenges and providing them with additive bilingual educational programming would fix these deficiencies and address these academic challenges.

Utilizing the concept of nation-state/colonial governmentality, allowed me to denaturalize these linguistic designations by pointing to their complicity in the production of governable national subjects who serve the political and economic interests of modern society. Specifically, I examined the ways that additive bilingualism, while challenging subtractive bilingualism, did not challenge monoglossic language ideologies and, by extension, did not challenge nation-state/colonial governmentality. In particular, subtractive bilingualism sought to produce mono-languaged subjects with mastery in one national standardized language while additive bilingualism sought to produce bi-languaged subjects with mastery in two national standardized languages (Flores, 2017). In this way, additive bilingualism was not a break with nation-state/colonial governmentality but was rather a way of framing bilingualism in ways that continued to produce governable national subjects. In
particular, it framed bilingualism in a way that continued to marginalize the bilingualism of Latina/o students and reify their subordinate position within existing racial hierarchies.

As I was developing my nation-state/colonial critique of additive bilingualism, I began to have conservations with Jonathan Rosa, a linguistic anthropologist and long-time friend who was asking similar questions about the intersections of language, race, and bilingualism. During our conversations, I shared with him my critique of additive bilingualism and he shared with me the concept of languagelessness that he developed as part of his ethnographic work in a primarily Latina/o high school to describe institutional discourses that framed Latina/os as not fully proficient in either English or Spanish (Rosa, 2016). We immediately saw the connections between our two frameworks with both contextualizing the linguistic marginalization of Latina/o students within broader histories of colonialism and continued manifestations of structural racism in contemporary society. Together we sought to create a coherent framework that could help to explain why it was that certain bilingualism was valued and others devalued. This would eventually lead us to develop the concept of raciolinguistic ideologies.

**Undoing Additive Bilingualism through a Raciolinguistic Perspective**

The initial question that Jonathan Rosa and I grappled with in our collaboration with one another was related to the stark contrast between mainstream representations of supposed cognitive advantages of bilingualism (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009) and the continued deficit perspectives pertaining to the bilingualism of Latina/os with which we both had personal and professional experience. I brought to the conversation my critique of additive bilingualism and its connection with the production of governable subjects as part of nation-state/colonial governmentality (Flores, 2013). Dr. Rosa brought to the conversation his critique of discourses of languagelessness and its connection with raciolinguistic enregisterment, a process whereby people from racialized communities can be overdetermined to be engaged in deficient language practices even when utilizing linguistic features that are completely unmarked when utilized by white people (Rosa, 2018). Merging our two frameworks together we developed the concept of raciolinguistic ideologies to describe the co-constructing of language and race in ways that frame the language practices of racialized communities as inherently deficient.

One of our first points of entry into examining raciolinguistic ideologies was through further developing the critique of the LTELL label that I had already been working on as part of my work on the LTELL research project mentioned above. While in my work with this research team, we had contrasted the linguistic dexterity of LTELLs with their dominant representation in the literature (Flores, Kleyn, & Menken, 2015), in my collaboration with Dr. Rosa we sought to explain why there was little uptake of this linguistic dexterity in these dominant representations. How was it possible for these bilingual students to be framed as if they lacked full proficiency in any language? How did this dominant representation connect with the deficit discourses utilized to describe the language practices of other racialized students? Inspired by the concept of the listening subject that Inoue (2006) positioned as integral
to the ideological construction of women’s language in modern Japan, we developed the concept of the white listening subject to describe the ideological construction of the language practices of racialized communities as inherently deficient and in need of remediation (Flores & Rosa, 2015). From this perspective, the dominant representations of LTELLs and other such groups are not objective linguistic descriptions but rather ideologically produced representations that are part of broader racialization processes.

In order to concretize the implications of the white listening subject for how we think about language education, we revisited my critique of additive bilingualism and connected it with appropriateness-based discourses that suggest that students from racialized backgrounds should learn how to modify their language practices in ways that are deemed appropriate for school-related tasks (Leeman, 2005). Our basic argument was that appropriateness-based approaches to language education presupposed that students from racialized backgrounds had full control over their language practices failing to account for the role of the white listening subject in over determining their language practices to be deficient (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In other words, appropriateness-based approaches to language education failed to account for the racialization processes at the core of deficit perspectives that could not be dismantled simply by adding new language practices. No matter how much was added and how adept racialized students became at conforming to rules of appropriateness, they would always be heard as utilizing racially marked language practices that are inappropriate because of their racial position within the broader society.

Dr. Rosa and I have since further developed this analysis into five principles that we have termed a raciolinguistic perspective to the study of language and society (Rosa & Flores, 2017). In one of our principles, we merge raciolinguistic ideologies with nation-state/colonial governmentality to expose the logic of colonialism that have undergirded dominant representations of the language practices of racialized communities. We trace the origins of this logic of colonialism to depictions of indigenous languages as animal-like forms of simple communication (Veronelli, 2015) unable to express Christian doctrine (Greenblatt, 1990). We connect these early colonial representations to the marginalization experienced by colonized subjects who utilized European colonial language but who were never recognized as truly legitimate in their use of these languages because of their racialized status within European colonialism (Fanon, 1967). We made the case for the enduring durability of this logic of colonialism in more recent depictions of Latina/o and other racialized people as semilingual, LTELLs, and/or lacking academic language. Though discourse has changed over time the underlying framework has stayed the same—something about the language practices of racialized communities needs to be fixed for them to be able to have success in the modern world.

The consequences of these raciolinguistic ideologies can be illustrated by a recent ESL program evaluation of a small U.S. school district with a primarily affluent White population alongside a sizeable and growing number of children of migrant farmers from Mexico and Central America. During the evaluation, educators reported to me that many of the Latina/o students—even those who were not officially designated as ELLs—were struggling academically. The consensus was that these
academic struggles were primarily a linguistic problem, in that the majority of the Latina/o students had failed to master the academic language that was needed for school success. It was striking to me that the educators, who were predominantly monolingual and White, did not consider to be relevant a myriad of other factors that could be contributing to the academic challenges confronting their large and growing Latina/o population, including in-school issues such as the lack of Latina/o bilingual educators and teachers, or out-of-school issues such as the high poverty of migrant families. Instead, these larger sociopolitical factors were ignored in favor of a focus on the perceived linguistic deficiencies of their Latina/o student population.

It is possible that proponents of additive bilingualism would accept the framing of the Latina/o students as lacking academic language. However, in contrast to the district administrators, they would not place the burden of responsibility on the students. Instead, they would argue that it is the subtractive bilingualism being promoted by the district’s English-only policy that lies at the root of their academic challenges. Indeed, this is precisely what our team reported to the district. We recommended that the district adopt a dual language model that could be made available to both the Latina/o and White families served by the district. They completely dismissed our suggestion, illustrating the continued power of subtractive bilingualism in shaping U.S. educational policy. Yet, let us say that they had responded positively to our recommendation that they adopt an additive approach throughout their district. Let us say they did begin dual language programs that would support the developing of bilingualism for all students in the district. This still would not get to the root cause of the marginalization of the Latina/o community in the district.

Adapting a hypothetical scenario, I proposed elsewhere (Flores, 2016), might provide an indication of what could happen should the district implement dual language models for its student population. Affluent White children would likely enter the program being framed by their teachers as having a strong foundation in academic language. In contrast, the Latina/o students would likely be framed as lacking a strong foundation in either academic English or Spanish because of their constant habit of language mixing—a language practice that is stigmatized in many dual language programs (Fitts, 2006). As a result, the White children might be offered enrichment activities while the Latina/o students might more likely be offered remediation activities throughout elementary school. In high school, the affluent White children might continue to study Spanish and would likely be applauded for their efforts to use Spanish whenever they can. In contrast, the Latina/o graduates from the program would more likely be told by the Spanish teacher that they speak Spanish incorrectly because of regionalisms that they learned at home, a common phenomenon for Latina/o students in Spanish courses across the United States (Nieto, 2010). The affluent White students might have the opportunity to travel and study abroad—a privilege that has been shown to lead to White students’ Spanish being seen as superior to the Spanish of U.S. Latina/o by Spanish teachers in higher education (Valdés, Gonzáles, López García, & Márquez, 2003). Unfortunately, the Latina/o students might not be able to afford to travel abroad with some even explicitly barred from doing so because of their immigration status. Which of these student populations would benefit most from an additive approach being adopted by the district?
In short, from a raciolinguistic perspective, the limitation to additive bilingualism is not that it is “infused with raciolinguistic ideologies” (Cummins, 2017, p. 415) but rather that it offers a purely linguistic analysis of a phenomenon that is highly racialized. Despite nods to structural inequality, at the core of additive bilingualism is a similar theory of change as the one that lies at the core of subtractive bilingualism—that the root of the problems confronted by Latina/o students is linguistic in nature. The difference is that subtractive bilingualism seeks to subtract Spanish while additive bilingualism seeks to add English. In addition, it presupposes that Latina/o can and must master academic language and that when they do so they will be recognized as doing so by their interlocutors. Yet, the racial position of Latina/os within U.S. society often prevents this from happening. To be clear, I am not suggesting that scholars, policymakers, and educators who promote additive bilingualism are racist. Instead, my argument is that additive bilingualism fails to challenge the logic of colonialism that has historically and continues to produce raciolinguistic ideologies that frame the language practices of racialized communities as inherently deficient. In a society built on a foundation of white supremacy, a failure to actively work to dismantle white supremacy in the frameworks we use will ensure the continued maintenance of the racial status quo.

**Toward a Materialist Anti-Racist Future**

When I first read the page proofs of *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century* I could never have anticipated the many directions it would take me. While so much of that book has been helpful to me in my thinking over the years, it was Ofelia García’s often overlooked critique of additive bilingualism that proved to be the most fruitful for me in developing a research agenda that works at the intersection of language, race, and bilingualism in education. It was her denaturalizing of the ideological underpinnings of additive bilingualism that provided me with my first glimpse into an approach to the study of bilingualism that situates dominant framings of bilingual education within the broader socio-historical context that has led to their emergence. These efforts have led me to a more robust understanding of the logics of colonialism that have undergirded dominant representations of the language practices of racialized communities for the past several hundred years. They have also paved the way for me to grapple with just how deeply entrenched white supremacy is in US institutions and by extension the ways that agents of these institutions, including scholars, policymakers, and practitioners often rely on deficit frameworks even in our efforts to advocate for racial justice.

It is with this in mind that I have developed a *materialist anti-racist* approach to bilingual education (Flores & Chaparro, 2017). Melamed (2011) describes materialist anti-racism as an approach to political and economic analysis that situates the global struggles of racialized communities within the white supremacist and capitalist relations of power that lie at the root of their marginalization. Incorporating insights from what Pennycook (2015) has termed the *materialist turn* in applied linguistics, a materialist anti-racism framing of bilingual education accounts for the ways that poverty contributes to linguistic marginalization. It complements this with the incorporation of critical race scholarship that examines the material consequences of
white supremacy on racialized communities (Harris, 1993) and the ways that these racial disparities contribute to linguistic marginalization. Bringing language and race together, a materialist anti-racist framing critically examines the ways that poverty and white supremacy intersect to produce raciolinguistic ideologies that frame the language practices of racialized communities as inherently deficient and in need of remediation in order for these communities to overcome their marginalized positions within the broader society.

To illustrate the implications of a materialist anti-racist framing for our scholarship and work with practitioners, let us revisit the school district mentioned above. Work that has typically been under the banner of additive bilingualism could still play a vital role in necessary reform efforts albeit through grappling with some of the critiques that dynamic bilingualism has brought to the table. What a materialist anti-racist framework adds is an insistence that efforts to reframe language as a resource for learning, as important as this work may be, does little to address the root cause of the marginalization of Latina/o migrant workers in the district. At the core of this stance is that there is nothing affirming about an institution designed to prepare Latina/o students to conform to monoglossic ideals, especially in a society where Latina/os are overdetermined to never be able to achieve this ideal. Instead, a materialist anti-racist framework argues that if we want to truly affirm the language practices of Latina/o students what we need is a fundamental transformation of school and society. That is, to truly address the root cause would require fundamental structural changes to the global political order.

Some might object that a focus on the broader political and economic context is beyond the scope of applied linguistics and the purview of efforts to promote bilingual education. My response is that if we are committed to using our expertise in ways that challenge racial hierarchies then we must bring attention to these broader issues. By bracketing the broader political and economic issues confronting Latina/o and other racialized communities and focusing solely on linguistic solutions, our field has been complicit in the production of a theory of change that identifies the root of the challenges confronting Latina/o students as linguistic and the solution as the modification of their language practices. Developing a materialist anti-racist theory of change requires not only new conceptualizations of language that resist deficit perspectives but also a systematic incorporation of the structural barriers confronting Latina/o communities into the solutions we propose. Only in this way can applied linguists truly avoid being part of the problem and instead part of the solution to the marginalization of racialized communities.

As I continue this work, my hope is to embody Ofelia García’s generosity of spirit. Rather than feeling threatened by new ideas, she has always insisted that my generation had to develop our own analytic tools for understanding the world that respond to the sociopolitical context that we have grown up in and now confront. She has always encouraged me not to be afraid to situate myself in my work and to embrace the ways that my own personal experiences as a U.S. Latino have both shaped the questions I ask and inform the answers that I provide. She has always encouraged me to keep pushing the field forward which is something that I intend to do for the rest of my career. This article demonstrates that none of what I have done, am currently doing,
or will do in the future to push the field would have been possible without her theoretical leadership. Her mentorship has been critical as I apply her theoretical contributions in new ways. Her continued support has inspired me to develop a research agenda that insists that processes of racialization must be central to applied linguistic research and practice. It is no exaggeration to state that I would not be the scholar I am today had I not been blessed to be guided by Ofelia García.

References


Minority Languages, National State Languages, and English in Europe: Multilingual Education in the Basque Country and Friesland

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This article focuses on minority languages in education in Europe in contexts where they are in contact with national state languages and English. Teaching minority language implies bilingual education because it is not about replacing the majority language, but to come ‘alongside’ or at ‘equal footing’. The cases of Basque and Frisian, comparing and contrasting their similarities and differences, are analyzed. Schools in these regions desire to go beyond bilingualism and to promote multilingualism as an important aim in education. The contribution of Ofelia García’s work to research in these contexts is discussed.

Keywords: Basque Country, English in Europe, Friesland, minority languages, multilingualism, multilingual education, national state languages, Ofelia García, translanguaging

The work of Ofelia García has focused on bilingual speakers in the US but her influence has also been extremely important in Europe, particularly in bilingual contexts in which a minoritized language is used (Cenoz & Gorter, 2010; Gorter, Zenotz, Etxague, & Cenoz, 2014). European regional minority languages are autochthonous languages originating from the areas where they are still spoken today, and they are in contact with national languages. In regions such as the Basque Country, Friesland, Catalonia, Corsica, or Brittany, all speakers of the minority language are also fluent in the national language and at school they learn English as a third language. European regional minority languages face many challenges regarding their use in education because of their status. In this article, we look at two regions, Friesland and the Basque Country, where three languages, the minority language, the national state language, and English are included in the curriculum. Multilingual education in Friesland and the Basque Country has been influenced by Ofelia García’s outstanding scholarly contributions. In the next sections, we explain the sociolinguistic and educational situation of these two regions. Moreover, we discuss her visits to Friesland and the
Basque Country and her remarkable insight into the study of bilingualism and bilingual education.

**Friesland, the Frisian Language, and Multilingual Education**

**Languages in Frisian Society and Education**

Fryslân (Friesland) is a province located in the north of the Netherlands, it covers an area of 3,250 square km. The province is the core of the historical living areas of the speakers of the Frisian language along the south coast of the North Sea and the area is called West-Frisia to distinguish it from North Frisia and East Frisia both located in Germany. Almost 650,000 people live in the province and a large part of them can speak Frisian. Their language is a variety of the West-Germanic language branch of Indo-European languages, related to but as a language distinct from the North Frisian dialects and Sater Frisian in Germany. The Frisian language has a co-official status with Dutch, the state language of the Netherlands. The two languages are closely related to each other but not mutually comprehensible. Table 1 shows some family terms in Frisian, Dutch and English.

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<th>Frisian</th>
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All Frisian speakers today are at least bilingual as they have also fluency in Dutch. For Dutch speakers, who want to, Frisian is relatively easy to learn and to understand, but harder to speak because of phonological differences. The Frisian-speaking community is basically homogeneous and there are only small differences between the main varieties of this language.
In society in general, as well as at all levels of the education system, Dutch is the language that dominates. Frisian is an indigenous minority language, which has only entered a limited number of the key language domains in current society; this is a circumstance that Frisian shares with many other European minority languages (Extra & Gorter, 2007). Depending on the geographic location, the use of Frisian can prevail in situations of communication in the family, the neighbourhood, the local community, and the lower work sphere. Even though the provincial government stimulates Frisian through its language policy, language use in the administrative domain is modest (Gorter, 1993).

Frisian is the language learned first at home by approximately half of the population, but inter-generational transmission is vulnerable among younger parents. The results of language surveys over a period of almost 50 years show a noteworthy stability, in particular for the receptive ability to understand Frisian. As shown in Table 2 below, the ability to understand Frisian is common among the population. Proficiency in reading remains limited to about half the population, probably due to the limited emphasis on Frisian literacy in education. The competence to speak Frisian has gradually stabilized over the years, although this self-reported ability does not say much about actual use of the language. Finally, reported writing skills apparently have increased, which may be related to changes in the official spelling, education, and use in social media (Klinkenberg, 2017; Provinsje Fryslân, 2007).
Table 2

*Developments in the proficiency in Frisian over the last 50 years*

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<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Gorter, Jelsma, Van der Plank, and De Vos (1984); Gorter and Jonkman (1995, pp. 67-68); Klinkenberg (2017, p. 11)

*Due to differences in the sampling method in 2016, those figures may have some positive bias for Frisian.

English is a language that has an increasing presence in the province. In the Netherlands and in Friesland, English can be considered more of a ‘second’ or a ‘third’ language rather than a ‘foreign’ language. English is all around, and people hear and see the language on an everyday basis through television, advertisements, internet, and tourism. According to the Eurobarometer survey (2012, p. 21) 90% of the inhabitants of the Netherlands claim they speak English “well enough in order to be able to have a conversation”. This is the highest percentage in the European Union, although similar to member states such as Malta, Sweden, or Denmark, and more than double the average of 38% for the European Union. The knowledge of German is also quite widespread; according to the same Eurobarometer survey, 71% of the population reports speaking proficiency. In other words, a large majority of the population are multilingual speakers of two, three, four, or sometimes even five languages. Other languages, for example, the home languages of migrants, expats, refugees or other newcomers have a modest place in Friesland. Some years ago, Extra and Kloprogge (2000) reported that primary school children in Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, the capital of Friesland, speak around 50 different home languages. However, in public life none of those languages plays any role of importance. The percentage of people in Friesland not born in the Netherlands, is nine per cent, of those over half are born in European countries [in comparison in the Netherlands the average is 22.6% ‘migrants’ and about half are born in ‘western’ countries (CBS, 2017)].

In comparison to other minority languages in Europe, Frisian is viewed favourably in terms of the relative number of speakers and the basic positive attitudes among the population (Gorter, 2001).

The Frisian Language in Education

The Netherlands as a country is characterized by a rather centralised system of education, and schools in Friesland are fully integrated. Just a few legal exceptions were created in the second half of the twentieth century to allow for the possibility to teach the Frisian language. Therefore, Frisian has attained a minor presence at all levels of education.

Playgroups or day-care centers are left free in their choice of language, but through a series of policy measures today about half of them are Frisian-medium or
bilingual (180 out of 375), those are attended by between 30-35% of children aged two to four years old. The situation at this level of education has improved substantially over the past 10 years.

**Primary schools** are attended by children aged 4 to 12 (grades 1 to 8). According to law, primary schools in Friesland are obliged to teach three languages: Dutch, Frisian, and English. However, the amount of time for each language is not prescribed and a small number of schools have obtained an exemption to teach Frisian as a subject (in cases where the language has only a small presence in the local situation). Usually, Frisian has a limited place in the curriculum. A common pattern is to teach Frisian for one session of about half an hour per week as a subject in the two lowest grades and one full lesson in grades 3 to 8, which equals a total of some 200 hours over a 10-year period. As a medium of instruction for other subjects Frisian also has a modest position. Figures collected by the Education Inspectorate from some years ago inform us that in the lowest grades, 34 per cent of the schools use some Frisian for creative subjects and physical instruction. In the higher grades only 11 per cent of all primary schools use Frisian as a medium of instruction (Inspectie, 2006, p. 32). A few years later the Education Inspectorate concluded on the basis of a follow-up study that two-thirds of all primary schools do not reach the expected 45 minutes of teaching Frisian per week and that the existing education in Frisian can be much better (Inspectie, 2010, p. 56). As this sketch of Frisian in primary education makes clear, the position of Frisian as a school language remains rather weak. An important factor is that Frisian is usually not graded for the report card because Frisian is not seen as important for socio-economic success.

As a general obligation in the Netherlands English is taught as a subject for one lesson a week in the two highest grades. In the last few years, schools were allowed to teach a foreign language for 15% of the time (4 hours per week). Several schools in Friesland have started to teach English as a subject from grade one. Bilingual Dutch-English primary education, with 30-50% of teaching time in English, is still limited (until 2019) to one experiment with 19 primary schools, of which one in Friesland.

A positive development for Frisian in primary education has been the development of so-called **trilingual schools** since 1997. In such schools Dutch, Frisian, and English are each taught as a subject and used as languages of instruction. The experiment with trilingual education was set up to stimulate the teaching of Frisian. Approximately 400 pupils at seven primary schools, all located in small villages, participated (Ytsma, 2001). In the original model, languages were strictly separated, with 50% of teaching time given to Frisian and 50% to Dutch. English was introduced as a subject in the sixth grade (a year earlier than other schools) and English was used for 20% of the time in the last two grades (Gorter, 2005). The attainment targets for both Frisian and Dutch are to be met fully and pupils have to reach a basic communicative ability in English (Van Ruijven & Ytsma, 2008).

In a longitudinal study, Van Ruijven and Ytsma (2008) summarised the results of eight years of the Trilingual School Project. The differences between the experimental and the control schools were not significant for Dutch literacy, but on Frisian technical reading skills the children at the experimental schools scored higher. The reading and writing of Frisian is a relatively important part of the curriculum in this project. The
systematic bilingual approach had no negative influence on proficiency in the majority language, Dutch, and positive effects for the minority language, Frisian. Another important result was that literacy skills for English (reading and writing) differed little between the schools. The aim of obtaining better literacy results in English was not fulfilled, although the children of the experimental schools showed more confidence in speaking English.

After the experimental stage, the trilingual schools have become one of the focal points of provincial language policy. The number of trilingual schools has grown considerably over the last years. In 2016, the network of trilingual schools included 73 primary schools (out of 428, or 17%). Currently the trilingual model is undergoing important changes, and variations on the basic model of trilingualism are allowed. Also a number of schools introduce English from the 1st grade onwards and leave the strict compartmentalization of languages behind and those schools aim for a more integrated use of languages or what they call 'translanguaging’, an obvious influence of the work of Ofelia García (see below).

Secondary education has a core curriculum, but schools can decide freely how much time they devote to each subject. Frisian is an obligatory subject in secondary education, but almost all secondary schools teach it for one hour per week in the lowest grade. Frisian can be chosen as an optional subject in the higher grades for the final exams, but only very few students do so each year. Dutch is the predominant medium of instruction, although more recently a handful of secondary schools has introduced a bilingual Dutch-English program. In all secondary schools Dutch and English are taught as a subject and often German and French can be chosen as well.

Educational Language Policy

In Friesland, as elsewhere, multilingualism in society is increasing. Today many children come from mixed-language families. In the classroom, the teacher will be confronted with this diversity and has to deal with a more complicated educational practice. In general, speaking different languages is valued positively, but minority languages such as Frisian or immigrant languages are lower on the prestige scale than English or other so-called ‘modern’ languages such as French or German.

Ofelia García visited Friesland in April 1993 as a keynote speaker at the conference Bilingual Education in Friesland: Facts and Prospects (García, 1993). Koen Zondag was the main organizer of the 1993 conference. At the time, he was the specialist for bilingual education of the educational advisory centre in Friesland. Over the years he had been visiting Joshua Fishman and Ofelia García in New York in order to get acquainted with bilingual Spanish-English schools and other forms of heritage education. One of his main tasks as a school advisor was to transfer the knowledge thus obtained to teachers in Friesland. In 1999, when Zondag retired, Ofelia García wrote a two-page contribution to his Liber Amicorum (García, 1999). In that short text, she mentions three things worth repeating in this contribution. First, she observes that throughout the world, bilingualism is no longer sufficient. Thus, in the case of Dutch-Frisian bilingualism “English must also be part of the multilingualism of Frisian children” (p. 28). Second, she refers to similarities between the revitalization of Frisian and Basque or Galician in Spain (p. 29). Finally, she makes a curious remark about the
relevant role of grandfathers in the process of intergenerational transmission of minority languages, because they can assure ‘that there will be another generation of children who will play and dream in Frisian’ (p. 30). This is probably as much the case for grandmothers, as Ofelia García will be aware of today.

**The Basque Country, the Basque Language, and Multilingual Education**

The Basque Country covers an area of approximately 20,603 square km along the Bay of Biscay, north and south of the Pyrenees in France and Spain. The total population of the Basque Country is just over three million. As it can be seen in Figure 2, the Basque Country comprises seven provinces, three belong to France (Lapurdi, Nafarroa Behera and Zuberoa), and the other four provinces to two autonomous regions in Spain (the Basque Autonomous Community and Navarre).

Iparralde, the Northern Basque Country covers an area of 2,978 square km, and it has approximately 260,000 inhabitants. The three provinces in Iparralde are part of the administration of the French ‘Department des Pyrénées Atlantiques’. Its main cities are Bayonne (44,506 inhabitants), Anglet (37,897) inhabitants, and Biarritz.

*Figure 2. Map of the Basque Country (EuskoSare, [http://www.euskosare.org](http://www.euskosare.org), Cenoz, 2008).*

The province of Navarre covers an area of 10,391 square kilometers and has 640,647 inhabitants, is administratively an autonomous community in Spain. Its capital is Pamplona-Iruñea with almost 200,000 inhabitants.

Ofelia García has a personal connection with the province of Navarre through her husband, Ricardo Otheguy who is of Basque origin. Ricardo’s family comes from the North of Navarre, an area with a high level of emigration to different countries in North America and Latin America in the XIXth century and early XXth century. Ernest Hemingway describes the landscape in this area in his famous book *The Sun also Rises*. The area and particularly the village of Burguete was a place to relax and to go fishing after the intense Fiesta of Pamplona. The impact of this landscape can be seen in the following passage:

> We went through the forest and the road came out and turned along a rise of land, and out ahead of us was a rolling green plain, with dark mountains beyond it. These were not like the brown, heated-baked mountains we had left behind. These were wooded and there were clouds coming down from them (Hemingway, 1926/1976, p. 91).
This area of Navarre is also very well-known nowadays because it is on the Way of Saint James, the Pilgrim’s way to the shrine of the apostle Saint James in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

The Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) covers an area of 7,234 square km and it is the most populated of the Basque regions. It has 2.1 million inhabitants, which is just over 70% of the total population in the whole of the Basque Country. The Basque Autonomous Community has three provinces: Bizkaia with a population of 1.1 million, Gipuzkoa with a population of almost 720,000, and Araba with a population of 325,000. The main cities in the BAC are the capitals of these provinces: Bilbao, Donostia-San Sebastian, and Vitoria-Gasteiz. Bilbao-Bilbo is the biggest city with a population of 345,000 and a metropolitan area of 1 million. Vitoria-Gasteiz is the administrative capital.

The Basque language, euskara, is a non-Indoeuropean language. Basque is not a Romance language such as Spanish or French and is not related to Germanic or Celtic languages either. There has been a lot of controversy over its origin and there have been several theories relating Basque to the languages in the Caucasus, or the family of Berber languages in Africa but there is not enough evidence to confirm these relationships. Most linguists consider that Basque is in a language family by itself, unrelated to other languages.

Unlike Spanish or French, the Basque language has declensions as it can be seen in Table 3. Basque also has a different word order as compared to Spanish and English. The linguistic distance between the languages in the educational system is a necessary factor to be taken into account when considering the different types of multilingual education. The differences between Basque, Spanish, French, and English can be seen when looking at vocabulary for family terms (Table 4).

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basque</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>etxe</td>
<td>home / house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etxea</td>
<td>the home / the house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etzeak</td>
<td>the houses/the house (erg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etxean</td>
<td>at home / in the house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etxera</td>
<td>to the house/go home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etxearen</td>
<td>belongs to the house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etxeko</td>
<td>of the house, / familiar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etxetik</td>
<td>from the house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etxerantz</td>
<td>toward home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some Examples of Family Terms in Basque, Spanish, French, and English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alaba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anaia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arreba/ahizpa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can look at the following examples:

Basque: Susanek liburu bat eta bi aldizkari erosi ditu

Spanish: Susan ha comprado un libro y dos revistas

French: Susan a acheté un livre et deux magazines

English: Susan has bought a book and two magazines
Basque is a minority language in the whole of the Basque Country. According to the most recent sociolinguistic survey, 28.4% of the population in the whole of the Basque Country is proficient in Basque and 16.4% can understand Basque but do not speak it (Nguyen, Doğröz, Rosé, & de Jong, 2016). Speakers of Basque are bilingual and can also speak French or Spanish with the exception of very young children who have Basque as their first language and learn French or Spanish at school. The majority of the population living in the Basque Country do not speak Basque. The sociolinguistic surveys started in 1991 and now it is possible to see the development of the knowledge of Basque. The data from 2016 indicate that the number of speakers who are proficient in Basque has increased in the last 25 years from 22.3% to 28.4%. As we will see, this increase of speakers of the minority language is mainly due to the efforts made in education.

The Basque language was widely spoken in most parts of the Basque Country in the past but the intensive contact of Basque with Spanish and French has resulted in an important retreat in the last centuries. In Spain, Basque was banned from the public domain during Franco’s dictatorship (1939-1975). The political and social changes that took place in the last decades of the twentieth century in Spain favored a collective effort to maintain and revive the Basque language.

The process of promoting the Basque languages has been more intense in the Basque Autonomous Community than in the other areas of the Basque Country. There are special language policy plans to increase the use of Basque in different sectors (administration, health, private companies) but the most successful has been education.

In 1979, the Statute of Autonomy of the BAC declared Basque an official language along with Spanish and this implied that all inhabitants in the BAC have the right to know and use Basque and Spanish (Basque Autonomous Community, 1979). A few years later, the Law for the Normalization of Basque (Basque Autonomous Community, 1982) acknowledged the right of every student to receive his/her education in either Basque or Spanish and the parents’ right to choose the medium of instruction. Basque was already used in education before this law was passed but in 1982 Basque and Spanish became compulsory subjects in all schools in the BAC. The Basque educational system has three models of language schooling: models A, B and D (there is no letter ‘C’ in the Basque alphabet). Table 5, below, presents models that differ with respect to the languages of instruction used and the intended student population.

The use of Basque as the medium of instruction has increased steadily over the years and at present, 96.55% school children in kindergarten, 95.63% primary school children, and 91.31% compulsory secondary school children have Basque as a language of instruction for some or all the school subjects (Model B and Model D, see Table 6).
Table 5

*Models of Bilingual Education in the Basque Autonomous Community*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model A</td>
<td>Intended for native speakers of Spanish who choose to be instructed in Spanish. Basque is taught as a school subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model B</td>
<td>Intended for native speakers of Spanish who want to be bilingual in Basque and Spanish. Both Basque and Spanish are used as languages of instruction for approximately 50% of school time. Both languages are also taught as school subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model D</td>
<td>Originally created as a language maintenance program for native speakers of Basque. It has Basque as the language of instruction and Spanish is taught as a subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model X</td>
<td>Students in this model do not learn Basque because they live only temporarily in the BAC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

*Distribution in the Three Models (percentages)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spanish (A)</th>
<th>Basque and Spanish (B)</th>
<th>Basque (D)</th>
<th>No Basque (X)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kindergarten</strong></td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>17.13</td>
<td>79.42</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary</strong></td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>19.55</td>
<td>76.08</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary</strong></td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td>24.13</td>
<td>67.18</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Basque Government: Department of Education, 2017*

Model D with Basque as the language of instruction is the most popular at all the levels followed by model B. Model D was originally designed for Basque speaking children and practically all children from Basque speaking homes are enrolled in this model. Parents have the right to choose the model they want for the children and many parents choose model D even if they do not speak Basque at home. Sometimes this choice can be due to the feeling that speaking Basque is a part of Basque identity and the idea that even if Basque has been lost in the family children should learn it and use it in the future. Some parents also choose Basque-medium instruction for practical reasons, because it can be easier to find a job for Basque speakers.

The extended use of Basque as the language of instruction has had a very important effect on the increase of the number of speakers in the BAC. According to the sociolinguistic survey, there were 212,000 Basque speakers more in 2016 than in 1991 and the percentage of Basque speakers in the BAC has increased from 24.1% to 33.9% in these 25 years. The survey only includes people who are over 16 years old, but it is estimated that most children in the BAC are Basque speaking because of bilingual education. According to the 2016 survey 71.4% of the young people between 16 and 24 are Basque speaking.

In spite of the important increase of Basque in the BAC, Basque is still weak in many areas of the Basque Country. Even in the BAC, there is no communicative need to use Basque in many situations. Many Basque speakers who learned Basque at school use mainly Spanish in their daily life.
The shift from Spanish into Basque as the main language of instruction has required an enormous effort on part of teachers and institutions. Many teachers had to receive courses to be qualified to teach through the medium of Basque and materials to teach all the school subjects through the medium of Basque have been developed over the years. Many students go on having Basque as the language of education in higher secondary education and at the university.

English is also taught in Basque schools and it is becoming increasingly important. Being proficient in English is seen as necessary by many people in the Basque Country. In the last years there have been two main trends in Basque schools so as to increase the hours of instruction in English. The first is the introduction of English in kindergarten, at the age of 4 or even earlier. Another trend is the use of English as an additional language of instruction in primary and secondary school.

The use of English as an additional language of instruction in a bilingual educational system adds additional challenges. Teachers need to have a high level of proficiency to be able to teach school subjects in English and some teachers who had Spanish as a first language already had to learn Basque, and now they face the need to improve their competence in English as well. Another challenge is that the use of English as the language of instruction implies the development of specific materials in accordance with the Basque curriculum. In spite of these difficulties, there is an increasing number of schools teaching a few subjects through the medium of English.

An additional challenge for the Basque educational system is to adapt the educational system so as to integrate immigrant children. The percentage of immigrants who have Basque as the language of instruction is much lower than for the total number of students and this creates a concentration of immigrant students in some schools.

On May 15, 2015, Ofelia García and Ricardo Otheguy visited a D model school in the Basque Country. The school is Landako, a primary Basque-medium school in the town of Durango. The school has around 600 students and about 60 teachers divided over preprimary and primary education. The majority of the students belong to lower and middle socioeconomic classes. Some students have Basque or/and Spanish as their first language and others speak other languages at home. Landako school has a pedagogical system with its own special characteristics which is shared with a network of 19 schools. The space of the classroom is distributed into four or five areas where students work in groups and change to a different area every few weeks. Students of two different grades are in the same classroom with the idea of creating a more diverse and richer environment for learning. The school has its own radio and Ofelia García was interviewed by the school children as it can be seen in the picture below (Figure 3).
Part of the Interview

St 1 [Ofelia García is visiting] our school. We are going to ask her some questions because we want to know more about her work.

St 2: Egunon Ofelia, ¿en qué país trabajas?
[Good morning Ofelia, in which country do you work?]
OG: Yo trabajo en los Estados Unidos, en Nueva York.
[I work in the United States, in New York]

St 3: ¿Qué beneficios crees tiene trabajar con tres idiomas simultáneamente?
[In your opinion, which are the advantages of working at the same time with the three languages?]
OG: Me parece que hay mucho beneficio, como, por ejemplo, porque ustedes hablan en inglés, en castellano, y en euskera. Yo no sé euskera y ustedes tiene muchos más beneficios que yo.
[I think that there are many advantages because you speak English, Spanish, and Basque. I do not speak Basque so you have more advantages.]

St1: ¿En que consta tu trabajo?
[What is your job about?]
OG: Pues, mi trabajo consiste en investigar y estudiar la adquisición de diferentes lenguas, y el desarrollo de multilingüismo, tanto el multilingüismo escolar como el multilingüismo en el mundo ... //
[Well, my job consists on conducting research and studying the acquisition of different languages and the development of multilingualism, both multilingualism at school and multilingualism in the world.]
The school also has an online magazine and a blog with news where Ofelia García’s interview was reported (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Landako school on-line magazine

Translation from Basque:

Ofelia García in our school

Today Ofelia García (Graduate Center, City University of New York, USA) researcher working on languages, after visiting the Amara Berri school in Donostia, has visited our school. She has visited some classrooms and has seen our work.

Ofelia García and Ricardo Otheguy were visiting the Basque Country to give lectures at the University of the Basque Country. Our research group, Donostia Research on Education and Multilingualism (DREAM) organized a symposium on translanguaging on May 14, 2015 at the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) and Ofelia García was our keynote speaker. She gave a brilliant lecture on theoretical and practical aspects of translanguaging. The symposium also included a presentation giving the details of the pedagogical intervention based on translanguaging that our research group has carried out in Landako. The aim of the intervention was to develop language awareness about multilingualism, the Basque language, and metalinguistic awareness by using the students’ resources in their whole linguistic repertoire. Students in the 5th and 6th years of primary school worked on planned and sequenced activities that combined two or three languages and highlighted similarities and differences between them (Leonet, Cenoz, & Gorter, 2017). The director and teachers from Landako school also explained the way they were applying translanguaging in their classes. Participants were mainly teachers from Basque-medium schools who were not very familiar with the concept of translanguaging. Teachers had the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and some of them expressed their surprise about translanguaging because they had always been told that languages should be isolated from each other.

We also kept Ricardo Otheguy busy while he was in Donostia-San Sebastian. On May 13, 2015 he gave a lecture on the concept of Spanglish and the incomplete
acquisition of Spanish in New York. The lecture was well attended by university staff, graduate students, and some teachers and there was an interesting discussion at the end of the session.

Both of them also had some interviews with the media. They were on the Basque television; Ricardo Otheguy had an interview on a Basque radio and Ofelia García in Diario Vasco, a daily newspaper. The headline of the article says that she explained that “Languages such as Basque have to be protected but without isolating them from other languages” (Figure 5).

«Hay que proteger las lenguas como el euskera, pero sin aislarlas del resto»

La doctora Ofelia García es una experta en el ‘translanguaging’, entendido como el uso de elementos de dos o más lenguas de forma espontánea

Figure 5. Newspaper clipping Diario Vasco, May 21, 2015

Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García, and Wallis Reid also refer to the Basque language “euskara” in their article in Applied Linguistics Review (2015) and their influence is important on research conducted in the Basque Country. The interest for researching language in the Basque Country can also be seen in the inclusion of chapters on the situation of Basque in volumes edited by Ofelia García. For example, Mª José Azurmendi and Iñaki Martínez de Luna wrote about the success-failure of “euskara” in the Basque Country in the Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity (2nd ed. 2011) edited by Joshua Fishman and Ofelia García. Another example is the chapter on minority languages, state languages, and “English in European Education” by Cenoz and Gorter in the Handbook of Bilingual and Multilingual Education edited by Wayne E. Wright, Sovicheth Boun, and Ofelia García (2015).

Key Lessons from Ofelia García’s Work

In her contribution to the conference Bilingual Education in Friesland: Facts and Prospects that took place in Friesland, Ofelia García (1993) highlighted that teachers have a societal role also beyond the classroom. She illustrated how in Spanish-English transitional bilingual programs in the US “Latino teachers think they are contributing to the maintenance of Spanish when in fact, they are only accelerating the groups shift to English”. Working from the paradox of how increased use of the minority language
Spanish explains an accelerated shift to English, she presented four sociolinguistic principles:

1. “Stigmatization leads to shift to the prestigious language
2. Absence of language-identity link leads to shift to the unmarked language
3. Lack of compartmentalization leads to shift to the dominant language
4. Lack of usefulness leads to shift to the useful language” (p. 30).

In hindsight, it is interesting to note how Ofelia García emphasized in her third principle the importance of compartmentalization of languages. As examples, she mentioned the Hebrew Day schools and Canadian immersion programs where languages receive a different functional allocation that is similar to societal diglossia. She observed that in transitional bilingual programs the teachers do not give much thought to the distribution of languages in the classroom. It is worth repeating her words here at length when she states that a teacher uses “her two languages in the way in which it is most frequently used in the bilingual community, frequently alternating or code-switching between one and the other” (p. 31). Moreover, “code-switching is certainly not always helpful in classrooms where bilingualism and biliteracy are the goal” (p. 31) and “code switching may facilitate English language acquisition ... it certainly works against the minority language, once again eroding the compartmentalization or diglossic arrangement that must exist between the two languages if bilingualism and biliteracy were the goal.” (p. 32). Further “A teacher who code-switches will naturally use more English than Spanish, since non-conscious language use in a bilingual context of unequal power leans toward the dominant language. And by eroding borders between the two languages, code-switching brings in English, while destroying Spanish.” (p. 33)

She also discussed the metaphor of the linguistic heterogeneity in the world seen as a colorful flower garden, adding beauty, but also complexity, and needing a plan and work in order to conserve its beauty. In her conclusions she emphasized that “because language is such an important part of education, all teachers, but especially bilingual teachers, should understand the role of language in their particular social context, and how their classroom practices reflect that goal” (p. 36).

The ideas Ofelia García put forward about teachers fit well with the trilingual schools project that would start a few years later in Friesland. Ofelia García’s ideas about language compartmentalization and the flower garden and diversity did evolve and she later abandoned them in favor of a translanguaging approach.

In García (2011) she explains the reasons to replace the image of the language garden by the image of sustainable languaging. In a globalized world a more dynamic understanding of language is needed. The language garden represented separate plots of flowers in planned spaces in patterns to display colors. In the same way, languages in schools were compartmentalized to maintain language diversity. In the 21st century the focus has shifted to ‘languaging’, “that is, the social features that are called upon by speakers in a seamless and complex network of multiple semiotic signs” (p. 7). Our understandings of bilingualism and bilingual education are also affected by this shift. As she argues, “additive bilingualism, or even trilingualism is no longer relevant. Bilingual use is not linear, not compartmentalized, not balanced. Rather, bilingualism is
dynamic, and perhaps better understood as translingual (p. 7).” The assumption of translanguaging is that speakers engage in fluid language practices selecting certain features and soft assembling those in order to fulfill their communicative needs (see also García, 2009; García & Wei, 2014).

A language garden with separate spaces and language colors was adequate in the past but is no longer appropriate, because in a globalized world, it has as an effect to keep English dominant and it marginalizes other languages as “heritage”, pointing to the past. Today the sustainability of languaging must be encouraged, which refers to “renewing past language practices to meet the needs of the present while not compromising those of future generations” (García, 2011, p. 7).

Her more recent ideas about translanguaging have influenced research and practice in education in Friesland. For example, Duarte and Riemersma (2017) report upon a project in five trilingual schools where a translanguaging approach was implemented. Recognizing the changes in a globalizing world, the aim of the project is on the one hand, “reducing the language separation pedagogies practiced in the schools” and on the other hand, “giving immigrant languages a place in the schools’ trilingual model”. The three languages were given a joint role in certain activities and language awareness was stimulated to give value to home languages of children with a migrant background. The example offers a clear demonstration of Ofelia García’s influence on education research in Friesland. Today ‘translanguaging’ has become a household term in education in Friesland and that is in no small part thanks to Ofelia García.

Translanguaging has also had a huge influence in the Basque Country. Nowadays, research studies conducted in the Basque Country usually quote her work and teachers are accepting new ideas that go against the compartmentalization of languages. This concept has also stimulated discussions about the survival of Basque (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). Ofelia García’s work is dynamic and her ideas have evolved over the years to keep up with the characteristics of bilingualism and bilingual education in the 21st century (García, 2009). Her scholarship has been inspiring and invigorating for many scholars working on bilingual and multilingual education all over the world.

Ofelia García is one of the most distinguished members of the international academic community. Her groundbreaking ideas, her extensive scholarship, and her exceptional communicative skills make her a true leader in our field.

References


Ofelia García: A Visionary Thinker

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As a tribute to Professor Ofelia García’s visionary thinking on bilingual education, this article relates the reflexive journey of a French academic whose research was profoundly influenced by her scholarly work. The notion of power is the running thread through which four main themes in Ofelia García’s approach to research are discussed in relation to their relevance in the French educational context: The power of imagination, the power of naming, the power of multilingual critical language awareness for teacher education, and the power of translanguaging. In this article, I argue in favor of thinking beyond one’s epistemological borders and illustrate how Ofelia García’s work led to put social justice at the heart of her research agenda, and to understand the need to decolonize our minds in relation to linguistic knowledge.

Keywords: bilingual education, critical multilingual language awareness, emergent bilingual, France, monoglossic/heteroglossic language policies, multilingualism, Ofelia García, social justice, translanguaging, tribute, USA, visionary thinker

L’être est multilingue. Un jour on le découvrira. Ce n’est pas la psychanalyse qui s’en chargera mais la physique. Elle nous démontrera que nous sommes plusieurs. Le moi est une illusion: Le bilingue le sait, il est hybride comme les mots en lui, surpris à mi chemin de la traduction. (Jurgenson, 2014, p. 115)

[Human beings are multilingual. One day we will find out psychoanalysis will not be responsible for this but physics. Physics will demonstrate that we are plural. The I is an illusion: bilinguals know this, they are hybrid like the words inside them, surprised halfway on the translation path.]

As a European researcher of bilingualism in the family, in schools, and lately in the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector, and as a parent and grandparent of multilingual children, I have been reading and writing about bilingualism and multilingualism for over forty years. My academic journey has been influenced by many encounters (in person or through their writing) with researchers all over the world. Among these researchers, Ofelia García stands out: she stands out not least for her humanity, generosity, sense of humor and warmth, but for the way she has inspired me to push the boundaries of my own thinking and to become an activist researcher engaged in transformative educational practices in France. Although García and I work in very different contexts and come from different traditions of sociolinguistics, reading her work opened new windows onto my research environment, encouraged me to
express more forcefully what I was trying to conceptualize and strengthened my belief in the legitimacy of engaged research. In other words, both on a personal and a professional level, she became a model for me, as a brilliant presenter at conferences, as an original and powerful thinker and author, as a very sensitive observer of children in classrooms, and as an outstanding mentor to her students.

Reading Ofelia García, listening to her, or working with her, is always thought provoking, inspiring, and empowering in many ways. In this article, I wish to pay a tribute to her as a truly exceptional person and as a most influential researcher in the field of bi/multilingualism, bi/multilingual education, and sociolinguistics. Because she is such a powerful thinker, I have organized my contribution around the notion of power. I will focus on four main domains in which my research in France has been influenced by her unprecedented theoretical insights into: (a) the power of imagination to implement multilingual education for social justice, (b) the power of naming and transforming our representations of minoritized language speakers into competent bi/multilingual individuals, (c) the power of a critical multilingual approach to language education for teachers to become agents of social change, and (d) the power of the theory of translanguaging to reframe previous understandings of language practices and pedagogy.

**The Power of Imagination: Imagining Multilingual Education in the 21st century**

*L’imaginaire offre une voie qui permet de penser là où le savoir est défaillant.*

(Wunenberger, 2003, p. 71) [Imagination opens a path for thinking when knowledge is failing us.]

In 2005, I organized a conference at the teacher education department of the University of Strasbourg entitled “Penser le bilinguisme autrement” [“Rethinking Bilingualism”]. With such a title, Ofelia García’s research on bilingual education in the US came to mind instantly. At the end of her contribution, she asked the following question: "Comment pouvons nous protéger les espaces linguistiques hybrides que l’éducation bilingue nous a apportés ?" [How can we protect the hybrid linguistic spaces that bilingual education has opened up?] She was referring to the two-way dual language bilingual programmes (English/Spanish and English/Chinese) she had just described. What she had so acutely observed in the two schools was striking for her European audience: the complexity and very high level of linguistic and cultural hybridity (her terms) of the teachers and learners enrolled in a bilingual program. She explained that this bilingual program had been conceptualized from a monolingual point of view, i.e., two teachers taught the two languages separately to students who were considered as native speakers of either one or the other language. But in spite of such a policy, the fact that these programs were child centered and based on teaching small groups in which all the children had different linguistic profiles, she had observed heteroglossic and hybrid language practices, such as third spaces being built in classrooms where all voices could be heard equally and languages becoming hybrid entities.

Even if at this conference (in 2005), she did not use the term ‘translanguaging’, she was already imagining the pedagogical possibilities such spaces of hybridity could
offer, if protected, and the affordances it gave minoritized language speakers when they could use their full linguistic repertoires. She was also already questioning the conceptualization of different languages as separate entities within the minds of bilinguals and this idea was going to be at the heart of her future research. Based on her inside knowledge of bilingual schools and multilingual children, she was developing a major new theoretical approach to bilingual education that can only be described as a great leap forward in the field of sociolinguistics. Her 2009 book “Bilingual Education in the 21st Century. A Global Perspective” is still today a most respected reference work on the subject, considering the extent to which it is quoted by sociolinguists all over the world. Questioning many of the notions I (and others) had taken for granted, she expanded on the previous models of bilingual education to take into account the linguistic complexity of our globalized world and to address anew the language learning needs of all children. Indeed, right at the beginning of the book she insists that, “Bilingual education is the only way to educate all children in the twenty first century” (García, 2009, p. 3).

I especially like quoting this sentence when I talk to educators in France who always think it is a provocative statement, a utopic, and unrealistic proposition. It gives rise to endless controversial questions regarding language education in France and it provides an opportunity to explain the ways in which bilingual education participates in the reproduction of inequalities. The strength of her formulation, the only way also points instantly at issues of social justice, therefore putting values at the heart of education as a stepping-stone to imagining how to do it. Imagining means breaking away from previous representations, opening to new understandings of reality, and finding the means to express them. This is exactly what Ofelia García did in her 2009 book: she argued for a reconceptualization of our understandings of language and bilingual education, with notions such as languaging (very difficult to translate in French), translanguaging, recursive and dynamic bilingualism, monoglossic and heteroglossic language policies, expanding on ideas she had started to formulate in previous publications (García, Skutnabb-Kangas, and Torres Guzmán, 2006) and introduced by researchers like Williams (1994; 2002) and Del Valle (2000).

Most importantly, she reminds us again and again of social justice as the ultimate aim of bi/multilingual education and that learners’ social practice of languaging lies at the heart of the learning process. This means that students today bring multiple multilingual languaging practices to schools that differ significantly from the ways in which the standard variety of the national language is used to teach them. Therefore, we have to imagine that it is possible to language differently at school, to transform our monolingual classrooms into multilingual ones where students are allowed to translanguage freely across all their linguistic and semiotic resources.

Bilingual education in the twenty first century must be reimagined and expanded, as it takes its rightful place as a meaningful way to educate all children and language learners in the world today. (García, 2009, p. 9)

A year before, in 2004, I was lucky to participate in a conference organized by Ofelia García and her colleagues at Teachers College, Columbia University. The title of the conference Imagining Multilingual Schools: An International Symposium of Language
and Education opened the doors I needed to make sense of the research I had been carrying out with my colleague Andrea Young in a primary school in the south of Alsace in northeastern France (Hélot & Young, 2006). Imagining multilingual education was somewhat of an intellectual challenge in France where the entrenched monolingual ideology of the education system was very difficult to question. Yet, for three years we observed two teachers implementing a language awareness project in a primary school where incidents of racism recurred amongst the children. Never having heard of language awareness before, the teachers reinvented the approach elaborated by Hawkins in the UK in the 70’s and through the collaboration of parents introduced their students to eighteen languages (and cultures) over three years.

We observed and analyzed young learners and their teachers familiarizing themselves with multilingualism and acquiring a better understanding of bi/plurilingualism as a cognitive, social, and educational resource. In other words, these teachers had imagined an alternative approach to language education, based on inclusion, and they had managed to find the space in the regular curriculum to carry it through. Therefore, it was possible in a French school to contest the power differentials between languages, it was possible to empower migrant parents through their participation in a school project, and it was possible to change representations towards minoritized languages and most importantly towards their speakers. Significantly it was also possible to transform the schooling experiences of young children from feeling shame towards their home languages into self-esteem through the valuation of their and their parents’ bi/multilingualism.

We then used our research to educate trainee primary teachers to sensitize them to the ways languages are used to exclude and discriminate. This meant including in the teacher education curriculum a critical approach to language education that we thought we could implement with a module on language awareness. The aim was to include activities in languages that were not taught in schools but seen as an obstacle to the acquisition of French. Mariette Feltin’s film (2008) of the project became a persuasive testimony that what was possible in one school could be implemented in another, and what was felt as unimaginable to implement in a French school was in fact a matter of social justice. I always insisted that the Didenheim project was not a model to be replicated but an example of the power of imagination of teachers wanting to transform their schools and the reality of their students’ experiences regarding their languages, cultures, and identity. At the end of the conference in Teachers’ College, it became clear that my message to trainee teachers would be replicating García’s discourse: educators are never powerless, even within strict constraints as in France, they do have the power to make choices for their students; and they always have the freedom to imagine pedagogy differently.

But what should pedagogy for the 21st century look like? Was language awareness the same as multilingual education, or only a very first step to challenge monoglossic language education policies? How could bilingual education answer the needs of learners with very heteroglossic repertoires? What about all the research I had carried out on bilingual education in France? I was well aware it needed to be expanded to include a plurilingual approach, as formulated in European language policy documents. But while proposing the productive notions of plurilingual repertoire and
plurilingual competence, these texts do not question the way national languages are taught, specifically to migrant children, they are addressed mainly to foreign language teachers, and they do not question the notion of bilingualism as the evaluation scales clearly show. In other words, these policy documents had no impact on language education in general. They did not question the hegemony of standard academic French and how it produces so much linguistic insecurity; they did not deconstruct the notion of language or the L1/L2 dichotomy; they focused on the learning and teaching of several languages, rather than on learning and teaching through several languages; they acknowledged the plurilingual repertoires of students but not their languaging practices, and how their actual social practices could leverage their appropriation of more standard or academic languaging.

I was left with my question: what kind of pedagogy was needed for the 21st century? Ofelia García’s answer, as many times before, came to my rescue: pedagogy in the 21st century - she wrote in her 2008 article for the Encyclopedia of Language Education - should be multilingual, critical, inclusive, transformative, participatory, creative, transcultural, and nothing less. There lies the power and clarity of García’s thinking. Each one of these adjectives is explained, illustrated, and justified across her numerous publications in which she analyzes the imagined creative potential of the multilingual classroom. This was going to influence my research for a good few years to come. It also gave me the impetus to embark on a new project with my Irish colleague Muiris O’ Laoire, to think further on the role of language education policies in what we decided to call “a pedagogy of the possible”iv.

The Power of Naming or Transforming Representations: The Notion of “Emergent Bilingual”

Insisting that these children are emergent bilinguals, whose language development exists within a bilingual continuum, also calls for development of bilingual pedagogy for all children, not just those we are calling here emergent bilinguals (García & Kleifgen, 2010, p. 3)


We prefer and we use here the term ‘emergent bilinguals’ because it has become obvious to us that much educational inequity is derived from obliterating the fact that a meaningful education will turn these English language learners not only into proficient students, but more significantly, also into bilingual students and adults. (p. 3)

In my own work on bilingual children in France (Hélot, 2007), I had been denouncing the fact that minoritized language speakers in French schools were never referred to as bilinguals as opposed to majority language speakers who were. I had tried to analyze the invisibility of migrant children’s bilingualism and the frequent stigmatization of their family languages. I had used discourse analysis to deconstruct the meaning of a part of the French prekindergarten curriculum where these children
were referred to as “*les élèves dont le français n’est pas la langue maternelle*” [students for whom French is not a native language]. Not only were the students defined negatively by what they lacked, but nearly all the structures in the following text were negative as well, such as for example: “*le bilinguisme n’est pas un handicap*” [bilingualism in not a handicap]. I argued that defining children through their lack of competence rather than through their knowledge of other languages was discriminatory and could only give rise to negative visions by teachers and low self-esteem for the children concerned. I repeatedly explained to teachers, school psychologists, and other educators that these children were bilingual even on entering pre-primary school at age three because they were living with two languages, therefore, they should be recognized as “*bilingues*” or “*bilingues en devenir*”, or *bilingues débutants* [bilinguals, or future bilinguals, or beginner bilinguals], in other words as *emergent bilinguals*.

We all know as sociolinguists the central role of language in shaping the reality that surrounds us and, as educators, that it takes a long time and a lot of effort to change representations of a social phenomenon. Like Ofelia García, I explained that naming these children positively (all parents in France want their children to be bilingual) would allow teachers to imagine a different scenario, that teachers could focus on these students’ potential and develop higher expectations of them. Thus, naming these children bilingual could transform the educational reality from seeing these learners as a problem into considering their plurilingual competence as a resource to invent new pedagogies and to develop bilingual education for all children.

France has had a long tradition of reifying languages other than French particularly in schools where children used to be hit for speaking regional languages. The very widespread belief that speaking a language other than French at home or in school slows down the acquisition of the national language has silenced many young children who are then described as suffering from muteness at school. It took a lot of patience explaining again and again that it is the school policy of forbidding a home language in class which is responsible for silencing the children. In French, explaining the difference made by Ofelia García between being ‘silent’ and being ‘silenced’ can only be expressed with a verb, ‘*réduire au silence*’ [to be reduced to silence]. Why is it important to insist on this crucial distinction? Because it means shifting the responsibility for the silence from the children to the policy and starting to question why such language policies are in place.

On the one hand, the educational policy in France is overtly stressing the importance of the French language (for all students, monolinguals and bilinguals alike); it is still based on a very normative vision of the language because of the strong belief in the ideology of the nation state, French is the language of the Republic and therefore the language of schooling. Consequently, some teachers still believe that it is forbidden to speak languages other than French on school premises. In reality there is no law stating such a rule; it is more what I call ‘*un interdit intériorisé*’ [an internalized prohibition], or in Bourdieu’s term a habitus, ingrained in French school culture and rarely questioned.

“What’s in a name?”, Ofelia García and her colleague ask in the above-mentioned book. Indeed, labeling speakers of minoritized languages is a never-ending battle in
Another label I have been repeatedly querying is the term “allophone” ["allo" means different and "phone" refers to speaking] to categorize newcomer students (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2015). I always enjoy asking an amphitheater full of university students what the term means and very few can actually answer. The term is restrictive and othering for students who are de facto plurilingual even if they do not speak French. French colleagues have found the term more positive than previously because it is a first recognition that these students speak ‘another language’. As if it was not obvious! As if all speakers of languages other than French could be classified together as a homogeneous category! Strictly speaking, as I like to explain, although I am French, I am also an allophone since I speak languages other than French. Of course, what needs to be analyzed is the reluctance to name these children bilingual or plurilingual, and the French habit of using obscure terminology to define them and incomprehensible acronyms to describe the special courses available for them to learn French. It is all the more striking, and unfair that their plurilingual competence is ignored, invisibilized, and silenced when European discourses on plurilingual competence are so prominent in foreign language pedagogy aimed at monolingual learners.

How to move forward? Again, Ofelia García’s thinking gives us the answers we need. What these students need is bilingual pedagogy, what teachers need to understand is that ‘their language development exist within a bilingual continuum’, therefore the policy in place for these learners must change, if not at the official level, at least in classrooms. Again, we know it is possible: influenced by their readings of Ofelia García’s work (as well as other researchers), Kadas Pickel (2016) and Prax-Dubois (2018), two teacher/researchers of so-called ‘allophone’ students in France, have transformed their classrooms into safe spaces where multilingualism thrives, and French is being acquired.

Most importantly, this research shows how students can reconstruct their lives while continuing to use their home languages. They are reconfiguring their plurilingual competence; and because they are allowed to use all their linguistic resources in class, their learning journey is more efficient. For example, students who come from Eastern European countries usually have knowledge of the history of the USSR, so that when the topic comes up in the mainstream history class, they understand the teacher’s discourse, but it is very difficult for them to express their knowledge in French. Allowing them to use their own languages and to work in groups could prevent them from hiding their knowledge and being disempowered; it would also help teachers to understand that imposing French only is silencing them, robbing them of the opportunity to participate in class. Furthermore, expecting or waiting for these students to perform like native speakers of French to give them a voice is assimilationist and unfair. Therefore, as expressed by Ofelia García above, allowing these students to use all their language resources will help them to go beyond being ‘only’ French language learners, and to turn into proficient students, even more significantly, into competent and articulate bi/multilingual students and adults.
The Power of Critical Multilingual Language Awareness for Teacher Education

Bilingual education is much more than a technique or a pedagogy. Bilingual education is education, and it is also a way of equalizing opportunities. It rests on principles of social justice and supports social practices for learning. (García, 2009, p. 386)

This said, for a French history teacher (or of any other school subject), to imagine that students could be speaking a dozen different languages in her class would take a major ‘revolution’. The furthest our curriculum has gone along this path is bilingual pedagogy in the form of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), meaning a school subject is taught through a ‘foreign’ language (FL). Generally, the main aim of the CLIL model is to improve competence in a FL that is usually not the language of learners. This does not mean that learners should not appropriate new languages nor be exposed to learning history through English or German in France, but that the choices of teaching languages should not be restricted to the languages of power, dominant European languages only, therefore giving more power to those who already have it. I have argued previously (Hélot, 2008, 2010, Helot & Erfurt, 2016) that bilingual education in France is a source of inequality in the way it gives precedence to European languages over minoritized migrant languages.

I have not chosen the above quotes of Ofelia García haphazardly. In all of them she stresses the importance of social justice and that bilingual education should be offered to all students. Thus, rather than focusing on the languages that can be taught with the CLIL model, one needs again to insist that the focus should be on the students’ own multilingual resources. This shift of perspective makes it possible to imagine that in a mainstream classroom, the teaching language be French (if the teacher is monolingual, which is in fact rare), but that the students’ learning languages be different and multiple, that translation be available as well as peer group support, that dictionaries, textbooks in other languages and the internet be used as well. In other words, why restrict the learning languages of multilingual students? They need not always match the teaching language. We know that multilingual communication works in out of schools-spaces where it is very common, and that it also works in classrooms such as the ones participating in the CUNY-NYSIEB® project where all students are given a voice through their multilingual languaging.

The main issue here for teachers and policymakers is to shift perspectives from languages to speakers of languages thus to understand multilingualism from a social point of view and not just as a new pedagogy or technique. Ofelia García has spent her life in bilingual classrooms observing learners and at her desk writing about their languaging and about teachers’ need to address the linguistic complexities of the twenty first century. She has so aptly analyzed the lived experiences of bi/multilingual learners in and out of schools and repeatedly explained that multilingualism only becomes problematic for children when they enter schools that forbid them from speaking their languages. Why should multilingual children have to adapt to monolingual schools, why do they keep being silenced in so many classrooms, why do teachers relent on the possibility of a joyous languaging polyphony in their schools?
This does not mean teachers in France are not sensitive to their ‘allophone’ students’ special needs but very few of them are adequately prepared. Therefore, most of them believe learning French as a ‘foreign language’ is the only answer and the concern of specialist teachers. In other words, they cannot imagine taking into account the multiple multilingual practices of so many of their students into their classroom practices and even less that doing so would actually maximize learning efficiency and communication for all learners.

As I am writing these sentences, I can hear the voices of so many trainee teachers I have worked with saying, “But how can I work in my class with languages I do not know?” Fear is probably the dominant feeling in schools today regarding the languages of newcomers (just like the fear in the face of immigration in Europe today). Ofelia García (2009, p. 54) is right to point out the positive value of linguistic tolerance associated to the European notion of plurilingualism (Beacco, 2007), but the promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity by European institutions is not devoid of its own ideology. Plurilingualism in Europe has been understood as more efficient teaching of more European languages, in other words languages that do not pose any threat to our identity. But what about other languages, for example Corsican, or the languages of others, for example Turkish or Arabic, what about translanguaging in La Réunion where people language with various creoles and varieties of French? All this gives rise to fears, represents a threat to political unity, social cohesion and the ‘purity’ of the French language. Prax-Dubois (2018) studied teachers’ representations of highly heterogeneous language practices in schools in La Réunion; she writes:

Le silence sur les situations de contacts de langues et surtout sur les idéologies qui sous-tendent les pratiques et stratégies langagières dans et hors de l’école n’est pas près de se résorber. La France a peur de ses langues. Même l’anglais a dû lutter en son temps pour se frayer un chemin à l’école primaire” (p. 185).

[The silence about instances of language contact and mostly about the ideologies underpinning linguistic practices and strategies inside and outside of schools will take a long time to be broken. France is afraid of its languages. Even the English language in its time had to fight its own way into primary schools].

I spent many years in France addressing teachers’ fear of languages they did not understand and believing that allowing students to share their home languages in class would be exclusionary to their peers and the teacher. Deconstructing such fears, explaining discriminatory language practices, and all the issues mentioned above demands time and space in the teacher education curricula; and it is still not seen as a priority. It also demands to be conceptualized within a language education approach that integrates all the languages taught in schools and all the languages of students.

Interestingly, it was through the teaching of a language of power (English) that I started taking trainee teachers on the alternative journey of Hawkins’s (1984) language awareness (LA) approach. Hawkins’ aims of LA as a way to question language, to develop linguistic understandings, and to challenge linguistic prejudices met with my objectives. However, in France, LA approaches took their own path, focusing again on languages more than on their speakers even if minoritized languages speakers did benefit affectively from seeing their family languages used at school. They also included
the objective of improving competence in French for migrant students. So that whenever I presented the Didenheim project at academic conferences in France, I had to answer the following question: does LA improve students’ competence in French?

Teachers in European schools are asked to develop students’ awareness of plurilingualism and linguistic tolerance, although they are rarely confronted with the histories of oppression and social inequalities that produce minoritized status of both regional minorities, including autochtonous and indigenous peoples, and especially immigrants. (García, 2017a, p. 268)

It was never our objective as researchers to test the children in French at the beginning or at the end of the project. We were more interested in the affordances LA gave the children to hear their own voices in their own languages in class, in the process of empowerment it developed in parents whose knowledge was valued at school and in the change of attitudes in teachers who believed previously that migrant parents should speak French at home. In other words, we observed the slow transformation of monolingual classrooms becoming spaces where other languages started to cohabit with French, where teachers had negotiated their own language policy, understood their own beliefs, attitudes and ideologies, and where migrant parents had become engaged in changing the school culture.

Reading Ofelia García again helped me to question the conceptualization of LA in relation to bilingual education. In her 2008b chapter in the second edition of the Encyclopedia of Language and Education (vol. 6) she chose the term multilingual language awareness which was a first clarification for me of what I wanted to do with trainee teachers, not just LA but indeed multilingual LA. This then required addressing social, political, and economic issues surrounding the use of languages in both monolingual and bilingual programs; and it meant taking teachers further on the terrain of critical thinking and getting them to understand the reasons why they should be concerned by glottophobia (Blanchet, 2016). Then I read García’s entry into the latest edition of the same encyclopedia (2017a) and saw how her thinking is always on the move. The new entry is entitled “Critical Multilingual Language Awareness (CMLA)”. In this chapter, she explains that CMLA for teachers should not only include an understanding of the complex language issues in the twenty-first century but that teachers should ‘enact’ these understandings in their teaching and in their students’ learning.

Enact! Of course! I exclaimed, as so often reading Ofelia García, feeling the power of each new step forward in her thinking. This example illustrates how she, as a great thinker, knows to put forward new ideas that within one’s reflection are only at the stage of intuition. The tables she used in 2008b to summarize the different kind of knowledge and awareness needed by teachers keep growing, including in 2017, a further component of CMLA: the awareness that language is socially created, thus socially changeable. This idea has been especially productive in my own interpretation of language policies in France and my understanding of the way the hegemony of French is perpetuated in educational institutions.

If language is socially changeable it means teachers have agency to negotiate their own language policy in their classrooms. Indeed, I had analyzed this in a chapter...
written for a volume edited by Menken and García (2010) where I had shown that despite a context where implementational spaces for change are scarce (école maternelle in France), beginner teachers had managed to negotiate their own language policy in order to embrace their young students’ multilingualism. Both teachers had experienced pedagogy as situated in practice and thus understood the importance of transgressing the French only language policy. The learners concerned in this case were plurilingual three-year-olds entering school, which made it crucial for the beginner teachers to ensure they felt safe and secure throughout their first schooling experiences. This could only be achieved by teachers enacting their understanding of the complex linguistic hierarchies prevailing in their schools and challenging a language regime that excludes children linguistically when they enter schools.

Teacher education programs must engage teachers in changing the sociolinguistic order and the ways in which languages have been constructed and hierarchized. (García, 2017a, p. 277)

According to García, pedagogy is about changing the world; therefore, like Freire (1970), she is a transformative educator and throughout her impressive career she has formulated critical models of teacher education meant “to result in action that has the potential not only to transform practice and pedagogy but also to transform the lives of children and communities.” (García, 2017a, p. 276)

The Power of a New Concept: Translanguaging

Translanguaging or engaging in bilingual or multilingual discourse practices, is an approach to bilingualism that is centered not on languages as has been often the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable. (García, 2009, p. 44)

Some books have a very powerful effect on their readers, academic research can be groundbreaking for its field of inquiry, and some researchers totally transform the vision of the phenomenon we have been studied for years. Sometimes you even say to yourself: ‘this is the book I wish I had written!’ García’s 500-page-volume on bilingual education in the 21st century (2009) was all this for me. She was questioning so many notions I had ended up taking for granted, because they were easy to explain; they suited my context; and they seemed to have an impact. The power of her thinking resides in the way she does not sit with easy categorizations. She goes straight to the heart of simplified dichotomies and she questions them. She questions relentlessly the central issues in our field: what does it mean to be bilingual; what does it mean to educate children bilingually; how should bilingual teachers be educated?

Most crucially she asks what is language; what are named languages, and what do we do with our languages; how do bilinguals perform their bilingualism; why is there so much inequity in the education of bilinguals; how we should redress it and why? Beyond questioning our comfortable assumptions, García also shows us how to expand our thinking from bilingual education to multilingual education. Multilingual education poses far more complex pedagogical questions than bilingual education, so that she is always searching for new theories to interpret a new reality. Based on her very wide knowledge of research on bilingual education throughout the world, she found a term in the work of the Welsh researcher Ces Williams (1994; 2002), whom she
never forgets to quote, the term ‘translanguaging’. But whereas Williams used the term as a synonym to language alternation in bilingual classroom, García developed an extensive theoretical investigation of the concept and profoundly transformed previous research on code switching and mixing. Since her 2009 book, she has expanded her research further in numerous publications, however, not without putting it to the test in a major empirical project in public schools in New York City. The CUNY-NYSIEB project has now become an invaluable resource for researchers and teachers wishing to embark on transformative bi/multilingual pedagogy.

Ofelia García’s relentless questioning of her conceptualization of translanguaging in political, sociolinguistic, and educational terms over the last ten years has impacted the field of bilingual education in a very powerful way. The number of researchers who have now appropriated the term across the world, the number of conferences which main topic is translanguaging, attest to the impossibility of ignoring her work. Similarly, a flurry of books and articles have been published since her 2009 volume, using the concept of translanguaging as if it were no longer possible to think of bi/multilinguals’ practices and bi/multilingual pedagogy without it. Even in France, researchers working with minoritized language speakers and bilingual teachers refer to her definitions (Mary & Young, 2017). At the European level, where researchers have been working with the notion of plurilingual competence, Ofelia García (2017b) was asked to contribute to a document published by the Council of Europe on the integration of adult migrants where she explained the role of translanguaging for language teachers. Although the difference between code-switching and translanguaging is still not always understood properly, the concept as elaborated by García makes sense; it makes so much sense when one is bilingual or when one has to teach bilinguals, that one wonders how as researchers in this field we did without it for so long. However, like all new brilliant ideas spreading throughout the scientific literature, new concepts meet some detractors who see it as a slogan or a fashionable term simply because it is recurrent in the scientific literature.

It is very easy to counter argue such discourses if one reads García’s publications since 2009. Whether in her books or articles with Kleyn (García & Kleyn, 2016), with Bartlett (Bartlett & García, 2011), with Ibarra Johnson, Kate Seltzer, and Guadalupe Valdes (García, Johnson, Seltzer, & Valdés, 2017), with Li Wei (García & Wei, 2014), with Velasco (Velasco & García, 2014), with Sanchez (García & Sanchez, 2015), with Menken (García & Menken, 2015), with Otheguy and Reid (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015), or in her work with the Council of Europe (García, 2017b), etc., she has been expanding in more and more depth what she means by translanguaging; she also gives ample examples of translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms where students and teachers are engaged in languaging to learn using their full linguistic repertoires, rather than inhibiting half of it.

Translanguaging, however, refers to the way that bilinguals use their language repertoires, from their own perspectives, and not from the perspectives of the national or standard languages. What is important to realize is that from the speaker’s (i.e. internal) perspective, what he or she has is one linguistic repertoire. (García et al., 2017, p. 20)
In my opinion, the most incisive clarification of the concept is the distinction García makes between the insider perspective on bilingualism and the outsider perspective, the deep personal lived experience of bilingualism and the outside perspective on languages as named linguistic objects that nobody really speaks. But she is a pedagogue and a realist; she insists both perspectives should be kept in mind in the education sphere. Seeing the bilingual from the individual vantage point or the insider perspective helps to understand that bilinguals have a unitary linguistic competence, similar to the European notion of plurilingual competence, an integrated competence from which the speaker selects one of the other or both languages to negotiate a communicative situation. If one stands in an outsider position or traditional social position towards bilinguals, one will observe dual competence, which is often judged in comparison to an ideal monolingual standard. Consequently, depending on what educators want to do, they should be able to consider their bilingual learners from both perspectives the insider and the outsider.

García’s theorizing of the notion of translanguaging is based on her extensive observations and deep understanding of the languaging practices of bilinguals in everyday life; she does not conceive of bilinguals having separate competence in two or more languages, as is so often the focus in school policies of bilingual education. Yet, she is not saying that bilingual children should not learn to language monolingually in certain situations, but that they should not be forbidden to translanguage. She argues that if one shares the principles of a child-centered pedagogy, one should give learners the right to access all of their available resources and prior knowledge. Furthermore, when teachers adopt an insider perspective on bilingual speakers, they then come to ask themselves why the use of only one language is imposed, by whom and to what aims.

Before I started using the term myself, the questions that the concept of translanguaging raises were at the heart of my research in bilingual families, in multilingual classrooms, and in early childhood centers. For my thesis on bilingual families in Dublin I questioned the one parent one language policy. Based on interviews with parents I asked them if they “mixed” their languages and what they thought of it. While approximately half the French mothers (who were teachers) were adamant they always used French and only French with their children, other mothers admitted the policy was too difficult to adhere to at all times. When I tested the children, their level in French was no different whether the mother used only French or “mixed” with English from time to time.

I was well aware that the mothers’ discourses were declared policies corresponding to a monolingual vision of bilingualism and I wondered how they could inhibit their bilingual competence at all times with their children. I knew myself as a bilingual mother that it was not possible to speak French all the time with my children in Ireland. Yet at the time (in the 1980s) and still today in France, the one language/one person policy is thought to be the most efficient strategy in mixed lingual families; and such a policy implies that each parent should language monolingually. But what does such a belief entail? It means that bilingual parents implementing this policy to bring up their children with two languages control their language practices more or less all
the time, as well as those of their children, they inhibit their bilingual competence and model monolingual languaging to their children.

Interestingly, a lot of the data I collected from children included examples of translanguaging which I interpreted then as transfer, as in this example: “je veux une tartine *avec-sans* beurre” [I want a slice of bread with-without butter]. Such a sentence can only be produced by a French/English bilingual child and illustrates clearly why we should adopt an inner perspective on the language of bilinguals. Therefore, when Ofelia García writes that bilinguals access a language continuum when they express themselves it makes perfect sense, as well as when she explains that “there are no clear-cut boundaries between the languages of bilinguals” (García, 2009, p. 47). That is indeed what the concept of translanguaging makes obvious.

An equitable pedagogy under no circumstances forbids a student to use either language. (García, 2009, p. 320)

Translanguaging in classroom contexts is far more controversial than in everyday life in the family. Schools by nature are spaces where language practices are strictly controlled and where children must adapt to the norms of standard and academic language. In some bilingual programs they also have to adapt to the policy in place and to different teachers, spaces, times, and subjects being allocated to each language separately. The perspective on learners and languages in these programs is an outside societal perspective where practices are idealized to correspond to a supposed native speaker, “a category which is just another way to keep power in the hands of the few and exclude those who are different” as explained by García (2017b, p. 14).

This is specifically relevant to the work I carried out with trainee bilingual teachers in Alsace. I wanted to question the notion of native speaker and the one language one teacher policy in place, a policy that splits the schooling experience of children between German and French with two teachers working separately. As explained elsewhere (Hélot, 2014; Hélot & Fialais, 2014) the conceptualization of this bilingual program is monoglossic in the sense that it operates as parallel monolingualism, the language taught is Hochdeutsch (in Alsace where a regional variety Alsatian is still is use) and the pedagogy is based on the framing of language as L1 or L2 thus on second language acquisition principles rather than on bilingual pedagogy. In other words, teachers and learners are expected to language monolingually and therefore have to inhibit their bilingual competence at all times, which is particularly difficult at the beginning of the program with children aged 3 or 4. This policy also means that teachers’ identity is affected because they teach only German (and through German). Briefly, the one language one teacher policy is put in place to make sure that translanguaging does not happen, and that the border between two national languages remains in place in a region where the translanguaging of Alsatian speakers is stigmatized.

Again, it was quite a challenge within such an environment, to introduce trainee bilingual teachers to the latest research on translanguaging pedagogy. Having observed bilingual teachers I knew that they did in fact translanguage at times, simply because it could not be helped, but they always felt guilty about it, believing using French from
time to time was not good for their students’ acquisition of German. Deciding it was not ethical in such circumstances to gather data from these illegitimate instances of translanguaging, I turned to written examples of translanguaging in literature, children’s literature, and literary work produced by bi/multilingual authors. What I found in the domain of children’s literature was a very monoglossic vision of bilingualism where dual language books display two or more languages, hierarchically with the dominant language on top of the minoritized one. For example, I analyzed several translated books from English into French and French into English and found cultural differences erased, thus children’s ability to understand difference underestimated. Very few books for children portray bilingual characters and fewer again dare to replicate the translanguaging practices of bilinguals. And when some multilingual authors make a point of using transgressive creative heteroglossic practices, their work is refused by publishers.

My search for instances of translanguaging in adult literature was more successful and illustrates so well what García meant by the inner perspective on what it means to be bi/multilingual. I found several translingual writers who because of their personal experiences as trans-nationals were crossing borders and languages and creating new literary forms that expressed the creativity of the translanguaging practices of their community. What some of these authors show is how through translanguaging, bilinguals create their own language beyond the named languages defined by societal groups, and how translanguaging gives them the possibility of not having to choose between one language and the other. Recreating in their novels the real language practices of their community gives them and their readers a new legitimacy, which also enables them to question the power differentials between state languages like English and Spanish in the US for example, as in the novel of Junot Diaz (2008). What such authors help us to understand is that they do not just go across these named languages but that their translanguaging practices is their own means of expression, of creativity, and through translanguaging new literary voices emerge.

Reflecting on this session now, I believe it was useful for the trainee bilingual teachers to question the legitimacy of the strict separation of languages in their program and it helped them to acknowledge the linguistic insecurity entailed in having to function as a monolingual German speaker all the time. They did understand that German was part of their plurilingual repertoire. In other words not just the language of others across the border but also their own, therefore no longer an L2, and they were happy to throw out the myth of the native speaker. They were convinced they should not forbid the use of French in their class despite thinking at the beginning of the course that allowing French in the German class would make learners lazy. They were impressed by the pedagogical affordances of translanguaging but would need more training to feel legitimate implementing it in their own teaching. What was most difficult was questioning the power issues related to the reification of national languages and specifically the dominant positionality given to academic French in schools.
To Conclude

The advantage of educating adult migrants with translanguaging theory and pedagogy in mind is that in focusing on the practices of people, it gives agency to minoritized speakers, decolonizes linguistic knowledge, and engages all of us in the social transformations that the world so sorely needs today. (García, 2017b, p. 24)

Translanguaging theory was born out of a poststructuralist and critical perspective on the ontology of language, bilingualism, and native speakers; it profoundly disrupts traditional ways of thinking about language, language policy, and language education. It argues first and foremost that language belongs to speakers rather than to nation states, and it questions the linguistic oppression of minoritized language speakers. The power of García’s theoretical advances lies not only in the concept of translanguaging but in the way she has also reconceptualized it in pedagogical terms. Her empirical work in translanguaging pedagogy shows very convincingly that it is possible to transform our monolingual educational systems and to teach and learn multilingually in 21st century classrooms all over the world. Her visionary work on the philosophical stance that teachers of immigrant students should adopt to transform their educational practice with equity and social justice in mind is admirable.

No doubt for me today, the most challenging part of my work in France is to decolonize linguistic knowledge. Decolonizing linguistic knowledge, decolonizing French schools (Salaün, 2013) or decolonizing English language teaching (Hélot, Masahito, & Young, 2018; López-Gopar, 2016) means before anything else “se décoloniser l’esprit” [to decolonize one’s mind] (Thiong’o, 2011 xiii). I was very lucky at 18 to leave France and to spend a year in California which changed my life forever because I left my language at home, learned to live through a new language which meant going beyond the many ideological borders of my French upbringing and education. Then later on, after living 17 years in Ireland, I was a returnee to France, which was an experience somewhat similar to migration except that I spoke the language and had legal rights. I felt deeply the pain of exile, and the social disqualification at the beginning. I discovered my Irish accent had to be adjusted for the teaching of phonetics in the English department, and that every time I opened my mouth in French, I felt judged. All these experiences were food for thought for a sociolinguist and made me sensitive to the plight of children speaking minoritized languages at home and being stigmatized in schools. It took me a long time and a lot of effort to untangle the historical, political, social, and educational factors that were the cause of the linguistic oppression of migrant children. But I had some guiding lights on this long journey: Ofelia García was my lighthouse, standing strong and tall in the academic sea of sociolinguistic research. She guided me on my many scientific explorations. Today, she still inspires me to enact the understandings I have gained through reading her most compelling writings on language, multilingual education, and social justice. In this article, I have expressed my gratitude for her and the scholarship she has accomplished.
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End Notes

i The various contributions were published in 2008a in Hélot et al. "Penser le bilinguisme autrement, Frankfurt, D.E.: Peter Lang.

ii Published in the above volume as "L’enseignement en milieu multilingue aux Etats-Unis", (García, 2008a).

iii Translanguaging has been compared to Lüdy and Py’s (1986) expression ‘le parler bilingue’. I think ‘parler translangues’ would be a more accurate translation.

iv This was the subtitle I chose for a book I edited with M. O’Baoire in 2011 entitled Language Policy for the Multilingual Classroom. Pedagogy of the possible, Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters

v UPE2A : Unité pédagogique pour élèves allophones nouvellement arrivés. These are classes offered at primary and lower secondary levels for newcomer’s students which they attend for 10 to 12 hours per week learning French. The rest of the time they are schooled in a mainstream class usually with no support in French.

vi See the website at https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/. It offers guides, videos, report, webinars, research, etc.

vii The field of language didactics in France uses several terms to refer to the teaching of French to non French speakers: French as a foreign language, as a second language, as a language of instruction, and even as a language of integration

viii Similarly, in Japan, Hélot, Masahito, and Young (2018) designed a course on critical language awareness for teachers of English as a second language. This poses the question in countries such as France or Japan of finding the available spaces in monoglossic teacher education curricula for critical multilingual awareness.

ix See the website at https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/. It offers guides, videos, report, webinars, research, etc.

x Recently I was sent the US translation of a beautiful French picture book entitled « Premier Printemps » and in this case the picture had been amended, the upper body of a stylized little girl at the beach was covered by a swimming top!

xi For example, I met Amaia Hennebutte-Millard in the French Basque country. She told me her book of poems Begi Blue in which she translanguages from Basque, to English, to French and Spanish was refused by her regular publisher.

xii It should be noted that “the Brief Wondrous life of Oscar Wao” won the Pulitzer prize. Up to this day, I have found no other novel that uses translanguaging to such an extent and that reflects so beautifully the creativity of latino speakers in the US.

xiii I read this book in French but it was first published in English under the title Decolonising the Mind, published in 1986 by East African Educational Publishers. The author is Kenyan and explains in this book why he decided to stop writing in English and to write only in Kikuyu and kiSwahili. He has been in exile in the USA for many years. He taught at the University of California in Irvine and directed the International Centre for Writing and Translation.
Trans + Languaging: Beyond Dual Language Bilingual Education

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Ofelia García calls for a re-imagining of bilingual education by challenging how teachers conceptualize, facilitate, and listen to language use in classrooms. Educators attempt to legitimize students’ authentic, fluid, and dynamic language practices through translanguaging, but non-standard named language varieties are still marginalized in classrooms. Using the prefix trans+, García pushes us to look beyond bilingual education to critically challenge hegemonic language ideologies and to break from the monoglossic status quo within dual language bilingual education. Bilingual educators are tasked with envisioning language pedagogies that keep our emergent bilingual students whole, as they learn to leverage and expand their linguistic repertoires.

Keywords: bilingual education, dual language bilingual education, hegemonic language ideologies, linguistic repertoires, monoglossic, named languages, Ofelia García, translanguaging

Our transformative pedagogies must relate both to existing conditions and to something we are trying to bring into being, something that goes beyond a present situation. (Greene, 1995, p. 51)

When movements have been unable to clear the clouds, it has been the poets—no matter the medium—who have succeeded in imagining the color of the sky, in rendering the kinds of dreams and futures social movements are capable of producing. (Kelley, 2002, p. 8)

When Ofelia García introduced translanguaging (2009) into the field of bilingual education she disrupted how teachers conceptualized language and effectively challenged how we teach it in dual language bilingual education classrooms. No longer are a student’s linguistic practices compartmentalized into two or more discrete named languages. Instead, through translanguaging theory we understand that the many ways a student languages, inside and outside of school, are all part of a singular and dynamic linguistic system. To value a student fully requires us to frame all of her linguistic practices as resources. How we structure the use of language while teaching content in classrooms determines a student’s language output. Although such a declaration seems obvious, it highlights the power we hold as teachers, the power to deliberately invite or silence features from our students’ linguistic repertoire as they interact with curricular content. To teach students fully requires us to value and respect them fully. For this,
not only must we push beyond how we perceive students as language learners, but we must critically challenge normalized expectations for language use during the teaching of standardized curricula in two languages.

Since its introduction, translanguageing in bilingual education has remained controversial due to the field’s political origins and three key ideological differences:

1. Bilingual education is a highly-contested political space won through community activism and continuously defended thereafter. In 1972, ASPIRA of New York fought for the educational rights of Puerto Rican students to use Spanish to learn in New York City public schools (Reyes, 2006). The ASPIRA Consent Decree provided all limited English proficient students with the right to a bilingual education. The Lau v. Nichols United States Supreme Court decision (Lau v. Nichols, 414 U.S. 563, 1974) further defended the limited English proficient speaker’s right to a meaningful education by engaging with their linguistic resources more fully. It effectively established bilingual education at a national level, including English as a Second Language (ESL). Many bilingual educators believe translanguaging practices unsettle these hard-fought spaces by contaminating the language other than English (LOTE) space with English.

2. Bilingual educators argue that a strict language allocation policy is vital for language learning. It is believed that students immersed in a designated named language space will be more motivated to produce the target language. Translanguaging pedagogy therefore undermines the strict language allocation by allowing students to use languages other than the target language. Thus, many bilingual educators believe translanguaging pedagogy threatens dual language bilingual education altogether.

3. Translanguaging is often (erroneously) viewed interchangeably with code-switching. Code-switching by students and teachers alike has historically been linked to linguistic deficiency. When a speaker switches from one language to another in mid-sentence he is perceived to be a weak bilingual speaker with a limited vocabulary. Moreover, code-switching is so undesirable in some school settings that teachers found using languages interchangeably in a lesson often receive negative written evaluations. It is taken as a sign of poor instruction, a lack of language planning and as presenting deficient language models to students. Unlike code-switching, the act of translanguaging between named languages is not a sign of deficiency but an indication of how the speaker is deliberately deploying her linguistic repertoire to engage with an audience. Still, many school administrators prohibit the use of translanguaging pedagogies in school buildings for fear of a linguistic free-for-all.

Translanguaging is controversial for important reasons; bilingual educators are protecting the political legacy of bilingual education, the establishment of two separate language spaces, as well as the language pedagogies believed to improve language learners’ educational experiences in U.S. public schools. However, we must engage critically with translanguaging theory and not challenge it blindly for the sake of maintaining the bilingual education status quo. As bilingual educators, we must continue to fight for the educational rights of our students by constantly questioning.
our pedagogies and the ideologies that create them. Translanguaging theory pushes us to think beyond bilingual education to construct public school spaces that keep our emergent bilingual students whole: (1) by helping students leverage and expand their linguistic repertoires within standardized linguistic and content-learning spaces; (2) by shifting the perception of a marginalized linguistic variety from non-standard to academic resource; and (3) by actively establishing translanguaging spaces where students can use their entire linguistic repertoires as academic resources to construct new knowledge.

Educators who genuinely embrace translanguaging theory struggle to create legitimate and discrete translanguaging spaces within bilingual education settings. The pressure to have students perform well on state exams cause teachers to primarily leverage students’ linguistic repertoires to strengthen standardized linguistic practices. This focus on standard language use to engage with content restricts and silences the use of students’ other linguistic features deemed non-standard or non-academic. However well-intentioned, these daily moments dismember, or pull, students violently away from their local linguistic and cultural resources (Mayorga, 2018). How do we teach beyond such assimilationist approaches that exclude authentic language practices? What does it mean to develop language pedagogies that keep our emergent bilingual students whole as they learn to leverage and expand their linguistic repertoires in academic settings? As dual language bilingual teachers we must be vigilant of pedagogies and ideologies that require students to surrender valuable linguistic and cultural resources upon entering dual language bilingual classrooms. Translanguaging theory pushes us to create pedagogies that genuinely honor non-standard linguistic features as academic resources and that leverage these as authentic ways to engage with curricular content.

The “trans+” prefix in translanguaging pushes us to imagine what lies beyond language in bilingual education (García, 2016, personal communication) by problematizing normative narratives of language use during content instruction. In this paper, I build on García’s trans (beyond) + languaging notion as part of a social justice and liberate project to transform dual language bilingual education by looking beyond strict language allocations and standardized language ideologies. Translanguaging pedagogy, translanguaging documentation, critical reflection of students’ authentic language, and active listening as translanguaging teachers, are offered as humanizing pedagogies for dual language bilingual education classrooms.

Trans+: Beyond Standard Language Ideologies

Standard language ideology is a social bias and preference toward the idealized linguistic performance of the White, upper middle class (Lippi-Green, 2012). In other words, the language practices of language-majoritized White populations are deemed more conceptually rich while language-minoritized People of Color need to be taught the correct form in order to be college and career ready (Flores, 2016). Schools actively use assimilationist pedagogies to leverage students’ less desirable home-based linguistic practices in order to develop the preferred standard language forms. Even when students learn the standard language varieties well, they are still often seen as outsiders due to racial and/or discourse markers (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Minoritized students feel...

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disenfranchised and disconnected from what is constructed as the only legitimate discourse, resulting in internalized feelings of deficiency regarding their own oral and written production in schools.

How will young people see themselves as fully authorized speakers and writers when their voices are constructed as inappropriate? How do we expect them to take ownership of their academic and linguistic resources to engage democratically as citizens? This is true violence; whereby a standard language ideology interpellates and constitutes the subject in such a way that they become recognizable only in contrast to the parts that are deemed “more correct” (Butler, 1997; Derrida, 1997; García, 2013). This lack of recognition renders students invisible, silenced, and socially (and politically) dead (Dumas, 2016).

When one visits a New York City elementary school classroom (and probably most classrooms across the nation), one can expect to find predictable components and organization: clustered tables, bulletin boards filled with student work, word walls, mathematical strategies, charts delineating reading and writing processes, libraries of books, a meeting area, and evidence of science and social studies inquiry. Sadly, without their physical presence, it would be hard to get a real sense of the children learning in these rooms. Although you may be able to see a child’s mathematical thinking or read a non-fiction article about dogs, you would find few products depicting students’ authentic use of language and lived experiences. Given the social and economic geography of NYC, school walkthroughs should instead demonstrate enormously rich differences as you travel from one part of the city to another. How does such widespread erasure or sterilization of human experience develop?

In 2010, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The standards focus on what they call “the essentials for college and career readiness in a twenty-first-century, globally competitive society” (p. 3). While the authors briefly highlight the importance of developing literacy skills to better understand divergent cultures it leaves much of the creation of such tasks up to the discretion of teachers and curriculum developers. However, many educators and parents have focused on the essentials as a way of raising the bar for all students. In the name of equity, states across the country carried out federal accountability measures through high-stakes state exams. In elementary public schools, both the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics state exams were used to measure the progress of disaggregated groups of students, as well as to rate the effectiveness of schools and teachers. The pressure to satisfy imposed performance standards resulted in increased test-preparation and a narrowing of curricula to these two main subjects, including students’ language production to elicit test- and content-aligned vocabulary and phrases.

Public school districts responded to the pressure by purchasing standards-aligned curricula and in some cases, supporting teachers in modifying and developing their curricula further. Understandably, from a school district point of view, the implementation of the standards-based curricula along with the delivery of instruction needed to be carried out consistently across classrooms. School administrators regulated the instructional and linguistic practices through walkthroughs, evaluations,
observations, and constructive feedback. Teachers were urged to follow scripted lessons and standards-aligned curricula with fidelity while also required to differentiate for students using rubrics and checklists. Teacher evaluations followed suit, evolving from a complete reliance on student performance on state exams to the present inclusion of more school-based measures such as reading levels, mathematical portfolios, and formal/informal lesson observations using performance assessments such as Danielson’s Framework for Teaching (New York City, Department of Education, 2013).

Ironically but not surprisingly, the pressure to create and teach rigorous, high-quality, research-based, college and career-worthy instruction in the name of equity did little to highlight and validate the lives, interests, and diverse languages of local students. Students’ experiences outside of school, their divergent cultures, and their many ways of languaging continue to play a non-significant role in school curricula. In a shift to improve the academic lives of all students, public school educators developed a highly specialized lens for crafting and evaluating standards-based instruction, but lost some of their sensibilities for seeing more fully the students that sit in classrooms. The students who should be at the center of instruction have essentially been filtered out of the content we teach. Even before the CCSS, language in education was (and continues to be) an essential part of every country’s process of nation formation. Throughout history, the dissemination of dictionaries and grammars formalized the illusion of language as an unchanging entity with clear boundaries (Lin, 2013). The reality is that dictionaries have been updated continuously as language norms changed to reflect the cultural practices of the powerful (Volosinov, 1929). The standardization of language has always privileged the language practices of those in power, while pushing the less valued linguistic varieties to the margins.

Flores & Rosa (2015) suggest that educators must move beyond appropriateness-based approaches and challenge the listening subject to confront their biases regarding the use of language in classrooms. They argue,

Simply adding “codes of power” or other “appropriate” forms of language to the linguistic repertoires of language-minoritized students will not lead to social transformation...Attempting to teach language-minoritized students to engage in the idealized linguistic practices of the white speaking subject does nothing to challenge the underlying racism and monoglossic language ideologies of the white listening subject. Additive approaches to language education inadvertently legitimate and strengthen, rather than challenge, the marginalization of language-minoritized students (p. 167).

They encourage educators to look at their own biases and critically question why the linguistic performances of Students of Color have been determined to be inappropriate for academic purposes. If educators continue to view differences as deficits, Students of Color will continue to suffer physical and psychic assaults in schools (Dumas, 2016). Our ways of knowing language and teaching language learners uphold a commitment to an epistemology that reproduces social hierarchies and oppressive educational practices (Mignolo, 2015).
As educators, we must look beyond standard language ideologies and critically question normalized instructional practices that other our minoritized speakers. Standards-based lenses to content and language sterilize and erase the incredible cultural and linguistic diversity of our students. When we listen for the exclusive use of standard and academic content language throughout daily instruction, we fail to recognize our students’ rich linguistic repertoires. We end up listening for the language we want students to learn—grade-level standardized language and content-specific vocabulary—without recognizing and respecting the full linguistic and experiential resources our students have to offer.

**Trans +: Beyond Strict Language Allocation Policies**

Most schools do not resist conventional barriers—they create them—by reproducing social hierarchies and structures through strict monoglossic language policies. Dual language bilingual education (DLBE) programs are no exception to this as they engage in enforcing standard language policies in two separate language spaces (García, 2009). As students transition from one linguistic classroom space to another, they are expected to transition from being a standard monolingual speaker in one language to a standard monolingual speaker in the other language (Grosjean, 1982). Furthermore, within each space, students are encouraged to shift from employing informal linguistic varieties to more appropriate standard language varieties. These expectations reflect an expanded standard language ideology that reproduces two sets of imagined and idealized language practices, each with its own arrangement of social hierarchies.

A translanguaging approach breaks away from this rigid view of language towards a more dynamic and fluid understanding. Instead of conceptualizing a language as a distinct closed linguistic system, or box with clear borders, translanguaging theory sees language as a dynamic set of linguistic features that are ever-changing as we engage flexibly with diverse speakers. This more open conceptualization of language includes the many varieties of a language often excluded in classrooms such as those referred to as dialects, informal, colloquial, non-standard, and non-academic, and/or social language. The distinction between these varieties and named languages are socially constructed along socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, religious, political, national, and other lines. Therefore, these distinctions do not actually exist structurally in the brain (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015) but live in the social imagination and are reified materially in multiple ways. In other words, all language speakers, monolingual and multilingual, are thought to have one linguistic system that holds a repertoire of linguistic features employed in their social worlds. Bilingual students are thought to hold linguistic features associated with their two distinct named languages, including the linguistic features linked to standard and non-standard varieties within each of the named languages.

The structural design of dual language bilingual education (DLBE) programs is informed by standard language ideologies that envision languages as closed linguistic systems. This is reflected structurally by the two separate and discrete language spaces that exist in dual language bilingual education programs, where models distribute language by percentage, temporally, or by subject. For example, some DLBE programs...
alternate language by day while others maintain one language in the morning and the other in the afternoon for a period of one to three weeks.

When translanguaging is introduced into dual language bilingual education classrooms, two conflicting theories of language play out in practice, explaining some of the difficulty DLBE educators experience when creating translanguaging instructional spaces. The DLBE theory of language takes standardized language practices as its focus and treats English and the LOTE as the main subjects while translanguaging theory shifts the focus onto the learner and their dynamic use of language in academic spaces. These theories of language have two distinct loci that create contradictions within DLBE instructional practices.

DLBE strict language allocation policies deny students access to their full linguistic repertoires. When we ask students to shut off their English part of the brain and turn on their LOTE part of the brain, what are we asking for exactly? Within a DLBE theory of language, we ask students to focus on developing a specific language variety as the primary locus of instruction and to dismember their unitary linguistic system to align to that focus. In other words, we focus on teaching an idealized language while disregarding students' authentic linguistic practices. In contrast, a translanguaging theory of language makes the student the locus of instruction, not the idealized language.

As students transition from one language space to another, we cannot ask them to simply collect the non-target language and non-standard linguistic features and store them in the recesses of their brain. We have all witnessed this impossibility time and time again when our students continue to use their diverse linguistic repertoires regardless of the language of instruction. Furthermore, by asking students to shut off, or temporarily dispose of a set of linguistic resources, we are denigrating their linguistic experiences as not fit for academic classroom discourse. These practices reinforce a damaging social hierarchy in classrooms that elevate speakers who use more standard language varieties to construct new knowledge while depreciating students who use non-standard varieties to communicate their ideas. Unfortunately, the only spaces that students can use their full linguistic repertoire freely is outside the classroom—during lunch, on the playground, or outside of school. Their full linguistic repertoire is not seen as a resource in academic settings, but as a social resource to be employed only outside of classrooms.

As students transition between two language spaces, DLBE teachers interconnect idealized language using standardized content-specific vocabulary presented by state-required curricula. Bilingual educators make explicit connections between two standardized varieties by paralleling vocabulary through bridging (Beeman & Urow, 2013), using cognates, and by deliberately sequencing content learned across two linguistic spaces. This focus on developing content through standardized language practices prevent students from using their non-standard language features as academic resources. Again, the standardized language practices become the instructional focus rather than honoring how students employ their authentic language practices to negotiate meaning. This point is illustrated in the following two scenarios carried out in a DLBE two-world model where students have just transitioned
into the Spanish classroom after studying non-fiction writing in the English classroom for a week. Scenario #1 presents content instruction focused on standardized language practices, while scenario #2 employs translanguaging pedagogies to honor students’ full linguistic repertoires as resources for learning new content.

**Scenario 1: Content Instruction focused on Standardized Language Practices**
The Spanish teacher bridges the English non-fiction writing instruction by presenting students with a teacher-created bilingual dictionary. The teacher asks students to use the dictionary to label the components of a displayed non-fiction piece in Spanish. The teacher presents the sentence stem: “Yo veo que esta pieza contiene un/una ______.” (I see that this piece contains a ______.) Students say: “Yo veo que esta pieza contiene un título y un sub-título” (I see that this piece contains a title and a sub-title.” Another student says: “Yo veo que esta pieza contiene una introducción y una conclusión.” (I see that this piece has an introduction and conclusion).

**Scenario 2: Content Instruction Honoring Students’ Language Repertoires**
The Spanish teacher posts a translanguaging space sign and encourages students to use both English and Spanish language features during the discussion. The Spanish teacher displays a chart created in the English classroom labeling the parts of a non-fiction writing piece in English. He projects a Spanish non-fiction piece on the SmartBoard. Pointing to the English chart he says: “Veo que han aprendido mucho con el maestro de inglés. ¿Me pueden explicar qué aprendieron usando todos sus recursos lingüísticos?” (I see you have learned a lot with the English teacher. Can you tell me what you learned using all your linguistic resources?) As he listens, he charts the vocabulary and phrases used by students to describe their learning. Students use language features associated with both English and Spanish. He does not correct their language practices. Students’ statements include:

a. “Este chart dice las partes de un artículo.” (This chart says the parts of an article.)
b. “Los artículos de non-fiction have titles and subtitles.” (Non-fiction articles have titles and subtitles.)
c. “También tienen una introducción y conclusión.” (They also have an introduction and conclusion.)
d. “Tambien tienen...how do you say these words in Spanish? (pointing to a caption under a picture)? (They also have...how do you say these words in Spanish?)
e. A friend yells out: ¡Una caption! (A caption!) [Although “una caption” is not the Spanish word for caption the student made an attempt to translate the word “caption.” This attempt is validated because the student was able to recognize the non-fiction feature.]

In both scenarios, students are sharing what they learned in the English classroom but they depict different approaches in how teachers engage with students’ language practices. In the first scenario, the teacher uses a bilingual dictionary as a support for students who do not yet know the equivalent Spanish vocabulary for the writing terms. This is a great strategy but it does not engage with the students’ full linguistic
repertoire. Instead, the teacher is exclusively focused on the state-mandated content and narrows students’ production to the corresponding standardized content-specific vocabulary. The second scenario presents the English non-fiction chart as a reference, but the teacher creates a translanguaging space to engage with the academic concepts using students’ entire linguistic repertoires.

Language pedagogies centered upon students’ linguistic repertoires is a social justice issue; students deserve linguistic agency to express their ideas flexibly. DLBE language learners deserve access to their dynamic linguistic repertoires to negotiate meaning across multiple experiences because complex ideas take time to develop. As students travel from one language space to another, their responses cannot always be narrowed down to sentence starters, content-specific vocabulary, and cognates. DLBE students deserve the right to be able to express authentic ideas employing as many of their linguistic features necessary. Educators must challenge themselves to accept and validate ideas expressed using language practices marginalized in academic settings. We must be critical of standard language ideologies that allow non-standard linguistic contributions to be admonished, belittled, deemed inappropriate, non-academic, and deficient.

Employing translanguaging pedagogy in DLBE calls for a student-centered approach to teaching language that keeps students whole as they expand their linguistic repertoire. We must de-center standard language ideologies in order to privilege students’ full lived experiences and their many ways of language inside and outside of school. Students’ language outside of school cannot simply be labeled social language while idealized in-school language is termed academic language. Additionally, local experiences need to be respected and regarded as academic content, not simply as “culturally-relevant” experiences that create scaffolds for legitimate academic bodies of knowledge. Actively privileging standardized language practices over students’ other non-standard linguistic resources in classrooms is an act of violence. This well-intentioned practice dismembers students from their local linguistic and cultural resources (Mayorga, 2018) and renders valuable linguistic resources deficient.

**Trans +: Listening Beyond What We Want Students to Say**

When we use instructional pedagogies rooted in standardized language ideologies, we become the White listening subject (Flores & Rosa, 2015). When dual language bilingual Teachers of Color utilize culturally-sustaining pedagogies solely to leverage a student’s linguistic repertoire to strengthen school-based academic language, they too embody the White listening subject. Our strong focus on standardized content-specific language prevents us from engaging with the authentic linguistic practices of Students of Color. As the White listening subject, we listen for the language we want students to learn—we actively regulate and monitor their linguistic output for specific language that aligns to lesson goals, such as content-specific vocabulary, academic phrases, genre-specific sentence structures, and proper syntax. Teachers of Color embody the White listening subject when they filter out and correct language deemed non-academic and push informal language varieties outside of the perimeters of the lesson. Among all the diverse and authentic linguistic practices being used daily in our classrooms, DLBE educators’ ears have developed a highly specialized filter through which they sort classroom language, effectively silencing and erasing the many ways of
language that are distinct from the standardized content language. Paris & Alim (2014) ask: “What would liberating ourselves from this [White] gaze and the educational expectations it forwards mean for our abilities to envision new forms of teaching and learning?” (p. 86).

Listening *beyond* standard language and content-specific language requires a significant and deliberate shift in both intention and practice—one in which we stop listening for the language we want students to learn and instead learn to *hear what students actually say*. Translanguaging theory pushes educators to engage with students’ authentic ways of languaging—to respectfully listen to what actually is being said by students without judgement. However, when teachers are conditioned to not (necessarily) listen to their authentic language production, it is difficult to hear, acknowledge, and appreciate translanguaging practices as resources.

Translanguaging documentation can be used as a pedagogical tool to appreciate and assess students’ authentic languaging practices in dual language bilingual education classrooms (for specific details and examples see Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2017 and Solorza, Aponte, Leverenz, Becker, & Frias, 2019). When students communicate with diverse audiences, they are deliberately employing their linguistic repertoires in specialized ways. For instance, when a student talks to a teacher who defines herself as a White, upper middle-class Colombian, the student may feel the need to use linguistic features associated with standard varieties of Spanish. When talking to his bilingual best friend during a math center, the student may use language features associated with informal and formal varieties of both English and Spanish. If DLBE educators document these specific authentic interactions throughout the day they would develop an emerging profile of each student’s linguistic repertoire, as well as gain a sense of how, when, and why the student translanguages.

As educators gain a deeper awareness of their students’ translanguaging, they must be careful not to resort to assimilationist approaches when teaching language and content. As stated before, many teachers in DLBE classrooms use translanguaging as a way to leverage their students’ minoritized language features with more standard language features. This is a *dismembering* practice that de-centers the value of students’ linguistic resources in order to teach them academic language. As educators, we must look *beyond* these approaches by critically analyzing why we have difficulty accepting a student’s authentic use of language. Why do we want students to replace their language features with more standard language features? What biases are we carrying as a listener? What local bodies of knowledge do we reject and why? Why do we privilege some language content as academic and some as social? What social hierarchies and oppressive ideologies have we internalized that allow us to devalue a student’s linguistic and cultural production?

Translanguaging documentation, and ongoing critical reflection of how we perceive students’ translanguaging as listeners, become important daily practices for valuing our students more fully. Combined with culturally sustaining practice (Paris & Alim, 2014), an ongoing appreciation of students’ authentic funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992) and community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), bilingual educators can engage in *re-membering* students to their local linguistic and cultural
resources (Mayorga, 2018). These practices educate the educator by establishing respectful humanizing practices that allow them to learn from and with their students. Armed with a greater understanding of students’ local bodies of knowledge and authentic language practices, educators are better able to modify curriculum and advocate for changes that include their students more fully. Together, teachers and students can build and co-create instructional practices that heal and counteract harmful dismembering and oppressive pedagogies (Greene, 1995).

**Conclusion**

García (2009; 2013) calls for a re-imagining of bilingual education by challenging how teachers conceptualize, facilitate, and listen to language use in classrooms. Using the prefix trans+, García pushes bilingual educators to look beyond bilingual education to critically challenge hegemonic language ideologies and to break from the monoglossic status quo within dual language bilingual education. This paper envisions trans+languaging as a transformational pedagogy for dual language bilingual education, one that pushes beyond normalized ways of teaching to genuinely validate students’ entire linguistic repertoires.

Schooling should inspire learners to become whole, not dismember and displace them. Standard language ideologies and standards-based curricula essentialize the language practices of minoritized students and bar them from using their own cultural and linguistic resources. This paper suggests using translanguaging documentation as a tool to value students more fully. The objective documentation of students’ authentic use of language provides space from which to frame such productions as resources. As curriculum developers, DLBE educators must find genuine ways to reposition students’ home/community experiences as official knowledge and as active ingredients for content instruction, not simply as scaffolds. Translanguaging pedagogies, as described in scenario #2 offer ways to meet this goal by legitimately privileging students’ full linguistic repertoires during standards-based content instruction. We must forge spaces where students’ bodies of knowledge and diverse ways of languaging develop alongside what is perceived as academic content in schools.

The teacher as listener can invite or silence a student’s authentic use of language. If bilingual educators want to genuinely honor and respect students fully, they must engage in hearing what students actually say instead of listening for the language they want students to learn. Daily critical reflection is needed to increase educators’ awareness of how they hear students in classrooms and as a way to gauge their personal biases toward language use.

Trans+languaging pushes us to dream and imagine possibilities beyond bilingual education so we may further serve the authentic linguistic and lived realities of our students. Maxine Greene (1995) notes,

To tap into imagination is to become able to break with what is supposedly fixed and finished, objectively and independently real. It is to see beyond what the imaginer has called normal or ‘common-sensible’ and to carve out new orders in experience. Doing so, a person may become freed to glimpse what might be, to form notions of what should be and what is not yet. And
the same person may, at the same time, remain in touch with what presumably is (author’s emphasis) (p. 19).

García’s work with translanguaging echoes Maxime Green’s words by calling us to break with what is supposedly fixed and finished in the field of bilingual education. Bilingual educators are tasked with envisioning language pedagogies that keep our emergent bilingual students whole as they learn to leverage and expand their linguistic repertoires.

Finally, to appropriately honor Ofelia García’s transformative work in this special issue, I must conclude by sharing a personal academic experience that underlies the ideas presented in this article. A decade ago, I met her during my second year of doctoral studies at a time when I felt completely estranged from the bodies of knowledge, I called my own. Although I had entered academia with lots to say and a soulful connection to the written word, I became voiceless, and my attempt to write often resulted in words paralyzed by the fear of sounding stupid. When learning is limited to writing, discussing, and reading academic papers that use linguistic forms of privileged expression, academia becomes violent and leaves us dismembered from local forms of power, knowledge, and place (Mayorga, 2018). When I dropped out of academia, I looked for a possible learning disability as the explanation for my failure. This is the story of many dismembered students – where we internalize notions of deficiency because we do not see ourselves represented in academic texts nor in the legitimate language practices used to sustain ideas in graduate classrooms. When we do deviate from academia’s norms and try to re-member ourselves to our local histories, place, and to each other (Mayorga, 2018; Vizenor, 2008) we are often corrected and directed to seek remediation, intervention, and/or leave the institution of school altogether.

The effects of academic violence are traumatic and long lasting. I still struggle to piece together an academic voice in academia that feels legitimate while remaining rooted in my local experiences and language. With García’s encouragement, care, and advocacy I was able to return to my doctoral program. Her validation of my diverse ways of languaging revitalized me and helped me develop an appreciation of my own intellectual and linguistic resources. Although academia has not changed much since I left, I have drawn much from translanguaging pedagogies to sustain my sense of wholeness by centering my efforts on nourishing my voice as a learner and actively imagining openings for my ways of knowing and languaging (Greene, 1995; Bakhtin, 1982).

I sincerely thank, Ofelia García, for being a constant source of inspiration and for helping me dream beyond academic norms to recognize my own wholeness. In this—my first solo writing piece—I imagine, disrupt, and reclaim in her honor.

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Ofelia García: A Transformative Thinker and Leader

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In this essay, I describe the ways in which Ofelia García’s work influenced the field of bilingual education and multilingualism, as well as my thinking over the years as a bilingual educator. Dr. García has been a model of what it means to be an intellectual who is deeply connected to the importance of engaging in transformative theory. Her ideas, in turn, have implications for pedagogy that can influence the education of emergent bilinguals. Her work is deeply grounded in understandings about language and language development as it exists in the world. Her perspective is one of strength and complexity. Ofelia García is a thinker whose work has transformed the field of bilingual and multilingual education at the local, national and international levels.

Keywords: bilingual education, descriptive inquiry, Ofelia García, transformative thinker and leader, translanguaging

The voice of Ofelia García with regards to the education of emergent bilinguals, echoes, not only at the local and national levels but also at the international level. Her voice reminds us that no matter what the current educational climate is, it is of critical importance that one stands strong in connection with what is ethically best for immigrant and bilingual students. For decades Dr. García has challenged what has been understood as the norm with regards to bilingual education in many parts of the United States, that is, to help children transition into English as soon as possible, with little regard to the sustenance of the home language (García, 1984; García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008). She has questioned the rigid separation of named languages that traditionally occur in most dual language programs because they do not take into account the dynamic language practices of bilingual children (Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2018). Ofelia García has also argued against dual language bilingual programs that serve only a particular and selective group of students. The way these programs are being implemented move away from the social justice principle that their main purpose should be to serve all students and exclude no one (Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2018).

Ofelia García’s work has impacted the field of bilingualism and multilingualism in profound ways. Her work challenges researchers and educators to pay close attention to how emergent bilinguals use language in their different communities, rather than study language in isolation and separate from the purposes it serves. She asserted that when educators (and researchers) begin by looking at language from the perspective of the speaker (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, 2018), they can witness how
they communicate effectively by deliberately selecting particular features from their one linguistic repertoire (García & Li Wei, 2014). Through her research on translanguaging she challenged the field to pay close attention to the “*multiple discursive practices*, in which, bilinguals engage in order to *make sense of their bilingual worlds*” (García, 2009, p. 45, emphasis in original). She defied the field to re-think how by capitalizing on the students’ full linguistic repertoires to learn, teach, and assess the learners’ bilingualism (and multilingualism) can be strengthened and sustained (García & Kleyn, 2016).

A translanguaging stance demands radical shifts in one’s ideology. It recognizes bilingualism as the norm. It makes evident the profound limitations of a monolingual perspective (García, 2009; García & Li Wei, 2014). This stance acknowledges that the learner’s full linguistic repertoire is always present in the classroom, even when the teacher fails to acknowledge and capitalize on it (García & Kleyn, 2016). Ofelia García insists vehemently that a translanguaging stance and approach opens spaces for the learner’s voice, creativity, critical thinking, and agency to be fully present, active, and visible, rather than silenced (García & Kleyn, 2016). She has argued that labels matter, and that therefore, a shift in labels from *limited English proficient* to *emergent bilinguals* has the potential of radically changing how these students are educated (García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008; García & Kleyn, 2016).

In this essay I describe how Ofelia García’s work has been tremendously influential in my roles as a prospective teacher, an early childhood-bilingual multiage K-2nd grade teacher, a director of a "dual bilingual language program" and now as a researcher and teacher educator who works with both early childhood and childhood bilingual teachers at Lehman College/CUNY in the Bronx. Her legacy reminds me that it is OK to have the courage to question long-held ideas about teaching and learning. In addition, I discuss important lessons from Dr. García’s compassionate ways with others. I also chronicle how her work has influenced deeply both my professional and personal life over the years. I have had the honor of learning from her published writings, also from working along her side, and through observations, learning from the person she is.

**Learning about Ofelia García’s Work**

Ofelia García’s work has significantly influenced my professional life over the years as a bilingual educator. I was first introduced to her publications when I was a master’s level student at Arizona State University, Tempe campus in the early 1990’s. As a graduate student, I read that in the 1980’s she already raised questions to the field asking us to rethink how bilingual education was conceived. She insisted early on in her career that a bilingual education that is based on deficit should not be the goal, as is often the case in transitional bilingual models (TBE) in which the purpose is to transition children into English as soon as possible so that English becomes the sole language of instruction (García, 1984).

Instead, after studying the education of Cuban American Children in Dade County ethnic schools in the late 1980’s, she proposed that we learn from a type of bilingual education that was conceived locally and holds high expectations for the development of bilingualism and biliteracy for all students. Most importantly, she
advocated for an education that included the community’s perspectives (García & Otheguy, 1985). Dr. García endorsed, from the very beginning, an education that afforded a close connection between home and school. She has reminded us for decades that parents’ voices matter, and that an intellectual and social continuity between home and school have tremendous potential for strengthening a child’s educational possibilities. She has reiterated tirelessly that in developing bilingual programs, one must pay close attention to the community (García, Evangelista, Martínez, Disla, & Paulino, 1988) and take a perspective of strength (García & Traugh, 2002). I learned also from her published research and writings to resist and challenge the assumptions institutions made about bilingual students (García, 1993).

I arrived in New York in 2004 and took a non-tenure position at Long Island University (LIU), Brooklyn Campus. By this time Dr. García had already left after serving as Dean of the LIU School of Education for 5 years (1997-2002). However, in spite of her absence, the work she started with Cecelia Traugh (then Associate Dean at LIU Brooklyn Campus and now Dean at Bank Street College of Education in New York City), specifically on the Descriptive Review Process, had a profound impact in the quality of program prospective teachers received. Based on the work of Patricia Carini and her colleagues from Prospect Center for Education and Research in Bennington, Vermont, they implemented this review process on a teacher education program that served minoritized communities. This work transformed the LIU School of Education to become more inclusive of the community it served.

Descriptive inquiry is grounded on phenomenology (Hurserl, 1965; Merleau-Ponty, 1962). It is the study of something or someone as it is in the world (Van Manen, 1997). Phenomenology argues that as humans we engage in and with the world (Carini, 1975). Our meaning making emerges from these active encounters with it. From a phenomenological perspective our knowledge is always in the making, never complete. Descriptive inquiry allows participants to get closer to the phenomenon under study through careful description, deep immersion, and avoidance of labels. Its main purpose is to experience what is being studied with full complexity (Carini, 1975; Himley, 2000). Descriptive inquiry is a collaborative practice through which participants engage imaginatively in ways that enhance the group’s understandings of what could be possible (Ascenzi-Moreno et al., 2008). It begins with an open-ended question. It recognizes multiplicity of perspectives focusing on the particular and avoiding abstractions. Himley (2000) states, “the point is to use language to resist easy or conventional explanations of a child or work, to use language to produce precision and particularity” (p. 130). Descriptive inquiry has tremendous potential to generate ideas for action from an imaginative perspective of what it could be.

Each year the School of Education at LIU, Brooklyn Campus had a conference on Descriptive Processes in which students presented descriptive reviews of children and descriptive reviews of practice. Many of these were sessions that focused on emergent bilingual students. Since Ofelia García continued to attend these conferences, it allowed me to meet her at one of these events. I was immediately struck by the strong connection she still had with the community at the LIU, Brooklyn Campus School of Education.
Led by Dr. García and Dr. Traugh, the Teacher Education program at Long Island University (LIU), Brooklyn positioned teacher knowledge at the center. Using Ofelia’s knowledge of bilingualism and Cecelia Traugh’s understanding of the Descriptive Processes, spaces were created where prospective teachers engaged in scholarly reflective work through, for instance, descriptive reviews of children (child studies), descriptions of children’s work, and inquiries into teachers’ practice. In addition, they both invited the faculty at LIU, Brooklyn campus to participate in year-long inquiries. These inquiries led to questions that revealed emerging tensions, i.e., state mandates for certification and what it meant to prepare teachers (most of them from minoritized backgrounds) from a perspective of strength. Faculty engaged in phenomenological descriptive inquiries, documented their work over time, and utilized this documentation to propel appropriate changes to their teacher preparation program. These self-studies led faculty to transform the curriculum they offered to the prospective teachers.

The lessons learned from the work with faculty at LIU School of Education were expanded into supporting the Cypress Hills Community School, dual language bilingual school in East New York. There García and Traugh worked with this school’s faculty and administrators to become more intentional and thoughtful in creating and developing practices that made sense for this bilingual community over time. They encouraged educators at this school to assume a phenomenological perspective in the study of biliteracy practices of its young bilingual students. The phenomenological stance they took was based on the principles of descriptive processes such as, inquiry, careful observations of “children in action and in motion” (Carini, 2000, p. 57), close descriptions of children’s work, the study of a teacher’s practice or an aspect of the curriculum. This phenomenological-inquiry stance required the educators at this dual language bilingual school to slow down, to look and to listen with care as they learned to more attentively pay attention to their work with children (Kesson, n/d).

The research at Cypress Hills Community School was another powerful space in which Dr. García reminded the field that it matters that one starts with the children and their linguistic repertoires, with the teachers’ practices, with the community, rather than with theories, strategies, or how to structure programs from the top down. García and Traugh (2002) write about their research at the dual language school:

Descriptive Inquiry has enabled the entire Cypress Hills school faculty to continue to find intellectual and creative energy, passion, and space necessary to continue their efforts to develop the children’s bilingualism in the face of mounting attacks. It has also provided a space and time that allows them to consider their teaching practice and school structures in the light of work of individual children. The descriptive process has also enabled the faculty to build a relationship not only with children through their own work but also with each other. The process has kept the complexity of teaching and learning, and especially of developing bilingualism and biliteracy, alive and visible in the face of standardization and homogenization. (p. 324).

Through Ofelia García’s commitment to bilingualism and descriptive inquiry, the teacher education program at LIU, Brooklyn campus and Cypress Hills
Community bilingual dual language school had an abundance of opportunities to imagine “new pedagogical and curricular solutions” (García & Traugh, 2002, p. 316).

**Working with Ofelia García**

Finally, in 2013 I was able to work with Ofelia García. I was invited to join the City University of New York - New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals Project (CUNY NYSIEB), which Dr. García co-lead with Dr. Menken, Dr. Otheguy, and Dr. Sánchez. My participation in this project challenged all my current understandings about bilingualism. CUNY NYSIEB work is based on Ofelia García’s understanding of dynamic bilingualism, rather than additive bilingualism (García & Sánchez, 2018). From this perspective, in order to make full sense of the world, bilingual individuals need to utilize their entire linguistic repertoire in flexible ways. Thus, she writes, “translanguaging posits that bilinguals have one linguistic repertoire from which they select features strategically to communicate effectively. That is, translanguaging takes as its starting point the language practices of bilingual people as the norm” (García, 2012, p. 1). Through the translanguaging perspective, she invited us to view bilinguals (and multilinguals) with new eyes. I learned, for example, that it is only from the outsider’s view that bilinguals have two named languages, as defined by nation-states (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). From the bilingual person’s perspective (insider’s view), bilinguals have one linguistic repertoire. These new insights forced me to rethink and question how I was positioning the bilingual child and teacher in my pedagogy as a teacher educator. As I engage with teachers now, my evolving questions are: How can we leverage bilingual (and multilingual) children’s repertories in order to better support their education? How can I best ensure that the whole bilingual child comes into the classroom?

At CUNY NYSIEB Ofelia García was instrumental in creating the kind of intellectual community one rarely has the opportunity to be part of. This community brought together faculty from different CUNY colleges and doctoral students from the CUNY Graduate Center (García & Sánchez, 2018). The project viewed bilingualism in new ways, and it challenged teachers, administrators, state, and other education officials and teacher educators to re-examine what has so far been held as truth in bilingual education and in English as a New Language Education programs (García & Sánchez, 2018; García & Li Wei, 2014). As it is characteristic of Dr. García, the CUNY NYSIEB principles she proposed were based on the actual practices of bilingual students and their experiences in the outside world. García and Li Wei (2014) write, “translanguaging is the discursive norm in bilingual families and communities” (p. 23). Based on this lens, the CUNY NYSIEB work challenged traditional perspectives of bilinguals and bilingualism by arguing that bilinguals need spaces where they can enact their own agency and engage in fluid and dynamic language practices as the norm. The pedagogical theory of CUNY NYSIEB advocates for two principles: (1) for bilingualism to be utilized as a resource in education, (2) for a multilingual ecology for the entire school (García & Menken, 2015; García & Li Wei, 2014).

The purpose of CUNY NYSIEB is to support teachers and administrators in developing a pedagogy that reflects the needs and uses of bilinguals in the 21st Century. This is a pedagogy that requires a transformation of one’s ideology with regards to
bilingualism. As we engaged in this transformative journey, Dr. García sat by our side, modeling through her research, listening carefully as we strove to understand this new perspective, challenging our rigid conceptions of bilingualism. Through her writings, she introduced to this community thinkers such as South American scholars Walter Mignolo, Humberto Maturana, and Francisco Varela, and other thinkers such as Jasone Cenoz, Suresh Canagarajah, Mileidis Gort, Bruce Horner, among many others. She also read the professional literature with us and invited us to write about the ideas we were developing through our participation in CUNY NYSIEB. In a dialogical manner, she nudged us to fully integrate translanguaging pedagogy in our practices as teacher educators.

As one of the leaders of CUNY NYSIEB Dr. García took the time to respond to our writing, professional development plans in the different schools associated with CUNY NYSIEB. Most importantly, she engaged in dialogue with us as we developed intense and more complex understandings about translanguaging. She never hesitated to pose a question that would challenge us to more multifaceted insights. Meeting after meeting I witnessed Dr. García taking careful notes of the discussions. Often, she weaved these notes into the next session placing our ideas next to those of other thinkers in the field, as well as her own thinking.

As I reconceptualized my understandings about bilingual education within the context of translanguaging and the CUNY-NYSIEB project, I understand from my participation in this project that as bilingual educators we need to go beyond language maintenance to envision language sustenance. Ofelia García described that when we think about sustainability, we conceive of language practices as being dynamic rather than rigid (García, 2009; García & Li Wei, 2014). She reminded us that emergent bilinguals bring with them complex identities, agency, as well as cultural and pluriliteracy practices located in their families and multiple communities. These must be leveraged as powerful resources for learning, if schools are to be transformed as spaces that ensure the full participation of each learner, as well as spaces that mirror the dynamic practices of bilinguals in the world rather than the practices of monolinguals (García, 2013). When students are invited to fully capitalize on their linguistic practices, and these become the norm in the official spaces of the school life opportunities for language sustenance multiply. A perspective on language sustenance affirms a bilingual identity and normalizes their linguistic practices.

Ofelia García argued passionately that when we emphasize only the idea of maintenance and strict language separation, we remain with a focus solely on the past, in addition to the idea of holding onto a stance that privileges exclusively monolinguals. There is always the danger, she warned us, that by focusing on strict language separation, we will continue to construct minoritized languages as the other (García & Kleyn, 2016). She insisted that a perspective on language maintenance holds a static view of people’s languageing and identities, while a perspective on language sustenance contends that “fixed identities and meanings are questioned” (García, 2013, p. 162). When we insist on a focus on language maintenance, we ignore the fact that bilinguals are not two monolinguals in one (Grosjean, 1984), and we also fail to acknowledge the complex language practices of bilinguals (García, 2013). For emergent bilinguals these are fluid and interdependent (García, 2009; García & Li Wei, 2014).
the demands of the 21st century, where students are asked to engage with texts that demand critical thinking and depth of comprehension, the only way to ensure full participation is if they are invited to construct meaning utilizing their entire linguistic repertoire (García & Li Wei, 2014). It is a perspective that recognizes the local histories of people and embraces translanguaging practices as the norm.

Dr. García consistently reminded us that, given the realities of schools and the focus on assessments, within the context of bilingual programs, teachers need to plan intentionally for particular language practices. Students need full access to dominant language practices. They also need focused time dedicated to enhancing their home language practices. At the same time, they need to be provided with spaces to enact their "agency to negotiate their linguistic and meaning-making repertoires" (García & Li Wei, 2014, p. 75). In addition, teachers need to create spaces for students to bridge and leverage the ways in which language practices exist in the world, i.e., bilingual families utilize their entire linguistic repertoire to communicate with one another; writers often translanguage, such as the United States 2015 Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera. In addition, she insisted, diverse communities’ languages co-exist in authentic ways; therefore, the language ecology of a bilingual neighborhood offers texts in languages other than English.

Ofelia García urged us to consider that, if we embrace a perspective of translanguaging as a pedagogy of empowerment, we stop reinforcing the ideology of monolingualism as the standard. It matters that the legitimization of these power structures be challenged, she insisted. Educators can begin by creating intentional spaces within the macro language policies set by school administrators and policymakers in order to ensure students can build bridges between families’ and communities’ ways of knowing (García & Menken, 2015). Important also is that students see reflections of themselves at school in ways that empower them. Their voices and agency need to be invited to be an integral part of their education. In addition, teachers can capitalize on the students’ language practices in order to ensure depth of understanding, as well as enhancement of their literacy capacities and abilities (García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017).

As I reflect on my experiences as a teacher educator and a scholar in the CUNY NYSIEB Project and the leadership Ofelia García provided, I marvel at the growth experiences I was afforded. I had, for example, ample opportunities to work with practicing teachers and principals helping them find spaces in the school day where the whole child could be invited to participate fully by bringing in their entire linguistic repertoire. This was challenging work since schools exist under the surveillance of the State and the heavy emphasis on test scores tends to make English the sole language of instruction. Yet, there were brave teachers and principals willing to challenge official and unofficial language policies.

Ms. Tacy (pseudonym), a bilingual kindergarten teacher is one of these daring teachers. I supported her to figure out ways to integrate translanguaging into her pedagogy by understanding that in science, cognates were key to supporting children’s understandings of essential concepts. As the class studied about plants, she invited the children on a journey about gathering cognates of words connected to what they were
learning about plants. In this space she created in her bilingual class, the children had opportunities to bring both languages together and thus, had opportunities to build their language practices in new ways, while building on their linguistic strengths. Ms. Tacy created a space of resistance within a school in which the language policies were becoming gradually stricter with regards to utilizing English as the only language of instruction, in spite of saying that they had a bilingual program (CUNY NYSIEB notes, 2016).

Another courageous educator was brand new middle school teacher Ms. Cope (pseudonym). She understood quickly that in her English as a New Language class capitalizing on the students’ home language was key to their development as writers and thinkers in the new language. Once she opened these windows, her students willingly wrote utilizing their entire linguistic repertoire. Once her students wrote in their home languages, she challenged the school’s unofficial language policy that only student work written in English could be posted outside the classroom walls. Ms. Cope was determined to transform the language ecology of the school in ways that truly reflected the language practices of her students, their families, and the community. She engaged in this struggle in spite of the pressure she received from colleagues about her stance towards developing a multilingual ecology at the school (CUNY NYSIEB notes, 2016). Without the vision of CUNY NYSIEB developed by Ofelia García and her colleagues, the students in these classes might not have engaged in opportunities to sustain their home language practices.

Dr. García always challenged us to continue the work as well as to take ownership of it. On one occasion, she invited a small group of us to consider our areas of expertise and re-imagine what could be possible if we integrated translanguaging into our work. On this occasion, she was envisioning we re-imagine what writing could be like if a translanguaging stance was weaved into it. This is how the Translanguaging Pedagogy for Writing: A CUNY NYSIEB Guide for Educators (Espinosa, Ascenzi-Moreno, & Voguel, 2016) was composed. We grounded it on the principles we had learned from her and the CUNY NYSIEB colleagues, that translanguaging can support, expand, and enhance student writing; and that it can also support students along with all stages of the writing process. Translanguaging is more than a scaffold to support student writing in English. Translanguaging deepens meaning-making, provides students to access richer content, allows emergent bilinguals to truly show what they know. It also allows students to position themselves as the experts, while they negotiate their multilingual identities from a perspective of strength (Canagarajah, 2011; García & Li Wei, 2014). Deeply influenced by the CUNY NYSIEB vision this guide challenges notions of deficit with regards to emergent bilinguals and writing, and instead, it takes a perspective of strength (Carini & Himley, 2010). It invites teachers to create environments where bilingual students can capitalize on their entire linguistic repertoire to construct meaning as writers and thinkers in the 21st century in order to fully participate in the life of the classroom. With Garcia’s nudging, guidance, and support we have continued to explore our ideas on translanguaging and writing (Ascenzi-Moreno & Espinosa, 2018).

Her commitment to bringing practice and theory together has always been at the forefront of her work as a bilingual educator. She understood that good teachers
always recognize that the whole child needs to come to the classroom, meaning that students need spaces in which it is possible to capitalize on their entire linguistic repertoire. As part of one of the CUNY NYSIEB projects, she also encouraged us to engage in research. She invited us to participate in collaborative action research projects with classroom teachers (Espinosa & Herrera, 2016). The purpose of this research project was to better understand and document translanguaging practices of teachers and students in New York City Schools. She invited us to pursue the following overarching questions: How, when, and why is translanguaging taken up or resisted by students and teachers? What does its use mean for them? This work culminated in the edited book of Dr. García with Dr. Tatyana Kleyn (2016) titled *Translanguaging with Multilingual Students: Learning from Classroom Moments*. As is distinctive of her stance with regards to working in a democratic manner, this book ends with a call for principals to end top-down leadership structures and create more democratic decision-making spaces where teachers who have expertise teaching emergent bilinguals work side-by-side with administrators (Menken & Sánchez, 2016).

The work with CUNY NYSIEB through Ofelia García’s vision was richly engaging and also challenging. It answered many questions for me, but it also raised new questions. Within the context of my work as an early childhood bilingual educator, I ask myself how to ensure that young emergent bilingual students attend early childhood classrooms where teachers will have the agency and knowledge to create classroom environments and learning experiences that will sustain and enhance the language practices all young children bring with them? This is particularly important as states move to provide universal Pre-K to all children. New York State and New York City in particular have witnessed the rapid expansion of preschool classrooms (New York City Department of Education, 2018). Without doubt, these changes have brought forward an urgent need to ensure that the prospective and practicing early childhood teachers are fully prepared to offer quality learning experiences to all emergent multilingual learners (New York State Department of Education, 2018).

Ofelia García has tirelessly reminded us that as teacher educators we need to think carefully how we are preparing teachers to understand the importance of starting their pedagogical practices by creating learning spaces that allow all children to bring their entire selves into the classroom. She is arguing for teacher preparation programs that support prospective teachers in understanding the value and importance of translanguaging. It matters that we bring forward new ideas about language and language development (Faltis, 2013). Without doubt, Dr. García’s work will serve as an important terrain to continue the commitment of advocacy for the best education possible for young emergent bilingual students.

As I think about some of the implications, we as educators can draw from her legacy, I am reminded that projects such as CUNY NYSIEB need to have a complex and broad vision:

- to bring faculty from across universities to create new knowledge and understandings about the importance of educating emergent bilinguals to the fullest of their potential;
• to support quality and 21st century teaching and learning in schools by bridging the worlds of research and pedagogy;
• to develop a caring and dialogical community among educators committed to the education of emergent bilinguals where mentoring is as its core;
• to engage in work with schools that challenges administrators, teachers practices and teacher educator practices;
• to engage in careful documentation of the work and engage in ongoing research;
• to serve and to connect local, national and international communities through presentations, writing for publication, and provide access through technology (website, webinars, electronic documents, etc.).

Dr. García’s work challenges us as educators to consider carefully how we construct the different projects in which we participate. As her vision of the CUNY NYSIEB project demonstrated, each aspect of the project’s multilayered nature needs to be carefully orchestrated if we want it to have a long-lasting impact.

Learning from Ofelia García, the Person

Ofelia García has a unique way to attend with care and thoughtfulness to individuals, as well as to communities. I remember when I was a newcomer to New York City and had to apply for jobs as an assistant professor since my position at LIU Brooklyn Campus was a one-year position. I reached out to Ofelia García for advice, although I had only met her briefly once. She generously gave me recommendations of universities where I could apply, suggestions for interviewing, and offered to take a look at my curriculum vitae (O. García, personal communication, spring, 2005). After reviewing it, she gave me detailed feedback on ways to tighten it up and strengthen it. Although she barely knew me, her generous feedback had tremendous implications on how I was presenting myself and my work. Ofelia García always takes the time to openheartedly help and attend to others even in those important but minute details.

She brings with her a deep commitment to what Patricia Carini calls, *human capacity widely distributed* (Himley & Carini, 2000). Without doubt, one of Ofelia García’s ways of being in the world is of one of sincere caring. She has a way of figuring out what is it that matters to each person in her many circles. She is curious about what is happening in other people’s lives. With her incredible memory, she remembers just about everything one tells her. She also shares generously about what is important in her life. Through conversations, we learned about her experiences as a mother, wife, a friend, a daughter, as a grandmother, as an immigrant who left her beloved Cuba. We learned about her life as a bilingual immigrant student in The Bronx, New York City (O. García, personal communication, April 23, 2015).

Ofelia García generously opens the doors to her home and these rich conversations take place often around a delicious meal made by her. In getting to know her one learns about the thinker, the professor, the mentor, the colleague, the immigrant; as well as her values, commitments, experiences, and dreams. I remember one day at her house, we asked her about a painting in one of her apartment walls. She
shared with us that this painting was done by her mother-in-law. It was left in Cuba when her husband’s family had to immigrate to the USA. Many years later Ricardo Otheguy, her husband, went back to Cuba. He went to visit the house where the family had lived. He shared with us that it belonged now to a government official. He recognized the painting on the wall. Before leaving, one of the occupants of the house gave him the painting. It now hangs in their apartment as a reminder of their profound connection to Cuba. When they left the island all they could bring was a small piece of luggage. As the conversation continued, we learned about the jobs her father, a professional in Cuba, had to take as an immigrant who only spoke Spanish in a new land (O. García, personal communication, April 23, 2015).

Ofelia García is a master at creating community. She knows that ideas are best developed through authentic dialogue and multiplicity of perspectives. She brings people together to think, to question, to rethink, to dialogue, to reflect, and to have fun. She also knows where and how she can challenge each member of the community to go to the next level, to take on the next challenge. She teaches us that one never stops learning and caring. She also demonstrates for us daily what it means to have the courage and the ethical commitment to questioning what the field of bilingual education has considered the truth about teaching and learning. Dr. García challenges us to pay attention to what bilingual students are doing in the world, as we strive to create spaces that will build bridges between home and school. According to her, it matters that we work collaboratively to create a clearly articulated vision to better serve emergent bilingual students and their families. It has been an honor for me to learn from and work with Dr. Ofelia García these years. Yet, as she once wrote, “The best lesson learned has been the human one” (García, 1991, p. 19).

¡Gracias por inspirarnos Dr. García! [Dr. García, thank you for inspiring us!]

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Reflections on Language and Identity: Ofelia García’s Impact on one Latina’s Academic Trajectory and Scholarship

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This essay shares my own personal story of how—as a first-generation Latina academic—working with Ofelia García transformed my sense of self and trajectory as a scholar working with issues of language, identity, and education. Weaving personal anecdotes throughout, I trace the evolution of my thinking and research with a focus on the concepts of heteroglossic language ideologies, dynamic bilingualism, and translanguaging. I conclude the essay by reflecting on the importance and implications of first-generation Latina academics receiving mentorship from senior Latina scholars.

Keywords: academia, academic trajectory, dynamic bilingualism, heteroglossic language ideologies, identity, language and identity, Latina, Ofelia García, scholarship, translanguaging

It was my second year as a doctoral student, and I was attending one of Ofelia García’s brown bag lectures in one of the stately conference rooms in Grace Dodge Hall at Teachers College. The room was full of graduate students and faculty, all eager to hear her talk on the shifts in US language policy over the past decade. Over the course of the next hour, we were all enlightened about what García called the “silencing of bilingualism”, that is, the ways that historically the word “bilingual” had been eliminated from US institutions and policy documents and replaced with “English language acquisition”, on the historical context of US language policy affecting emergent bilinguals and their families. As I listened, I thought about the fact that I had been involved with language education for over 10 years but had never considered the broader policy context and how that might affect practice. I decided right then that I had to take a course with Professor García the following spring. Little did I know that this would be the start of such an important and powerful mentoring relationship in my life and academic career. As a doctoral student, I would go on to take her course and co-author a book chapter with her and, years later, work with her on a research project as a junior faculty member.

This essay shares my own personal story of how—as a first-generation Latina academic—working with Ofelia García transformed my sense of self and trajectory as a scholar working with issues of language, identity, and education. Weaving personal anecdotes throughout, I trace the evolution of my thinking and research with a focus on concepts of heteroglossic language ideologies, dynamic bilingualism, and
translanguaging. I conclude the essay by reflecting on the importance and implications of first-generation Latina academics receiving mentorship from senior Latina scholars.

**Latinas in the Academy**

According to the most recent figures revealed by the National Center for Education Statistics, Latina women comprise 2% of the full-time faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions (U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). It is no surprise then that Ofelia García was only the second Latina professor I had in over 10 years of undergraduate and graduate studies. According to 2011-12 figures, Latina/o accounted for only 5% of all doctorates conferred (Santiago, Galdeano, & Taylor, 2015) and 7% during the 2014-2015 academic year (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). One of the most promising trends in the past two decades has been an increase in the percentage of Latina/o who attend college. The Pew Research Center reports that in 2014, “35% of Hispanics ages 18 to 24 were enrolled in a two- or four-year college, up from 22% in 1993” (Krogstad, 2016, para 5). However, the reality is that the overwhelming majority of these students have not been taught by faculty who look like them or can relate to their lived experiences. Latina/o constituted a mere 3% (2012) and only 4% (2016) of college and university faculty in the United States (DeLuca & Escoto, 2012; Myers, 2016). In an interview with Estrella Olivares-Orellana, García herself spoke to the importance of faculty mentors with whom one can identify:

> When I thought about a doctorate, or when I became involved in graduate study, there weren’t many Latinas in this. I want you to know that I don’t think I would have ever pursued a doctorate if it wasn’t because I had a Latino professor at Hunter College, I will never forget him, who actually said to me one day “you have to get a doctorate.” I was pursuing a master’s degree because I was teaching, and he said I needed to get a doctorate. I said, “How do you do that?” and he actually brought me by the hand to the graduate center and I applied. I had no idea what I was getting into, but I was curious, I was interested in intellectual ideas, I had a big commitment to education, and I also had a deep interest in learning about who I was, as a Latina woman, and about the Latino community. (Olivares-Orellana, 2012, para 2)

In the above quote, García notes that “there weren’t many Latinas” in academia, and unfortunately this has not changed all that much. Research has suggested a lack of mentors and role models for Latina graduate students coupled with additional barriers such as marginalization by departments, tokenization by peers, and low expectation by professors (González, 2006). This researcher showed that Latina doctoral students experience strong feelings of isolation and self-doubt, many times seeking mentorship outside of their program or department in order to overcome these crippling emotions. According to Diggs, Garrison-Wade, Estrada, and Galindo (2009), these issues continue once faculty of color secure tenure-track positions and must contend with racism, sexism, marginalization, and “often struggle with issues of developing personal and professional identity within the academy” (p. 313).

Within this kind of social and professional context, it makes my relationship with Ofelia García as mentor that more special, and I feel privileged to be able to share this

**Ofelia García’s Impact on My Identity and Scholarship**

In the spring of 2008, I took García’s graduate course at Teachers College entitled Language, Societies, and Schools. It was here that I first examined language from a sociological perspective, and it was here that I began to examine and explore the concepts of monoglossic and heteroglossic language ideologies, dynamic bilingualism, and translanguaging as well as the imposition of language standards and language hierarchies. In her course, García challenged us to expand our notions of language by eschewing dominant and parochial views and considering the complex, evolving, and contextual nature of language and language practices.

I remember how profoundly I was impacted during one of Ofelia García’s lectures. She was discussing Bourdieu and symbolic violence and elaborated on how particular linguistic practices are seen as normative and how societies create an illusion of a standard language. At that time, I was able to reflect on the ways Standard English was promoted as the language of prestige and marker of intelligence during my own educational experience. The language we use is an expression of who we are, and when we are told it is not good enough, it is a veritable assault on our voice, our sense of self. This is something that I went through as a freshman in high school and it was to have long-lasting implications. I had immigrated to the US from Guatemala as a young child and grown up in an exclusively Spanish-speaking household but had been schooled in exclusively English monolingual settings. I reflected on my high school experience in my first Double Entry Journal assignment for García’s class as I responded to a 2006 reading by Elana Shohamy.

I was having a difficult time with my English teacher that year who considered my writing sub-par and unscholarly. She continuously scrutinized my essays and provided long-winded comments about my lack of structure and unimpressive vocabulary. These comments were always quite lengthy, but never helpful. I thus began to doubt myself and develop an imposter syndrome complex: Maybe I don’t belong in honors English? Maybe I’m not smart enough? Maybe it’s because I speak Spanish at home? It was at this time that writing transitioned from being an enjoyable form of expression to an excruciatingly painful experience. In order to address my writing woes, I looked for examples of “good” writers and tried to emulate their style and use their language. It seemed to work. Throughout the year, the comments on my essays got shorter while my grades showed significant improvement. It seemed as though I could pick up Standard English after all. The problem is that as I acquired this legitimate way of communicating my thoughts, as I became versed in academic conventions, and as I maneuvered my way through this privileged discourse...I lost my own voice. And I’ve been struggling to find it ever since. (personal communication. López, Double Entry Journal (DEJ) #1, January 25, 2008)

As is evident in this journal entry, I was able to relate to the theoretical concepts of language hierarchies and symbolic violence in a very personal way. It was both
liberating and empowering to be able to deconstruct these past experiences and put a name to what had been the source of crippling self-doubt about my intellectual capacity, my writing abilities, and my bilingualism. It was this process of reflection that allowed me fully to understand how language ideologies functioned in society, and why it was necessary to have a critical lens as both language educator and education researcher. The emergence of a critical lens in my perspectives about language is seen in another journal entry where I describe my newfound understandings about the relationship between monoglossic language ideologies and deficit perspectives of bilingualism:

In her lecture this week, Professor García argued convincingly that this is an urgent concern in the United States, a country which though bilingual and multilingual, “refuses to acknowledge it.” Indeed, the dominant language ideology in the US is one that is monoglossic and one that views language as a problem rather than resource (personal communication. López, DEJ#4, February 1, 2008).

García’s lectures were powerful in that she used relevant personal and social examples to make sophisticated theories about language and language policy accessible to her students. Her lectures were enjoyable, engaging, and often used humor to drive in an important point or insight. Later on, in the semester García introduced the concepts of dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging—concepts that would not only change the way I thought about language and language practice but would have a lasting impact on my teaching and scholarship. The idea that we should understand bilingualism “from the bilingual speaker/user’s perspective” was revolutionary for me.

There were multiple “aha” moments in our discussions about bilingual language practices and the differences between the concepts of code-switching and translanguaging. Again, this was incredibly empowering for me, as I understood my own bilingual language practices in a new light. I had always had the balanced bilingual (a monoglossic perspective) as the ultimate standard for true bilingualism. As previously mentioned, I had grown up speaking Spanish at home and considered myself fluent but had never been schooled in Spanish. This meant that in my interactions with my friends and colleagues who were educated in Latin America, I often felt clumsy and ill equipped, as my academic Spanish was clearly not up to par. These moments often produced feelings of shame and inadequacy, but the concepts of dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging allowed me to appreciate my linguistic repertoire by disrupting the monoglossic ideal of the balanced bilingual.

My explorations of these constructs had further implications for what I saw happening in schools and how educators perceive the bilingualism of their students. In one of my last journal entries for the course, I reflect on a fellow colleague’s struggle to connect with her students and how this was based on false assumptions about their bilingualism and their specific language practices.

My colleague’s teaching experience harks back to the need for educators to understand the relationship between identity and language learning and the way in which language is used among students’ discourse communities. As Professor García constantly reminds us, it is critical and fundamental “to build on the
(linguistic, cultural, discursive, academic, social, etc.) strengths of our students.”
(López, DEJ#7, March 14, 2008)

By the end of this course, I had an entirely new conception and appreciation of bilingualism, language ideologies, language practice, and language education. The knowledge that Ofelia García shared in class transformed the way I thought about language and provided me with a much broader and vertical perspective of language policy and how it manifests at the local level. Though she was not on my committee, I did meet with her several times about my ideas for research, and the contours of my dissertation project changed as a result. My decision to study a national English Literacy/Civics Education language-in-education policy was largely a result of taking this course and García’s teachings.

At that point in my doctoral studies, I was unsure of whether I wanted to pursue a career in academia or whether I would return to working with community-based nonprofits. Specifically, I did not see myself in academia, since I was not at all confident in my abilities as a researcher or writer. Imposter syndrome was something that I had always dealt with since my undergraduate years in an Ivy League institution. However, I felt it most acutely as a doctoral student where the expectation was that I contribute something new and original through my dissertation project. García’s course lectures made clear that my bilingualism was a resource. It was not just an academic interest, but it involved serious and critical reflection of my own identity and experiences and the role that bilingualism had always played in my life (Castillo-Montoya & Torres-Guzmán, 2012). This changed the way I saw myself and the way I approached my research.

However, I was still taken aback when, toward the end of the semester, Ofelia García invited me and another friend/colleague, Carmina Makar, to co-author a chapter on language and ethnic identity in Latin America. As a first-generation college graduate, I had never in my wildest dreams imagined that I would go on to pursue a doctorate or career in academia. The Gates Millennium Scholarship that I received my senior year as an undergraduate changed the scope of opportunities as it fully funded my masters and doctoral degrees. However, upon starting my doctoral journey, my vision had been to go back to working with non-profit and community-based organizations and use my doctorate as leverage for funding. I am convinced that it was this invitation to work on this book chapter with García that began a process of transformation in the way I viewed myself as a writer and an academic.

Working on the book chapter with Ofelia García was an introduction to the practices of academic writing, and as Carmina and I navigated the process of co-authoring, we also got to know Ofelia García better and more intimately. Through this process, we were not only able to experience her brilliance up close and personal, but also her warmth, strong work ethic, and extremely high expectations. We had been tasked with updating an earlier version of the book chapter from a 2001 edition of the Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity. At some point during the writing process, García sensed our hesitation to make changes to the original manuscript and called us out on it in an email where she included very detailed instructions on how to move forth with revisions on the chapter. With a tough love tone, she implored us to take
ownership over the writing process and to not be shy about making edits, “Cambien!!! Para eso son co-autoranas!” [You have to revise the writing!! That is why you are co-authors.] (Personal Communication, February 13, 2009). That’s right, I’m a “co-author”, I had thought to myself. This idea of writing for publication was still so new to me, and working with Ofelia García had helped demystify it.

Prior to working on this book chapter, I had made several false assumptions about academic writing and the scholarly publication process that were challenged by my experience as García’s co-author. First, I had assumed that one had to be well known in the field in order to be invited to work on a writing project. As someone who is now more familiar with the workings of academia, I realize how naive and silly this idea was, as someone can only become well known through publishing their scholarship. Second, I had assumed that academic writing was simply a process of transferring brilliant, well-formed intellectual ideas into writing, and that this was to be mainly a solitary process. Yet this experience was far from this. It was a messy, dialogical process with a lot of back and forth, writing and re-writing. In email correspondence and in-person conversations about the chapter, we spoke in English, Spanish, and everything in between.

We created a space in which I felt that I belonged, and I have now come to think that our translanguaging only strengthened our ideas and the final written product. Thirdly, this experience taught me a lot about my own abilities as an academic writer. García modeled for us how to engage in rigorous scholarly work. Through the writing, rewriting, and revising, I gained confidence in my ability to sustain this kind of work and began to envision myself as a researcher/writer. I felt that I had somehow gained entry into what Oliva and colleagues call “the figured world of academe” (2013, p. 102). As I reflect on this experience years later, I believe that this experience was a crucial ‘counter-space’ for myself as a Latina doctoral student. According to Critical Race theorists Solorzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000), "counter-spaces serve as sites where deficit notions of people of color can be challenged and where a positive collegiate racial climate can be established and maintained” (p. 70).

Though García moved to the CUNY Graduate Center midway through my doctoral program at Teachers College, we remained in touch, and she never ceased being an important mentor and source of inspiration. After receiving our doctorate from Teachers College, Carmina and I went on to secure tenure-track positions at the City College of New York. As colleagues at City College of New York, we aimed to build on her work on dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging by examining how bilingual teachers used translanguaging strategies in the era of the Common Core (López & Makar, 2015). This was partly accomplished when in 2015, I joined the research team of the CUNY-New York State Initiative for Emergent Bilinguals led by Principal Investigators Ofelia García and Kate Menken (Queens College). Through this project, I was able to work with schools in the Bronx and Peekskill, NY and lead professional development sessions aimed at leveraging the bilingualism of their students and creating multilingual school ecologies. The work with schools helped me gain a more nuanced understanding of translanguaging, the challenges that public schools face in making changes to their structures and practices, and many creative ways in which
teachers and administrations are working to better serve emergent bilingual students and their families.

I consider myself incredibly privileged to not only be able to draw on her published scholarship, but also on countless face-to-face conversations throughout the past 10 years. As I move forward with my own research projects, I will continue to examine practices and pedagogies in bilingual education contexts. The questions that intrigue me and that I examine through my research have been inspired by Ofelia García’s scholarship, particularly her work on dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging (Espinosa & López, 2017; Kleyn, López, & Makar, 2015; López, 2018; López & Makar, 2015; López & Makar, 2017).

Concluding Thoughts

I would like to conclude the essay by discussing the difference that this kind of mentoring can make for a first-generation Latina academic such as myself. In many ways, my relationship with Ofelia García, the way it began, and the context in which it has developed, is much too unique to generalize. However, I believe there are some larger implications that may be drawn from my story and experience.

To begin, research clearly indicates that, for Latinas and other faculty of color, mentoring facilitates our emotional, cultural, and social adjustment to institutions in which we often face alienation and isolation (Diggs et al., 2009). Thus, it is imperative that institutions of higher education provide more mentoring opportunities for both graduate students and faculty of color, so that stories such as mine are not the exception, but the rule.

Another implication is that senior faculty of color, particularly women, can learn from Ofelia García’s example and reach out to junior faculty of color to engage in mentoring, scholarly collaborations, and the creation of a mutually beneficial counter-space. Castillo-Montoya and Torres-Guzmán (2012) describe a kind of authentic collaboration where the junior scholar has the opportunity to learn about the funds of knowledge that have helped the senior scholar succeed in teaching, research, and service. This form of mentorship cultivates an intergenerational transfer of knowledge that could be valuable to the junior scholar as she proceeds with building her own career. The mentorship becomes a new relationship that feeds the human spirits of both participants (p. 556).

Finally, it would be easy to say, “just be more like Ofelia García!” But that would be a foolish recommendation. Ofelia García is one of a kind. We need not imitate, but be inspired. However, we can all learn from her and strive to be better teachers, better faculty, better mentors, and better people. I am currently teaching an undergraduate course at City College on the foundations of Bilingual Education. Of course, García’s scholarship figures prominently in my syllabus. But I would also like to think that I am paying it forward, as my class is predominantly first-generation Latina college students. I strive to be a dedicated teacher—one who cares about them, challenges them, and uses their cultural and linguistic resources as the basis for my instruction. Also, like García, I try to do so with generosity, kindness, and laughter.
References


**End Note**

\(^1\) This is a term coined by Clance and Imes (1978) to describe the psychological experience of feeling like an intellectual fraud and consistently doubting one’s accomplishments.
Pushing the Field & Practice: Ofelia García’s Reflective and Responsive Approach to Educational Innovation

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Ofelia García’s vision for educational equity for emergent bilinguals has always put children and their agency within social contexts at its heart. This essay draws upon her own writing and the experiences of the authors -- a current and a former student of hers -- to explore how centering people’s dynamic bilingual practices has been a source of innovation for bilingual education theory and practice.

Keywords: agency, diverse language practices, dynamic bilingual practices, educational equity, educational innovation, emergent bilingual learners, Ofelia García, pushing, reflective and responsive approach, translanguaging theory and practice

If we were to ask Ofelia García to describe herself in three words, “innovator” probably would not make the cut. Of course, her humility would preclude her from recognizing her achievements in that way. Also, given that the word “innovation” has become synonymous in recent years with technological advancement, she might deny the title, pointing to her perennial challenges getting her MacBook to work the way she wants it to. However, looking at her theories and body of work, it is impossible not to recognize her role as an innovator in the fields of sociolinguistics and bilingual education. Her advocacy for a simple and elegant idea -- that people and their diverse language practices, rather than standard languages, should be at the heart of teaching and learning -- is a break with past lenses on bilingual education. As we argue in this article, this idea has also empowered scholars, educators, and communities across geographical borders, and research and practice disciplines to reimagine education, and to take their own innovative risks for the benefit of multilingual people around the world.

In this essay, we trace how García’s work innovated the field of bilingual education in ways that center learners’ and educators’ agency. We provide examples of how those innovations catalyzed new practices in education in spaces in which we -- a current and a former student of hers -- have participated. The first example describes
how an educator took up García’s theories and made them her own through the City University of New York-New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (CUNY-NYSIEB) project. The last two examples illustrate how ideas from her work have been applied to recast learning with and through technology, especially in multilingual environments.

**Ofelia García as Innovator**

When we say that Ofelia García is an innovator, we do not mean of the type that is too often celebrated in the media today -- the solo entrepreneur who follows the “move fast and break things” mantra of Silicon Valley. We mean the type of innovator who builds on the work of others and with others to seed incremental, but ultimately transformational ideas in education. The process by which she innovates is reflective, responsive, and embedded in communities of scholars from around the world, parents and families, educators, and of course, her students. She often uses the verb “pushing” to describe what she does: pushing the field, her students, and broader society to be advocates for emergent bilinguals and social justice in education.

Her ideas are innovative in that they break with calcified and standardized practices in education that have marginalized students based on how they communicate, their race, their gender, and other aspects of their identities within education settings. Those traditional practices included imposing monolingual curriculum and assessment for emergent bilinguals, silencing students' home language practices, promoting language separation and policing, and fostering monocultural school environments (García & Li Wei, 2011; García, 2009). In these writings, she recognized that those ways of educating were not consistent with our multilingual times. They led to low quality, and ultimately detrimental, educational environments for children, and indeed constrained and stunted the work of teachers.

Her experiences in multilingual classrooms and her reading of Mikhail Bakhtin, Walter Mignolo, Sinfree Makoni and Alastair Pennycook, Gloria Anzaldúa, Patricia Carini and many others inspired her to question traditional views. She along with collaborators, began to view those traditional ways of teaching and learning with emergent bilinguals as symptomatic of a larger issue: society’s fundamental relationship with language, particularly the historical and social construction of language categories. In her influential book, *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective* (2009), she breaks with the idea that languages are discrete, state-sanctioned, bounded wholes that can be added or subtracted, preferring to use the word *dynamic* to describe how language is used and learned:

...the world’s globalization is increasingly calling on people to interact with others in ways that defy traditional categories. In the linguistic complexity of the twenty-first century, bilingualism involves a much more *dynamic* cycle where language practices are multiple and ever adjusting to the multilingual multimodal terrain of the communicative act (p. 53, our emphasis).

The theory of dynamic bilingualism privileges people’s language practices over the standard rules and grammars of named languages. This perspective is also at the heart of *translanguaging theory* (García & Li Wei, 2014; Otheguy, García & Reid, 2015; Vogel & García, 2018) and *translanguaging pedagogy* (García & Kleyn, 2016; García,
Ibarra Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017), conceptualizations that García has developed with her colleagues over her long career. These theories view language as a verb -- practices people do, rather than as static linguistic objects people should measure themselves against. These concepts also view bilinguals’ language practices not as problematic, but as opportunities to build on. In recognizing that language is learned in social context, these theories also highlight the key role of relationships in teaching and learning.

**Inspiring Innovation by Centering People’s Agency**

By centering relationships and people’s diverse languaging practices in education, García’s innovative lenses also restore agency to students, school leaders, and educators, empowering them to reenvision and remake their schools and classrooms. García and Li Wei explain the importance of documenting students’ language practices in their volume *Translanguaging: Languaging, Bilingualism, and Education* (2014):

All teachers need to be able to observe bilingual children closely and describe them as they are engaged in meaningful learning activities and interacting in different settings. Teachers need, in other words, to be aware of language diversity and to see their students as people, not just numbers. But beyond linguistic and cultural information, teachers need to develop a critical sociopolitical consciousness about the linguistic diversity of children, and in the case of bilingual teachers, the historical glottopolitics of the languages they’re trying to develop. Teachers then need to act on all of this information by constructing curricula and pedagogies that build on the sociopolitical, sociohistorical and sociolinguistic profiles of the bilingual children in question (p. 123, our emphasis).

By calling on education professionals to take risks and to be innovators themselves, these ideas follow in a progressive educational tradition. Ofelia García was deeply impacted by her study of the Prospect Center’s Descriptive Review Process alongside Cecelia Traugh. The Descriptive Review Process is premised on the idea that educators could, “generate knowledge of children, of curriculum, of learning and teaching” (Carini, 2000, p. 9; Traugh, 2000). By bringing the Descriptive Review Process to bilingual education, García opened up a space where educators and scholars could carefully analyze how learning was attuned to the multilingual learner. In an educational context where teachers’ and school leaders’ autonomy has been chipped away at by standardized policies and assessments, García’s work challenges them to come up with their own ways of implementing responsive educational environments, rooted in children’s unique characteristics, and multiple and dynamic needs. At the same time, these theories do not give educators easy answers. Rather, they empower people to accept how they and their students, language, while exhorting them to support students as they expand their repertoires and learn new ways of expression. That includes learning society’s “codes or rules of power” (Delpit, 1988, p. 283) but also questioning, resisting, and recasting those codes.

Our experience working within bilingual education in New York has exposed us to countless examples of teachers, school leaders, and researchers taking up and innovating on ideas developed in Ofelia García’s work. In what follows, we describe two
ways that her work has inspired innovation. First, we consider the case of a teacher who, drawing on theories of translanguaging learned through CUNY-NYSIEB, reimagined literacy assessment at her school. Second, we examine how we, along with other colleagues, used theories developed in García’s work to catalyze innovations in teaching and learning with and through digital technologies.

**From Teacher Agency to Teacher Innovation in CUNY-NYSIEB: Ella’s Story**

Teacher innovation and agency are key tenets of CUNY-NYSIEB, a project that Ofelia García developed along with Drs. Ricardo Otheguy and Kate Menken and carried out with dozens of other CUNY professors and research assistants from 2011-2019. The CUNY-NYSIEB project centered around two core principles: (1) bilingualism as a resource; and (2) the development of a multilingual ecology. These principles were framed by the larger understanding that through educators’ development of a deep knowledge of bilingualism and language use, instruction could be improved and radically transformed to meet the educational needs of multilingual students.

Through the CUNY-NYSIEB project, many school administrators and teachers were introduced to translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy for the first time. Translanguaging theory describes the practices of multilingual people as they draw upon the full span of their linguistic and social repertoire (García & Li Wei, 2014). Translanguaging pedagogy, in turn, is the translation of translanguaging theory into practice and describes a range of classroom engagements that value and encourage students’ leveraging of their linguistic and semiotic repertoire (Celic & Seltzer, 2013). Different from many other professional development opportunities, participants in the CUNY-NYSIEB project were not expected to faithfully implement a program or set of activities, but to rather engage in the development and generation of practices to match the unique needs of their students. The researchers in this project placed an emphasis on educators and leaders generating innovative knowledge and practices to fit their local needs. For this, a range of school staff including administration and teachers were key agents in shaping and implementing changes in local bilingual education policies and practices. We now turn to an example of how the CUNY NYSIEB project influenced teachers’ stances and practices with emergent bilinguals. We use pseudonyms to identify all teachers and schools.

Ella, an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher who worked with CUNY-NYSIEB, drew from translanguaging theory to innovate her reading assessment practices at the Willow School, a K-5 elementary school in a suburb of New York City. The Willow School (pseudonym) had experienced a steady increase in the number of Spanish speaking emergent bilinguals at the school. Schools participating in the CUNY-NYSIEB project were required to form an Emergent Bilingual Leadership Team (EBLT). The purpose of the EBLT was to study and formulate goals related to the emergent bilingual students at the school. Ella was part of this team and played an important role in both voicing the needs of the emergent bilingual students as well as developing new practices that impacted how emergent bilinguals were educated at the school. For Ella, the CUNY-NYSIEB project at the school shifted her role from a teacher working with emergent bilinguals on the fringes to a central player in leading fellow teachers to recognize the importance of home language for emergent bilinguals. In an interview
with the Willow School’s EBLT, Ella said that participating in CUNY-NYSIEB’s professional development about translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy,

opened up a dialogue [at the school]. As we continue to talk about it [translanguaging pedagogy], people are becoming more comfortable so that we are trying to bring in other languages. As we think about the practicalities, it’s getting better. We are moving towards a philosophy shift” (Personal communication, June 10, 2015).

This philosophy shift that Ella expressed was grounded in a holistic understanding of multilingual students. Translanguaging as a lens encouraged teachers to view their students’ language practices as valid and essential to their learning. Ella participated in a year-long research project alongside Laura in which they studied how reading assessments could be adapted to capture emergent bilinguals’ reading abilities. As a result, Ella began to create spaces for translanguaging within reading assessments -- a radical idea, since the realm of state assessment remains steadfastly monolingual in English. In a reflective memo about her inquiry on reading assessments, Ella wrote,

Since the purpose of the comprehension section of the assessment is to determine how well a student understands what she read, we can give students explicit permission to translanguage during the retell. We can translanguage with students when we ask questions and tell them they can translanguage when they respond. By doing this, we focus on students’ reading comprehension, not their developing language abilities in English (June 19, 2017).

Ella’s innovations in her reading assessments were framed by a commitment to understanding students as people with valid language practices. Incorporating opportunities for translanguaging is possible when teachers view students’ entire linguistic repertoire as dynamic, valid, and essential to learning. As García advocates, teachers must also act on the information that they have about children and bilingualism. Ella presented the ideas about opening up spaces for translanguaging within reading assessment to the rest of the Willow School staff and thus moved from action with her own students to advocacy across the school. She wrote in her reflective memo the following:

I believe we can assess students from a strengths-based perspective, valuing their emerging bilingualism, instead of using a deficit perspective where we only consider what they don’t know and can’t yet do. A one size fits all practice for assessing reading does not create a level playing field for emergent bilingual students. Our building should examine current assessment practices, especially for entering and emerging [levels of English language proficiency] students and encourage staff to make adaptations inclusive of students’ bilingualism. I will discuss these ideas with my colleagues and administration, and jointly decide on next steps at the building level for future practice. June 19, 2017

The story of Ella’s innovations, while her own, was deeply influenced by the type of pushing for educational change that Ofelia García tirelessly worked for during her entire professional career, and in particular through the CUNY-NYSIEB project. It is reflective of the type of change in stance that occurred from being part of the CUNY-NYSIEB project (García, Ibarra-Johnson & Seltzer, 2017). As a result of Ella’s work with
her emergent bilinguals, she worked with other school faculty at the school to bring these ideas into their own practices (Ascenzi-Moreno, 2018). For García, the struggle for improvement in the education of emergent bilinguals was always and necessarily connected to the struggle for teachers to understand their students holistically and to generate flexible strategies to meet their needs.

**Beyond Bilingualism: Centering Diverse Meaning-making Practices**

A core part of the innovation inspired by Ofelia García’s work has originated with teachers, as they make space for practices that consider their students’ dynamic languaging. At the same time, García herself is always pushing her own work to new geographical, social, and intellectual spaces. One strand of her scholarship has considered how translanguaging relates to multimodal meaning-making and communication through digital technologies, especially in multilingual classrooms. Collaborating with Lesley Bartlett and JoAnne Kliefgen in 2007, García posited the pluriliteracies approach to unite research in the field of multiliteracies -- at that point, much of it focused on learning with and through multimodal technologies -- with growing understandings of bilingual language and literacy development and plurilingualism (García, Bartlett, & Kliefgen, 2007). They predicted that new pedagogies for literacy practices would emerge out of “the linguistically integrated space of the classroom, coupled with the possibilities afforded to all new languages by new technologies” in order to “increase the potential for communication, knowledge and understandings among all participants” (p. 218).

Along with her students and colleagues, she has stewarded these ideas, theorizing their development over time, and documenting trends in pluriliteracies as they have taken shape. In the new edition of *Educating Emergent Bilinguals*, her book with Kliefgen first published in 2010, a chapter is dedicated to language and technology in which they discuss the affordances of technology in language teaching and learning with emergent bilinguals. They set out a theoretical framework that posits an expansive definition of “languaging” which goes beyond how people use language features (like lexicon, syntax, and morphology) to include “those that they embody (e.g., their gestures, their posture), as well as those outside of themselves, which through use become part of their bodily memory (e.g., computer technology)” (2018, p. 93).

Including these kinds of languaging in their theoretical framework helps them amplify and sensitize the lenses through which educators and researchers view student meaning-making practices. They argue: “The fact that technology has transformed the ways in which we use multiple modes to communicate and learn means that students’ full-semiotic repertoire has to be taken into account in teaching and learning” (2018, p. 93). As a former and current student of Ofelia García, we have benefited from her encouragement to explore how different modalities and literacies that make up part of students’ creative remixing pushes the boundaries of what is considered language and expression and how teachers can both acknowledge and incorporate these into their teaching practices.

This more expansive view on translanguaging gave us the theoretical tools needed to view seemingly common, everyday practices of students and teachers with technology in classrooms in new lights. As we worked with a CUNY-NYSIEB middle
school partner-teacher to provide spaces for translanguaging in his classroom, we found that a newcomer student from China was engaging in meaning-making through use of Google Translate. We brought that aspect of his learning process to the fore and collaborated with García in a case study of a teacher and student as they used machine translation software as part of translanguaging practices (Vogel, Ascenzi-Moreno, & García, 2018). Through observations of the student at work, analysis of his classwork, and an interview with the middle school student, we found out that the student was engaged in biliteracy instances (Hornberger, 2003) that were only possible through his creative and agentive use of machine translation software. He was involved in tinkering with machine translation software to produce, using his own evaluative skills of English, translations from Chinese to English.

In an interview, the student conveyed that he experimented with placing texts of differing lengths into Google Translate and then evaluated the quality of the translations based on the amount of text that was inputted into the software. He used his evaluative skills to measure each text produced by Google Translate and to tweak them according to his knowledge of English, explaining “it will have more nonsense when connecting more sentences, but it’s better to translate the word only” (Vogel, Ascenzi-Moreno, & García, 2018, p. 101, translated from Mandarin). The student’s engagements with machine translation were key languaging practices -- he used the software in ways that supported and furthered his development as a writer. Through our close study of this student’s use of machine translation software, we advocated for a broader working definition of translanguaging that incorporates people’s semiotic repertoire in addition to their linguistic resources (Vogel, Ascenzi-Moreno, & García, 2018).

We have also drawn heavily from Ofelia García’s body of work in multimodal languaging (e.g., García, Bartlett. & Kleifgen, 2007; García & Kleifgen, 2018) as we currently posit new approaches to the teaching and learning of computer science. Along with professors Christopher Hoadley and Kate Menken, and teachers from three public bilingual middle schools, we developed a National Science Foundation-funded research-practice partnership called Participating in Literacies and Computer Science (PiLaCS). Translanguaging theory and pedagogy are core tenets of this project, helping us conceive of the relationship between computer programming, computer science, and language, in ways that enable us to generate new kinds of computer science education pedagogies.

Casting a translanguaging lens onto computing education has helped us recognize the range of human meaning-making and communication practices involved in computing activities like working collaboratively to plan new digital projects, programming computers, troubleshooting bugs, and presenting new work. Translanguaging attunes us to additionally notice the dynamic ways that emergent bilingual students use and learn new computing concepts with and through language. Translanguaging lenses from Ofelia García’s work, described previously, have supported us in co-designing PiLaCS learning environments in ways that highlight social meaning-making in computing and leverage students’ diverse languaging practices.
Conclusion

The narratives of educational innovation presented in this essay attest to the idea that although we, as educators, have our own stories and trajectories, they have been enabled and enhanced by Ofelia García’s advocacy and vision for the idea that people and their diverse languaging practices should be at the heart of teaching and learning. Through this lens, García’s push for educators to see students through their language practices has reframed and extended our understanding of how multilingual students learn. She has also reasserted the importance of educators’ work as steeped in inquiry and advocacy as we strive towards educational innovation and equity for multilingual children.

References


End Note

As used in this article, agency refers to the ability to be actors in our educational contexts, and not passive objects to be acted on by policy.
Top Ten Lessons Learned from Ofelia García: Researching, Teaching, and Living from the Heart

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For nearly forty years, the work of Ofelia García has steered not only the field of bilingual education, but also Spanish language education, teaching English to speakers of other languages, and sociolinguistics. As our professor, mentor, colleague, and friend, Dr. García has taught us many powerful lessons. Here, we describe ten of these, including some pertaining to academic and theoretical contributions, as well as some related to advocacy work in multilingualism. We conclude by describing the impact she has had on diverse academic fields through the CUNY-NYSIEB research project, in which she has mobilized her passions to promote educational equity and justice.

Keywords: academic & theoretical contributions, bilingual education, educational equity and justice, multilingualism, Ofelia García, researching, teaching, and living from the heart, top ten lessons

For nearly forty years, the work of Ofelia García has steered not only the field of bilingual education, but also Spanish language education, teaching English to speakers of other languages, and sociolinguistics. Her articles, chapters, books, reports, and talks throughout the world – which number in the hundreds – have left an imprint on researchers, educators, and ultimately, bilingual students across the globe.

García’s body of work, as well as her role as our professor, mentor, colleague, and friend, have taught us many powerful lessons. This reflective essay details but a few of these, from her academic and theoretical contributions to her ability to bring forth her students’ voices to her unwavering advocacy for centering the lives of bilingual people. It is telling that the lessons that have been the most meaningful to us span the professional and the personal, as these two elements of her life are inextricable.

In what follows, we describe ten lessons to motivate readers to live an academic and personal life that is purposeful in mission, powerful in changing mindsets, and passionate because it is a life driven from the heart. We conclude this piece by describing the impact she has had on numerous academic fields through the CUNY-
NYSIEB (The City University of New York – New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals) research project. This project illustrates the most important lesson of all: the importance of mobilizing one’s passions in order to promote educational equity and justice.

**Lesson 1: Never Stop Pushing Yourself and Your Field Forward**

Reading through the extensive work of Ofelia García, we noticed common topics and themes across her research, with a constant evolution of ideas. This ability to remain true to the heart of her work and to shift in response to new information has shown us that even if we believe in something deeply, we must still strive to respond to changes in the world, so that our work lives. Her understandings continue to move scholarship about bilingualism and bilingual education forward.

An early example from García’s research demonstrates this flexibility and openness to challenging herself and ideas within the field. With her husband, she did an ethnographic study of schools attended by children of Cuban immigrants in Dade County, Florida (García & Otheguy, 1988). The questions that informed the inquiry were those that were being debated in the field of bilingual education in the US at the time, such as “Should schools maintain and develop Spanish?” and “How much instruction in English as a second language should students receive and when should it stop?” (p. 94). After spending time in the schools, these researchers realized that their framing of the study was flawed. They wrote that the very questions that were at the heart of the current conversations around bilingual education were “completely useless and inapplicable” (p. 97). In fact, they discovered the fluid use of both English and Spanish in these schools was “the only conceivable way of educating language minority children in a language majority environment” (p. 98).

They saw that the flaw in their study was a problem in the field at large: the questions being asked were, simply, the wrong questions. The questions were frameworks informed by a monoglossic mindset that failed to center the lived realities and language practices of bilingual speakers, and thus could not shed light on what they observed in the Dade County schools. Thus, in her work, Dr. García asks new questions that have contributed to the “multilingual turn” (May 2015, p. 1). She also challenges well-established constructs such as code switching (Weinreich, 1953), interdependence hypothesis (Cummins, 1979) and the hyper-policing of languages in bilingual education (Creese & Blackledge, 2011). Her scholarship is a model of how to evolve; with the urgency that exists in our current political climate, moving forward is the only option.

**Lesson 2: When Something Does Not Make Sense, Reframe It**

Across her long career, García’s theoretical contributions have shifted educational research and practices from an external, nation-state perspective of named languages - i.e., those that are socially and politically recognized as English, Spanish, and Urdu - towards valuing the unique linguistic repertoires of people that transcend named language categories. This is in stark contrast to previous thinking in fields like applied linguistics, language education, and TESOL that centers monolinguals and monolingualism as the norm, while positioning bilinguals in the periphery (Taylor & Snoddon, 2013; García & Li Wei, 2014). This earlier approach contributed to the
implied separation of language systems in bilinguals, as opposed to viewing them as having one system with numerous features. This separation of languages in individuals and in schools did not make sense for the linguistic realities of bilingual people, thereby informing her most prominent work around translanguaging.

While Cen Williams (as cited in Baker, 2001) coined the term translanguaging, Dr. García, with her colleagues,(García, 2009; García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017; García & Kleyn, 2016; García & Wei, 2014;) has led the field in extending this idea to both the US and international contexts (for example, Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Pennycook, 2010; Li Wei, 2011). Her work has provided a theoretical basis to understand a common phenomenon that takes place in the homes, schools, and communities of those with diverse linguistic practices. Translanguaging theory has given educators permission to start from the language practices of students, rather than from rigid monoglossic ideologies that have informed policies of states and schools. This approach counters English only laws in over twenty states across the US, English only curriculum, and bans on bilingual education. This theory has also provided the vocabulary with which to talk about (and plan for) what educators have anecdotally told us on numerous occasions were already doing and inherently knew made sense for their bilingual students, that is, the use of all the linguistic resources available for teaching and learning.

Lesson 3: Start from the Students, Not from the “Models”

One of Ofelia García’s constant refrains is that teaching and research must be developed from the students up. We have taken this to mean that our work - from our teaching, to our scholarship, to our activism - must start from the actual language practices and lived experiences of bilingual people, rather than from top-down labels or program models. This epistemology has been, at times, met with resistance, and she and those of us whose work has been influenced by hers have faced critique and push-back for questioning what Kachru (1996, p. 140) has referred to as “sacred cows” in linguistic and educational research.

One such sacred cow is the very premise of models in bilingual education. García has been critical of models that, in their attempt to ensure that students master a dominant form of English, or to protect the language other than English, advocate the separation of students’ language practices. The ideology of “models” upholds what Jim Cummins (2008, p. 223) has called the “two solitudes” with the home and new languages being strictly separated. Most models are based on the idea that “accepting the fluid language practices of bilinguals will in some way weaken the non-dominant language” (Li Wei & García, 2016, p. 11). Instead of attempting to separate students’ languages into bounded categories like first and second languages, García has argued for a focus on the features of bilingual education rather than its models. Specifically, these features that warrant attention “must then be dynamic [and] conforming to the existing practices in the community, rather than have the children and communities conform to pre-established notions of what constitutes the two or more languages” (García & Lin, 2016, p. 17). By envisioning bilingual education as a flexible, adaptable approach grounded in the language practices of students themselves, the goal becomes “the empowerment of bilinguals to use their entire language repertoire in different
situations for added criticality and creativity,” rather than “bilingualism in two standard languages, as defined by state and educational authorities” (p. 17).

Lesson 4: Keep the “Bilingual” in Bilingual Education

Ofelia García has always featured bilingualism prominently in her work and her life, in spite of political efforts to erase it. From re-framing how students are identified as emergent bilinguals (García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008) to reminding us that dual language programs are really dual language bilingual programs (García, Velasco, Menken, & Vogel, in press) to recasting bilingualism from a “double monolingualism” to a dynamic bilingualism (García, 2009), she has continued to proudly use the “B word” in her scholarship. As she does this, she constantly refers back to the field’s historical roots in the activism of Latino communities, as she did in the Journal of Multilingual Education Research (JMER) inaugural issue, with a focus on the evolution of bilingual education in New York City (García, 2010).

Another area where Dr. García actions have centered bilingualism is at The City College of New York (CCNY), where she held her first tenure track position (and met her husband, Ricardo). The program that was originally called Bilingual Education has now expanded to be the Bilingual Education and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Programs, and we have both been fortunate to work there, the second author as an adjunct faculty member and the first author as a faculty member and program director. We take pride in her decision – in collaboration with her CCNY colleagues - to bring together these two fields, so often separated in many schools of education, in the program’s name and philosophy. When she made this choice, it was revolutionary and continues to be an exception, in spite of the fact that both fields support emergent bilingual students in becoming bilingual. This integrated vision of teacher education in the fields of Bilingual and TESOL education is just one more way that she has kept bilingualism in the education of bilingual people, no matter the organizational structure of the program.

Lesson 5: Always Keep One Foot in the Classroom

One of the most important ways that Ofelia García keeps students as the starting point for her research is by staying close to the daily realities of schools and classrooms. Her extensive travels, within the US and internationally, have included visits to many different types of classrooms, and each has shaped her understanding of bilingualism and bilingual education. To be a colleague or a student of Dr. García is to be privy to stories from her travels that reveal how her experiences in schools have contributed to her broad conceptualization of what it means to educate bilingually.

One such story that particularly moved us revolves around a conversation she had with Antonio, a young bilingual fifth grader in New York. She was sitting with Antonio in his classroom, when he explained to her, “Even though Spanish runs through my heart, English rules my veins.” This interaction with a child brought together her developing understanding of languaging and how schooling must be more responsive to the lived experiences of bilinguals.

As she later observed, “Clearly it is English that rules, but Spanish is what keeps life going, the motor that pumps the English. Without either, life for these bilingual
students would stop” (García, 2014, p. 111). She has used this story not only to illustrate the dynamism of bilingualism, but also to illustrate the importance of keeping one foot in the classroom at all times. Without a physical connection to the classroom, we would miss the lessons that students like Antonio can offer us. It is his voice, and the voices of many other students and teachers, that have shaped her ideas about bilingualism and bilingual education.

Lesson 6: Be a Co-learner and Role Model through Collaboration

Ofelia García is, to use one of her own terms (García & Li Wei, 2014), a co-learner, whose willingness to be open about the research process dissolves the hierarchies so often embedded in academic relationships. Kate Seltzer remembers her first year of doctoral work, when, as her student and research assistant, she was asked to read early versions of García’s articles. Though at first it was nerve wracking to provide feedback to such an influential and respected scholar, García communicated that Seltzer’s input was genuinely important to the work. Reading García’s work simultaneously broadened Kate Seltzer’s knowledge of the field and expanded her understanding of the research process.

Just looking at Ofelia García’s long list of publications one can see her commitment to collaboration; in addition to her impressive list of individually-written books, articles, and chapters, are dozens of co-authored pieces, many of which were written with current and former students. For those of us who have been fortunate to write with her, it has been an invaluable intellectual and professional experience. Despite her position as a leader in the field, the co-authored publications, even with her graduate students, are true collaborations.

For instance, when Tatyana Kleyn co-edited “Translanguaging with Multilingual Learners” with Ofelia García (García & Kleyn, 2016) it was a true collaboration in every way. Dr. García, as a senior scholar, did not only contribute via the big ideas, but also worked diligently on smaller aspects of publication such as references and the index. Kleyn always appreciated how Ofelia García was open to her ideas and valued her contributions. This collaboration not only resulted in a published manuscript, but also a lesson for Tatyana Kleyn in how to collaborate with colleagues and students.

Lesson 7: Teach through Listening, Supporting, and Prioritizing Students

Perhaps one of the most powerful lessons we have learned from Ofelia García revolves around her teaching and her mentorship. To be a student in her classes is to be in constant dialogue, with the material, with fellow students, and most excitingly, with Ofelia García herself. In her thoughtfully designed, provocative courses, she rarely lectures, choosing instead to listen and facilitate her students’ exploration of the content and ideas. A strong believer in the Collaborative Descriptive Review process, an inquiry-based approach developed by Pat Carini and the Prospect Center for Education and Research (Carini, 2000), she organizes each session of her courses around her students’ voices. Always sitting in a circle, students share their impressions, questions, and connections to the material, building on one another’s comments, shedding light on moments of confusion or misconception, and collaboratively
constructing a shared understanding of the content. As her students speak, she takes detailed notes, asking thoughtful questions and, as she puts it, “pulling the threads” from the discussion. It is here that she provides her insight and expertise, as well as a glimpse of the bigger picture. Her students leave her classroom with more knowledge and a sense that they are part of a larger, ongoing scholarly conversation.

Being Ofelia García’s student means always having someone on your team, even as she urges you to dig deeper, think more critically, and – as she puts it – to “push” and destabilize status quo notions of languaging and education. Despite her being in demand to speak at events across the globe, she makes sure her teaching and students are prioritized. With a full teaching load and a large number of advisees, Ofelia García always makes time to meet with her students, both at The Graduate Center and at her home, and to read drafts of their work. Her feedback is never generic or cursory; it is always clear that she has read and truly thought about their work and ideas. After meetings with her, we have felt supported, centered, and more clear-headed about the story we want our work to tell. Dr. Kate Seltzer will always remember being invited to her home to discuss the first draft of her doctoral dissertation. Ofelia García had read the entire manuscript and provided invaluable feedback (and a delicious meal!), conveying in both her words and through her actions that Seltzer’s work was worthy of her – and the field’s – time and attention.

**Lesson 8: The Personal Informs the Professional**

Ofelia García’s readers and audience always find that her scholarship is highly personal. In fact, the two are intertwined and dialogic. To know her work is to know her life, and to know her life is to better understand her work. Her own history is the earliest source of her passion for bilingual education, and we see glimpses of that history and of the diverse experiences of her life in her conceptualizations of bilingualism. For example, a fairly recent publication (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015) draws on an anecdote from Dr. Otheguy and Dr. García’s personal lives as a way of clarifying the complex concept of “named languages.” The story, which centers on serving home cooked meals to a guest who was visiting them from Japan, offers an accessible and tangible way of deconstructing the myth of “named languages.” In the story, she prepares four different meals, and she does not plan them with the intention of adhering strictly to the cuisine of any single nation. The visitor has no basis for knowing if an individual meal is American, Cuban, or a combination of the two. Nor does it matter, because the meals are all well-constructed and delicious, regardless of whether they can be described with an external label that is particular to a specific place. This engaging window into Ofelia García’s life clearly demonstrates her and her co-authors’ central point – that “like a named national cuisine, a named language is defined by the social, political, or ethnic affiliation of its speakers” (p. 286). The anecdote also demonstrates the intersections of the personal with the intellectual and scholarly realms of her life. In short, she *lives the work*, keeping it in her heart and always start from there.

**Lesson 9: Live a Full Life**

We have learned from Ofelia García to live and enjoy a full life and to approach the people we work with as *whole* people whose lives and commitments outside of the
work are paramount. Though she is the hardest working person we know, she is never too busy to ask us about our lives outside of our work, nor to share elements of her personal life with us. Her stories about her family and friends are constant reminders that our time and energy must be spent both in our work and in our personal relationships and lives. Like her, we must take the time to help plan our children’s weddings, care for sick friends, travel with our partners, and babysit our grandchildren. As she likes to say, “the work will always be there.”

Lesson 10: Mobilize your Passions

We conclude with a lesson that brings together all the other lessons described here, which shows Ofelia García’s indelible impact on the education of emergent bilinguals. In 2011, García, along with Kate Menken and Ricardo Otheguy, conceptualized CUNY-NYSIEB. This major project aims to “improve the educational outcomes for emergent bilinguals” (http://www.cuny-nysieb.org/our-vision/), through a multipronged and long-term approach to working with participating schools across New York State through seminars, school visits, classroom coaching/modeling, and the development of resources to support schools. With the understanding that schools must center the needs of their bilingual students, there are two non-negotiable principles that guide the work: (1) Bilingualism is a resource; and (2) the ecology of schools must reflect the multilingualism of their families. Beyond these two areas, schools are free to create structures and approaches that best serve their emergent bilingual population.

CUNY-NYSIEB is a unique collaboration between faculty, primarily from CUNY, but also from SUNY (State University of New York) and other New York universities; doctoral students from the Urban Education program at the CUNY Graduate Center; and K-12 school leaders from across New York. These entities often work in their own silos, and it takes a concerted effort to bring these groups together with one common purpose. Through this multi-layered collaboration, Ofelia García and the larger team have been able to apprentice school leaders and educators to understand translanguage theory and then turn it into a stance, practice, and prominent aspect of school culture (see García & Kleyn, 2016). Beyond impacting schools directly, the idea to bring together university faculty and doctoral students, many of whom will be future faculty, has also influenced the preparation of thousands of pre- and in-service teachers of emergent bilinguals in New York. Additionally, this project has created bridges and bonds with faculty members across CUNY and SUNY institutions, who too often work independently of one another, fostering a collaborative community of bilingual educators, and ultimately la familia [the family] of CUNY-NYSIEB.

The work of CUNY-NYSIEB, under the leadership of Project Director Maite Sánchez (preceded by Nelson Flores and succeeded by Kate Seltzer) has created local, national, and international ripples that will surely live beyond its time. The project’s website (http://www.cuny-nysieb.org/) allows free access to numerous guides on translanguage, bilingual literature, curriculum development, and unique student populations. Videos show educators in dialogue with Ofelia García as she and other educators and researchers discuss the theory of translanguage in different contexts. As we have learned at various international conferences as well as with teachers and
teacher educators, this treasure trove of resources has been used by educators from around the world. It truly illustrates the impact that she has had not only through her research, but also through genuine ways of caring and connecting that undergird everything she touches.

Conclusion

We have had the honor to work with Ofelia García, and in this reflective piece we have highlighted only some of the important lessons we have learned from her. Her impact on our lives as researchers, teachers, and human beings is immense, and, as this special issue of JMER attests, we know we are not alone. Everyone she has worked with has stories about her enormous intellect, curiosity, humor, and warmth. The lessons we have learned from Dr. García, including her constant call to place bilingual students at the center of research and teaching, and her ability to connect and care for her students and colleagues, will stay with us and remind us, as we continue along our own personal and professional paths, to always do so from the heart.

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Ofelia García and the CUNY-NYSIEB Community: Symbiosis in Furthering Translanguaging Pedagogy and Practice

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Ofelia García’s scholarship on dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging has been at the core of CUNY-NYSIEB. At the same time, CUNY-NYSIEB’s work in schools has furthered her own scholarship on translanguaging pedagogy and that of the field as a whole. It is this rich symbiosis that we describe in this article.

**Keywords**: advocate, CYNY-NYSIEB, disrupt, dynamic bilingualism, inspire, Ofelia García, scholarship, symbiosis, translanguaging pedagogy and practice

In her seminal 2009 book, *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*, Ofelia García, building on the work of Williams (1994), put forth the term translanguaging to encompass the fluid language practices of bilinguals, particularly emergent bilinguals in school contexts. Soon after this book’s publication, in 2011, leaders at the New York State Education Department (NYSED) approached Ofelia García and her former student and then colleague and one of the authors of this article, Kate Menken, offering to fund a professional development project for schools in New York serving high percentages of emergent bilinguals. Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García, and Kate Menken saw this as an opportunity to support schools in their efforts to improve the programming and practices they provide to bilingual students, and to work in partnership with educators to develop translanguaging pedagogy, which at the time was in its infancy (as noted by Canagarajah, 2011). In part, they wanted to study how school leaders engage in this pedagogy and whether doing so would change their understandings about bilingualism and their language minoritized students, thereby transforming educational practices. This is how the City University of New York – New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (CUNY-NYSIEB) was born.

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It is this rich symbiosis that we describe in this article. We open the discussion with a brief overview of Ofelia García’s scholarship on translanguaging and consider the role of CUNY-NYSIEB in developing that work. We then describe the CUNY-NYSIEB project, including its vision, design, and structures with enough detail to support those engaged in similar efforts elsewhere. Further, we present an analysis of reflections by members of the CUNY-NYSIEB Community (team members and state, district, and school leaders who have worked closely with CUNY-NYSIEB for several years), which document the enormous influence of Ofelia García on their work. We also describe the collaborative and dialogic nature of CUNY-NYSIEB, and its significance in fostering growth and change. Ofelia García has greatly impacted the CUNY-NYSIEB Community and far beyond. At the same time, through CUNY-NYSIEB work, her scholarship on translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy has flourished.

CUNY-NYSIEB and Ofelia García’s Scholarship on Translanguaging Pedagogy

In her 2009 book, Ofelia García joined other scholars of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics in their protests against traditional, fixed language categories (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Jacquemet, 2005; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007), and expanded Cen Williams’ (1994) concept of translanguaging. This construct was rooted in his research with colleagues about the use of both Welsh and English within a single lesson in a classroom, and specifically referred to input in one language with output in another. Centered on the bilingual speaker’s point of view, García (2009) defined translanguaging as “the multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual world” (p. 45) or “the deployment of a speaker’s full linguistic repertoire” (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 281).

When CUNY-NYSIEB began in 2011, translanguaging pedagogy was still a new area of research and practice (Canagarajah, 2011). At that time, Dr. García and other scholars started to highlight the language practices of emergent bilinguals and consider ways to incorporate these practices in their schooling (see for instance Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Canagarajah, 2011; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Wei, 2011). Ofelia García and Jo Anne Kleifgen defined translanguaging pedagogy as “all practices that work against the bracketing of English, building instead English proficiency using the home language as a scaffold” (García & Kleifgen, 2010; 2018, p. 63). In the early stages of the CUNY-NYSIEB project, team members developed two translanguaging guides for teachers laying out translanguaging pedagogy (Celic & Seltzer, 2012; Hesson, Seltzer, & Woodley, 2014), each of which included a description of translanguaging and its pedagogical implications written by Ofelia García.

By 2014, her writing on translanguaging was very productive with approximately 21 publications by her alone or with colleagues (http://www.ofeliagarcia.org). She and Li Wei (2014) published their book, Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education, which provided the conceptual basis for translanguaging theory and pedagogy, and the second section of the book is about translanguaging in classrooms. The authors described the CUNY-NYSIEB project at the time as an example of “innovative spaces” (García & Wei, 2014, p. 125) where translanguaging pedagogy was being developed.
Much of the research about translanguaging pedagogy in the field to date has come from the CUNY-NYSIEB project, and was written by Ofelia García with members of the project team, or by project team members independently, contributing greatly to developments in this area (see for instance Ascenzi-Moreno & Espinosa, 2018; Espinet, Collins, & Ebe, 2018; García & Menken, 2015; García & Sánchez, 2015, 2018; García & Seltzer, 2016; García, Seltzer, & Witt, 2018; García, Flores, & Woodley, 2012; Menken & Sánchez, 2019). By late 2016, two books specifically on translanguaging pedagogy had been published by Ofelia García and members of the CUNY-NYSIEB Team (García, Ibarra Johnson, & Seltzer, 2016; García & Kleyn, 2016). At the same time, there has been increased interest in translanguaging pedagogy by other scholars and educational practitioners both in the U.S. and international contexts (Blackledge & Creese, 2014; Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Gort, 2017; Paullsrud, Rosén, Straszer, & Wedin, 2017). As explained above, Ofelia García’s scholarship and the work of CUNY-NYSIEB have been essential in furthering this area of inquiry.

CUNY-NYSIEB’s Vision and Design

Having briefly described the literature on translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy, with attention to Ofelia García’s scholarship and the work of CUNY-NYSIEB, in this section we describe the project’s vision and design. CUNY-NYSIEB is a professional development and resource development project funded by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) that began in 2011. The project’s Leadership Component involves professional development about dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging for schools across New York State. The Materials Development Component involves the creation and dissemination of videos, web content, and other resources to support educators in understanding their emergent bilingual students and adopting practices that support dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging.

Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García, and Kate Menken served as the principal investigators (PIs) of the project and established CUNY-NYSIEB’s vision and principles, based on Ofelia García’s scholarship about translanguaging and dynamic bilingualism. Accordingly, the CUNY-NYSIEB vision can be summarized as follows:

- **Emergence:** Language practices of students are always in creative emergence, continuous, never-ending, and shaped by relationships with people, texts, and situations (García, 2009). The project uses in its name the term “emergent bilinguals” (García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008) and conceptualizes diverse students as much more than learners of English only, since they are developing proficiency and literacy in academic registers of English from the base of home language practices.

- **Dynamic bilingualism:** Bilingualism is considered dynamic and not merely additive (García, 2009; García & Kleifgen, 2018). Bilinguals translanguage, or use their full linguistic repertoire in order to make meaning (García, 2009; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, 2018). Translanguaging is the discursive norm of all bilinguals as well as a pedagogy that not only serves as a scaffold for new language practices but transforms power relationships among named languages (García & Kleyn, 2016; Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2018).
The following two non-negotiable principles for schools that participate in CUNY-NYSIEB were established:

1. The dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging practices of students and educators are to be celebrated, leveraged, and extended in instruction through translanguaging pedagogy.

2. Schools are to develop a schoolwide ecology of multilingualism, which reflects and displays the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of all students, their families, and their communities throughout their linguistic landscape. (The CUNY-NYSIEB vision and principles can be read in their entirety online at https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/our-vision/)

Ofelia García was interested in CUNY-NYSIEB not only impacting New York’s public schools but also its public universities. Because bilingual education has been repressed in recent history, with many programs dismantled in New York schools (Menken & Solorza, 2014), she often discussed the age disparity between herself and the next wave of bilingual education faculty within the City University of New York (CUNY), and the importance of cultivating bilingual education leadership. Therefore, the Co-PIs invited faculty members from bilingual education programs across CUNY campuses (e.g., Brooklyn College, City College, Hunter College, Lehman College, and Queens College) to serve as Associate Investigators. In later years, faculty members from the State University of New York (SUNY) also participated. CUNY Graduate Center doctoral students, most of whom had been teachers, joined the team as Research Assistants, and several veteran teachers or staff developers became project Specialists. Nelson Flores served as the Interim Project Director during its first year, and then Maite Sánchez assumed the directorship from 2012 to 2017. Maite was followed by Kate Seltzer (2017-2018) and Ivana Espinet (2018-present), both of whom had previously been Research Assistants. A total of nine Associate Investigators (AIs), eleven Research Assistants (RAs), and two Field Associates have participated in the CUNY-NYSIEB team working with schools, with approximately fourteen participating each year in addition to the Project Director, PI, and Co-PIs.¹

**The CUNY-NYSIEB Leadership Component**

The CUNY-NYSIEB Leadership Component worked intensively with four cohorts of schools, providing professional development to 69 schools in New York State from 2012 through 2015. All of the schools applied to participate in CUNY-NYSIEB. These schools had different grade spans, and offered transitional bilingual, dual language, and/or English as a New Language (ENL) programs. The CUNY-NYSIEB Leadership Component provided participating schools with professional development for 1-1.5 years and multilingual classroom libraries. Schools engaged in three structures in order to enact the two CUNY-NYSIEB non-negotiable principles in their work: Leadership Seminars, Support Team Visits, and Emergent Bilingual Leadership Teams.

**Leadership Seminars**

Each cohort participated together in day-long professional development seminars, called Leadership Seminars, in which each school sent their principal (and/or
assistant principals) and at least two or three teachers. During the first semester, the Leadership Seminars met monthly and during the second semester met every 2.5 months. Each Leadership Seminar included workshops lead by Ofelia García and other CUNY-NYSIEB team members on dynamic bilingualism, multilingual ecology, and translanguaging pedagogy. Schools, also, participated in Collaborative Descriptive Inquiry (CDI) groups following the process developed by Patricia Carini (2000); for more detail, see García & Traugh, 2002) to offer a collaborative, democratic space in which participants had the opportunity to reflect on seminar content and its applications.

**Emergent Bilingual Leadership Team (EBLT)**

Each CUNY-NYSIEB school was also required to form an Emergent Bilingual Leadership Team (EBLT), comprised of 4-7 members including the principal, other key administrators or support personnel, bilingual, and/or ENL teachers, and general education teachers. The EBLT’s responsibility was to study the school’s emergent bilinguals and the structures in place to serve them, create an action plan aligned to CUNY-NYSIEB’s principles to improve instruction and programming, and oversee implementation of this plan. EBLTs were supported in their work through the Leadership Seminars and by the CUNY-NYSIEB Support Teams.

**Support Team Visits**

Throughout their enrollment in the Leadership Component, each participating school received monthly visits from a CUNY-NYSIEB Support Team consisting of an Associate Investigator or Specialist and a Research Assistant. Ofelia García frequently joined these visits. The visits included meetings with the EBLT to guide and support their work, the provision of professional development on translanguaging and dynamic bilingualism to school staff, and partnerships with individual teachers to support their implementation of translanguaging pedagogy. The work of the Support Team was tailored to the specific needs of each school according to their action plan.

In order to sustain the engagement of CUNY-NYSIEB schools once their formal enrollment in the Leadership Component ended, school staff continued to attend Leadership Seminars once per semester and maintained relationships with Team members for research and continued work on educational practices. Teachers were also invited to serve as CUNY-NYSIEB Ambassadors, who model translanguaging pedagogy for other educators and whose work is featured in CUNY-NYSIEB videos, instructional resources, and publications.

**Collaboration within the CUNY-NYSIEB Team**

Together, CUNY-NYSIEB team members (Co-Principal Investigators, Project Directors, Associate Investigators, and Research Assistants) developed and deepened our individual understandings of translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy over the years since the project’s inception and continue to do so. The CUNY-NYSIEB team is large and taking up translanguaging theory and a translanguaging stance challenged and unsettled many of our previous understandings about bilingualism and bilingual learning. Therefore, extensive dialogue and collaboration were central in the process. Towards that end, the Co-Principal Investigators and the Project Director met bi-weekly
in the first four years of CUNY-NYSIEB, and the entire team met monthly to share the work of each school and discuss schools’ efforts to implement translanguaging pedagogy.

CUNY-NYSIEB team members also participated in CDIs around essential questions about theory or practice, such as “How does translanguaging pedagogy look when the teacher doesn’t speak the languages of their students?” or “How can translanguaging pedagogy be implemented in dual language bilingual education if traditionally there is an expectation of language separation?” The team discussed what they saw in CUNY-NYSIEB schools, including examples of pedagogy that they observed or developed with participating teachers.

Through this collaborative process, a strong sense of community developed amongst the team over time – a point documented in the findings presented below. Different types of writing opportunities arose. For example, some team members wrote CUNY-NYSIEB guides that were used in schools but also shared widely (Celic & Seltzer, 2011; Hesson, Seltzer, & Woodley, 2014; Pérez Rosario, 2015; Espinosa, Ascenzi-Moreno, & Vogel, 2016). Team members have presented alongside the Co-PIs and Project Director at Leadership Seminars and in local, national, and international conferences. They have also co-authored with Ofelia García, solo authored, or co-authored with other team members publications that have come from the work of CUNY-NYSIEB. Likewise, the collaboration between CUNY-NYSIEB Support Teams and participating educators often moved beyond their classrooms, resulting in presenting together at local and national conferences, and co-authoring publications (see for instance García & Kleyn, 2016). Their classroom work is featured in videos (https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/classroom-videos/) and other resources on the CUNY-NYSIEB website (https://www.cuny-nysieb.org). Through this process, Ofelia García and the team supported CUNY-NYSIEB schools and contributed to understandings about translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy more widely.

Reflection Inquiry

Through the work of CUNY-NYSIEB, many people have engaged with Ofelia García’s scholarship or with her personally. For the purposes of this JMER Special Issue, we conducted qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995) to answer the following research question: What are the perceptions of members of the CUNY-NYSIEB Community regarding how Ofelia García has influenced them professionally and personally? Participants in this research included: (a) all Team members (defined as Associate Investigators and Research Assistants) who have worked on the Leadership Component since 2012; (b) state-level administrators; and (c) district and school-based leaders of schools who have been actively involved in CUNY-NYSIEB for at least two years. We sent each person an open-ended questionnaire asking them to reflect on one or more of the following questions:

- In what ways has the work of Ofelia García impacted you professionally?
  - Specifically, are there ways that Ofelia’s work has caused you to change what you do and how you think about the education of emergent bilinguals?
- In what way(s) has Ofelia impacted you personally?
• *Is there anything else about Ofelia García that you would like people to know?*

A total of 36 members of the CUNY-NYSIEB Community responded, comprising an 85.1% response rate (see Table 1 for details).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Participants</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CUNY-NYSIEB Member Category</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team members</td>
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<tr>
<td>State officials</td>
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<td>District and school leaders</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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We collected all the reflections and analyzed them as per the guidance of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2013) and Saldaña (2015), involving first and second level coding to identify key themes and draw comparisons. Table 2 includes the codes and corresponding themes that emerged from our data analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Analysis: Codes and Themes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Codes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• How a dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging framework challenge traditional ideas in the field</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How a dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging framework challenge personal ideas about bilingualism and working with bilingual students</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Changes in district-level supports for emergent bilinguals to highlight their multilingualism</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Changes in classroom practices through translanguaging pedagogy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Changes in university-level courses to reflect dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging pedagogy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Inspiration for advocacy in professional settings</td>
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<td>• Inspiration for relationship building and nurturing</td>
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Findings: Ofelia García’s Legacy through the CUNY-NYSIEB Community

The following three themes emerged from CUNY-NYSIEB Community members’ reflections about Ofelia García’s personal and professional influence: (1) be critical and challenge established ideas (Disrupt!); (2) act in support of bilingual students and their communities (Advocate!); and (3) be an inspiration (Inspire!). Our findings show the enormous impact that Ofelia García has had on our thinking, shaping our research and practices for years to come. Each theme is discussed below in detail supported by quotes of informants.2

Be Critical and Challenge Established Ideas (“Disrupt!”)

In their reflections, a central focus of CUNY-NYSIEB team members and district- and school-based leaders was on the influence of Ofelia García’s scholarship over the past decade about dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging (e.g., García, 2009; García & Wei, 2014; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015; 2018). Specifically, CUNY-NYSIEB team members and district- and school-based leaders stated that her ideas are unapologetic, and push us all not to simply accept traditional approaches, but rather to view these critically and, when needed, to disrupt. They understood how her scholarship reframes bilingualism from static views of first and second language to dynamic bilingual development (García, 2009; García & Wei, 2014). Likewise, they described how her work challenges traditional program models that are organized solely around named languages to focus on the actual language practices of bilingual students (e.g., García, 2009; García, Menken, Velasco, & Vogel, 2018; Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2018). They also reflected on how that scholarship has helped them to “re-articulate”, “reframe,” “challenge,” and/or “re-shape” their own understandings of bilingualism and the education of emergent bilinguals. For example, an Associate Investigator described how her views of bilinguals and bilingualism changed as she engaged with Ofelia García’s scholarship and worked with CUNY-NYSIEB.

This work [CUNY NYSIEB] that Ofelia and her colleagues had created was transformative. From day one it challenged understandings about bilingualism I had held for many years. Through translanguaging, Ofelia invited us to view bilinguals (and multilinguals) with new eyes. I learned, for example, that it is only from the outsider’s view that we can consider that bilinguals have two named languages. From the bilingual person’s perspective (insider’s view), bilinguals have one linguistic repertoire. These new insights forced me to rethink and question how I was positioning the bilingual child and teacher in my pedagogy as a teacher educator. (Associate Investigator)

A Research Assistant who worked as a bilingual education teacher, before starting her doctoral studies at the CUNY Graduate Center, commented on how the framework that translanguaging provides was fundamental in understanding her uneasiness with strict language separation in her school’s dual language bilingual program.

Before working with Ofelia and joining CUNY-NYSIEB I was always under the impression that keeping languages separate was the sign of a “good” bilingual. However, this never felt true, but I lacked the language and understanding to
explain that feeling. Learning about translanguaging and joining CUNY-NYSIEB changed not only the way I viewed bilingual language skills but also the way I understood language. Language was no longer just a communication tool, it was a function of identity, it was a medium for learning and for building community. (Research Assistant)

Similarly, district and school leaders mentioned how Ofelia García’s work contests entrenched ideas about the schooling of emergent bilingual students that privilege English learning at the expense of their students’ bilingual development. The two quotes below, from a district administrator and a principal exemplify something we heard repeatedly from district and school leaders: how the term ‘translanguaging’ offered a name for language practices in which they engaged every day and offered them the permission that they needed to do so.

When I went to the first [CUNY-NYSIEB] training it was a breath of fresh air. I felt like a dark shadow had been lifted and her words gave legitimacy to something I had known at the beginning of my career in bilingual education, something I knew in my gut was right, but something that had been long buried and forgotten - the dynamic nature of bilingualism and the concept of translanguaging. (District Administrator)

I remember Dr. García’s first presentation when we joined CUNY-NYSIEB. I remember saying, “These are the words I have been looking for...this makes so much sense!” All of the so-called ‘models’ and focus on ‘compliance’ leave out the element which was so sincere and of which Dr. García speaks so eloquently. We want to celebrate students’ home language because then we are celebrating the child and their family and their culture. (Principal)

For educators, having exposure to the work of Ofelia García also helped them understand their own translanguaging practices. Many translanguaged in their classrooms in order to respond to their students’ needs, but then felt guilty because doing so broke language separation guidelines or expectations. In the following excerpt, an ENL teacher reflected on this:

When I first heard Ofelia speak about the concept of translanguaging, it was as if the pieces of a puzzle were put together. As a teacher of emergent bilinguals, I realized that in many ways I had been using - or facilitated students’ using - multiple languages to improve their learning in the classroom. I just hadn’t seen the big picture of how these strategies all fit together under the concept of translanguaging. Once Ofelia put a name to this practice, it paved the way for all of us as educators to implement translanguaging strategies in a purposeful way. (ENL Teacher)

Taken together, the reflections of academics, educators, and administrators that form the CUNY-NYSIEB Community show how García and her work teaches the importance of disrupting ideas and institutional structures that prevail in our field and that no longer serve bilinguals.
Act in Support of Bilingual Students and their Communities, ("Advocate!")

In this section, we present reflections from district and school administrators, teachers, and university faculty about the changes that members of the CUNY-NYSIEB Community report having implemented as a result of their engagement with Ofelia García and her scholarship through the project. Two district officials who worked closely with schools in their districts that participated in CUNY-NYSIEB commented on the changes made in those schools. One school created the district’s first Karen Heritage Language Program for refugee students as a result of their participation in CUNY-NYSIEB, and another participating CUNY-NYSIEB school adopted translanguaging pedagogy schoolwide when instruction previously had been monolingual in English. One of these district administrators, who is in charge of the office that oversees programs for emergent bilinguals, reflected on how school staff had found creative and new ways to support bilingualism for more students as result of their participation in CUNY-NYSIEB: “The transformation from a deficit paradigm to one of acknowledgment and support of home language assets was remarkable and will have a positive impact for years to come.”

In another district, the administrator of the office overseeing programming for emergent bilinguals reflected on how the district replaced their transitional bilingual education programs with dual language bilingual education as a means to support bilingualism and biliteracy development throughout the elementary school years.

*Our work with CUNY-NYSIEB...has led our district to adopt a formal vision for our emergent bilinguals, to implement a one-way and two-way dual language program, and to abandon the transitional bilingual classes. We believe that all children should embrace and enhance their home language, while learning English.* (District Leader)

Across this district, the leader promoted an approach to bilingual education that she felt would offer more opportunities for students to engage and leverage their home language practices in schools.

Teachers who participated in CUNY-NYSIEB also described how they transformed teaching and learning in their classrooms to support their students. One bilingual education teacher started implementing translanguaging pedagogy as a result of her involvement in CUNY-NYSIEB. She reflected on how her work has been redefined through her personal interactions with Ofelia García and with her scholarship.

*There are people that cross one’s professional path and make positive contributions. Others have the ability to enhance your work. Very few people have the gift to shift and redefine your professional world. Ofelia García’s work through CUNY-NYSIEB has influenced hundreds of classrooms and the education of thousands of students. Through her work, I’ve been able to see my students as seeds of promise with amazing linguistic abilities. Ofelia García has taught me to lean into the unknown and have the courage to teach from a different space. A beautiful bilingual space. I’ve learned that being a bilingual teacher is very different from teaching from a bilingual space. Being a bilingual teacher places the focus on self, and teaching from a bilingual space places the focus on the students.* (Bilingual Education Teacher)
Other teachers shared that because of the scholarship of Ofelia García and CUNY-NYSIEB support, they have seen changes in their own classrooms, in themselves, in their students, and in the environment of their schools. Below are quotes from two ENL teachers who work in the same school, each reflecting on changes that they have seen in their classrooms and school:

*The translanguage strategies that we learned helped our students internalize a repository of flexible strategies to perform successfully in class and on standardized exams. The culture of the school is starting to shift towards including student’s home language across most classrooms...Most importantly, we underwent mindset shifts thanks to Garcia’s work to embrace the stamina, inquiry, and work ethic required for continuous school improvement for a school our team envisions for our multilingual, transnational community.*  

*(ENL Teacher 1)*

*The language use in my classroom quickly became more fluid which, in turn, greatly benefited my relationships with students who felt free to express themselves in any and all languages.*  

*(ENL Teacher 2)*

Faculty who were part of the CUNY-NYSIEB team also reported changing their teaching to place the perspectives of bilingual students and their families at the center of their work as teacher educators within their universities. Both Associate Investigators (university faculty) and Research Assistants (graduate students who taught courses at local universities) commented on how they changed their syllabi to include dynamic bilingualism and translanguage.

*My teaching has changed...I now combine translanguage and drama, visuals, technology in my class. I see how my students shine better and understand diversity better. Planning and [making] conscious effort in including emergent bilingual students learning through their home language were new to me.*  

*(Associate Investigator)*

*Ofelia pushed me to rethink how all students can have a bilingual education. [In my classes, I now] use my own work with Arabic speakers, Bengali, and more to think deeply and creatively about how languages can be used in empowering ways.*  

*(Research Assistant)*

The changes documented in the reflections by CUNY-NYSIEB community members about the way’s Ofelia García’s work has shaped their pedagogy and programming for emergent bilinguals at the K-12 and university levels suggest the lasting impact of her scholarship on future generations of students and teachers.

**Be an Inspiration (“Inspire!”)**

One of the words that repeatedly appeared in the discourse of the reflections we received about Ofelia García was “inspiration.” Specifically, state and district officials, school leaders, faculty, and doctoral students commented on how the work of Ofelia García has inspired them to be the best professionals that they can be, tireless in their support for bilingual students and communities. Below we present quotes from different stakeholders, including state officials, district leaders, teachers, and CUNY-NYSIEB team members on how Ofelia García has inspired them and others.
A New York state leader reflected on the lasting impact of Ofelia García’s work through CUNY-NYSIEB on educators’ practices in support of their emergent bilinguals.

Her knowledge, passion, and long-term commitment to these students and their communities has inspired the pedagogues and administrators that serve them. Her career and the information she has published will impact the quality of life for many of our English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners and their families for years to come by helping provide the skills and understanding that will allow them find life-long success both in and out of the classroom. (New York State Education Department Leader)

School district leaders also described how Ofelia García’s scholarship and their direct work with her have given them the knowledge to sharpen their advocacy for bilingual education and emergent bilingual students and their families. These leaders have been inspired to rethink the practices in their bilingual programs that support English hegemony. As one district administrator stated:

Ofelia’s work has reaffirmed this instructional practice [translanguaging pedagogy] and encouraged me to share it with others and not be afraid to defend it as an effective tool for learning…She has inspired me to continue to advocate for bilingual education to ensure equity for all students. (District Leader)

At schools, CUNY-NYSIEB teachers shared the ways in which they have been inspired by Ofelia García and their involvement in the project. Specifically, an English language arts (ELA) teacher who teaches newcomer adolescents had struggled to teach her students effectively in English medium classrooms. As she noted after starting to implement translanguaging pedagogy: “I used to doubt my effectiveness working with ENL students until she [Ofelia] gave me the vehicle to navigate through the many strategies and innovative ideas” (ELA Teacher). Another bilingual education teacher mentioned how she has been inspired to communicate with others what she has learned about translanguaging pedagogy. She stated,

Ofelia’s work emboldened me to come out of hiding and to use these and other strategies to ensure that students are better served. It also encouraged me to openly communicate what I learned and continue to learn through the CUNY-NYSIEB initiative with teachers, administrators, and parents. (Bilingual Education Teacher)

CUNY-NYSIEB teachers like this one spoke of deep transformations to their practices inspired by the work of Ofelia García and CUNY-NYSIEB. For instance, a dual language bilingual education teacher participated in a CUNY-NYSIEB study group on translanguaging in dual language education where they read Ofelia García’s writings and were asked to design and implement lessons that disrupt the strict separation that is prevalent in dual language programs. This experience spurred this teacher to rethink her practices and have discussions with her students on what it means to be bilingual and how they can be empowered in their bilingualism. She reflected on how Ofelia García’s work inspired her to question her dual language bilingual classroom and reclaim the bilingualism of her students.
Ofelia has encouraged me to disrupt marginalizing social forces and school limitations to re-imagine bilingual education in ways that value multilingual students’ holistic identities and language practices. (Bilingual Education Teacher)

Members of the CUNY-NYSIEB team also spoke of how they have been inspired by Ofelia García’s and her work to disrupt educational systems that marginalize and disempower emergent bilingual students and their families. In the following passage, a CUNY-NYSIEB Associate Investigator recalled what Ofelia García typically said at the CUNY-NYSIEB Team meeting each year.

*Ofelia is radical. She often begins the year [of CUNY-NYSIEB Team meetings] with a challenge to break the status quo and discuss how we can institute real change. Ofelia recognizes there are many on-going problems with the current system of bilingual education and reminds us that we must disrupt.* (Associate Investigator)

As mentioned earlier, in the creation of CUNY-NYSIEB, one of Ofelia García’s greatest contributions to local bilingual education was to design the project in such a way that it would cultivate a community of scholars across CUNY (and SUNY) campuses, and provide mentorship for students and junior faculty. The CUNY-NYSIEB team has been a very collaborative and nurturing environment in which Associate Investigators, Research Assistants, and Project Directors have worked together to encourage the scholarly work of everyone. Since CUNY-NYSIEB began, every faculty member who went up for tenure and/or promotion was successful in doing so, and every doctoral student has either defended their dissertation and graduated, or are on track to do so. Also, those who wanted to pursue academic careers have been successful in finding positions. However, all team members discussed how the model for that mentorship was Ofelia García, whose leadership fostered a nurturing and collaborative atmosphere. A Research Assistant said that she showed her how to be “a warm and supportive professional colleague,” and posited that part of her legacy “will absolutely be the creation of a community of scholars who not only respect one another’s work but LIKE one another!” (Research Assistant). As one Associate Investigator recalled:

*Ofelia takes the time to talk with each member of the community. She knows details about people’s lives. She also knows where and how she can challenge each member of the community to go to the next level, to take on the next challenge. Ofelia teaches us that one never stops learning and caring.* (Associate Investigator)

Ofelia García, through her scholarship and leadership of CUNY-NYSIEB, has inspired educators from state, district, school, and university settings to be confident in their ideas, voices, and the value of their work, and be tireless in building community in support for bilingual students, their families, and their home language practices.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Ofelia García’s scholarship on dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging has proven revolutionary for the education of emergent bilinguals. CUNY-NYSIEB started just after the publication of her groundbreaking 2009 book, at a time when translanguaging pedagogy was in its infancy, and the project has played a central role in the development of this area. As described in this paper, CUNY-NYSIEB was designed
based on Ofelia García’s scholarship about dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging, which is evident in the project’s vision and non-negotiable principles.

A major contribution of CUNY-NYSIEB has been the development of translanguaging pedagogy, and the collaborative structures that Ofelia García designed for the project were central in its capacity to do so. Specifically, the CUNY-NYSIEB team worked to apply her theories about dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging in classrooms and met intensively with one another and participating schools to develop, implement, refine, and theorize translanguaging pedagogy. Ofelia García’s productive scholarship on translanguaging was enriched through the work of CUNY-NYSIEB schools.

Through CUNY-NYSIEB, Ofelia García worked directly with state, district, and school leaders as well as university faculty and doctoral students from CUNY and SUNY campuses. In this paper, we explored reflections by 36 members of the CUNY-NYSIEB Community on the influence of this work and identified three main areas of impact. First, we found that her work encourages educators, policymakers, and academics to be critical and challenge established ideas. She pushed the Community to not only question their own strongly held and often fossilized views about bilingualism, but also to question institutional approaches to educating bilingual students, situating them within a broader sociopolitical context and disrupting them when needed.

Second, respondents described how they were galvanized to act in support of bilingual students and their communities. Ofelia Garcia has modeled this through her own engagement in schools and communities, ensuring that theory and practice inform one another. Finally, the reflections we received repeatedly referenced being inspired by Ofelia García, her scholarship, and the work of CUNY-NYSIEB to value their own voices and those of their students, and to motivate others to improve schooling for emergent bilinguals.

Ofelia García, through her leadership and scholarship, has deeply influenced the CUNY-NYSIEB Community. At the same time, the work of CUNY-NYSIEB has influenced Ofelia García’s scholarship. This has proven to be a powerful symbiotic relationship. Translanguaging pedagogy is a transformative practice within schools for its capacity to place students’ bilingualism at the center of decisions about programming and practice, and encourage entire schools to move from monolingual approaches in education to multilingual ones. More broadly, Ofelia García and the work of CUNY-NYSIEB has centered bilingualism in instruction and school structures, completely unsettling traditional monolingual approaches. We are only now beginning to understand the possibilities of a truly multilingual approach to schooling and the many implications of a translanguaging conceptualization of language and expect much more research and development of educational practices in this area in years to come.

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**End Notes**

1 In addition to the PI, Co-PIs, and Project Director, the following people have been part of the Leadership Component of CUNY-NYSIEB: Associate Investigators: Laura Ascenzi-Moreno, Brian Collins, Ann Ebe, Cecilia Espinosa, Meral Kaya, Erin Kearney, Tatyana Kleyn, Dina López, Kate Mahoney, and Vanessa Pérez-Rosario. Tatyana Kleyn and Vanessa Pérez-Rosario each also served as interim Co-PI for one year. Research Assistants: Gladys Aponte, Kathryn Carpenter, María Cioè Peña, Ivana Espinet, Luis Guzmán Valerio, Luz Herrera, Sarah Hesson, Liza Pappas, Kate Seltzer, Sara Vogel, and Heather Woodley. Field Associates: Christina Celic and Cristian Solorza. Other personnel have participated in other areas of the project. For the complete listing, go to: [https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/our-team/](https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/our-team/)

2 The use of Ofelia was kept in the quotes since it is how the informants referred to her in the original inquiry text.
A Tribute to Ofelia García

Colin Baker
Emeritus Professor at Bangor University, Bangor, Wales

As a tribute to Ofelia García, I describe five events in my life that were influenced by our meetings and collaboration. These events span the years of our first meeting in 1992 through my role to introduce Dr. García before her Keynote Address at a Bilingual Education & Translanguaging Conference in 2016.

Keywords: Foundations of Bilingual Education book, Ofelia García, tribute, translanguaging

My tribute to Ofelia García is in the form of five events. The first event is when we met in New York in 1992 to create the first edition of the Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism book. The second event is my acknowledgement of her in the first edition of that Foundations book (1993), including a passage in Spanish. The third event is an extract from a reference letter I wrote for her when she applied in 2002 for a post at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. The fourth event is about her coming to Wales to meet the originator of ‘translanguaging’ (Cen Williams) at a seminar that I had arranged. The fifth and most recent event is when I introduced Ofelia García before her Keynote Address at a Bilingual Education & Translanguaging Conference in 2016 and paid a heartfelt tribute to her.

The five events described in this tribute are snapshots documented through diary entries and portions from other professional and scholarly writings. They are also a film of a cross-Atlantic friendship over 25 years. I frequently asked her advice particularly in the development of the Foundations book across the six editions. We met each other’s families, and I watched her grow into an academic superstar. The five events will provide the evidence of this superstar status.

1. First Meeting with Ofelia García

Date: September 1992
Place: New York
Context: Meeting to discuss a draft of the first edition of a textbook Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.
Description: Ofelia García and I first met in September 1992. I had been commissioned by Multilingual Matters to write a textbook Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. The book needed to be strong on United States’ bilingual education to help sales in the US. While I had read widely on US bilingual education, I needed someone to teach me ‘insider nuances’, and increase my political understanding of US historical and contemporary language and educational policy.
Mike Grover, the Managing Director of Multilingual Matters (with advice from Professor Viv Edwards) decided that the best Advisor / Consultant / Reviewer would be Ofelia García at City College of New York (CCNY). Through him, I got in touch with her by email. She responded to my many emails and individual draft chapters very warmly and positively across many months in 1991 and 1992. After sending her a draft manuscript of the whole book in April 1992, we arranged to meet in New York in September 1992 to discuss the final version.

**Diary Entry: 13 to 16 September 1992**


Nervous at meeting Ofelia. Mike Grover tells me that Joshua Fishman is reputed to have said that Ofelia is the only person who understands what he has written. So, she must be some intellectual. Anxious ... as she will be well in advance of my knowledge, especially of bilingual education in the US.

JFK: Ofelia very kind indeed. Meets me in her car at JFK. All the way from Pelham. Forget it is a left-hand drive car unlike UK and try to get in the wrong side! Not a clever start to the relationship. We chat easily all the way to West Park Hotel, 308 W. St., Columbus Circle, NY. Less anxious now.

Ofelia tells me Hugo Baetens Beardsmore previously stayed in that hotel when he came to meet her. In the footsteps of a pioneer writer on bilingualism. Slept well that night.

Ofelia takes me to CCNY. Attend two of her classes. Informal but focused. Teaches by using the life and language experiences of her class. Meet some of her Latino students who need employment to pay College fees while my students get all costs paid by the state. Very sociable and enthusiastic students.

Evening meal at Ofelia’s house. Meet Ricardo who is instantly friendly and welcoming. Really lovely person. Three children all welcome me. Eric, Raquel, and Emma. We have a chat. Give them their presents. They talk in Spanish to Ofelia. Good to hear. Crickets outside talking loudly as we eat outside.

Down to business: we discuss at CCNY the draft chapters of ‘Foundations’. In a most diplomatic and charming manner, Ofelia tells me my draft manuscript needs to develop a more political dimension and include more sociolinguistic coverage. Correct. I enjoy learning about US politics, but sociolinguistics is a different language from my specialisms in psychology, education, and statistics.

Ofelia educates me about different US types of bilingual education. Has feet on the ground and is realistic. Our typology of bilingual education is refined. Need to credit Ofelia for that typology.

Back to the UK. What a lovely person: warm and friendly, welcoming and sensitive, generous with her time and expertise. I hope this is a friend for life, academic and beyond.
2. First Tribute to Ofelia García

Date: February 1993

Place: Publication of a book by Multilingual Matters (Clevedon, UK).

Context: Acknowledgement to Ofelia García in the first edition of *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*.

Explanation: An Acknowledgement in the first edition of the book (February 1993, p. xii) relayed my experience of the allocation of Professor García as Academic Consultant. This text is repeated below. Ofelia García later gently told me that she was at CCNY and not CUNY. But that is the only element that was wrong in this Acknowledgement to her. The acknowledgement was repeated in the second edition (1996).

Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García’s husband, very kindly helped me with a paragraph in Spanish. We did this secretly, so the first time she saw it was when she was sent a copy of the book in February 1993.

Acknowledgement: At the start of the proceedings, (following the advice of Viv Edwards), Multilingual Matters perceptively appointed Ofelia García of City University of New York as Academic Consultant. Through the miracle of electronic mail, I received detailed, sensitive, wise and judicious advice on each draft chapter. Achilles heels were quickly spotted, detailed polishing was recommended, and cultural assumptions gently revealed. Professor García shared her powerful and pervading Language Garden analogy with me in the early stages of writing. Professor García also had considerable influence in the typology of bilingual education. A great debt is owed for her generous amounts of time and patience, both in scores of written responses and when visiting New York. The ideas shared, and her deep empathy for language minorities became a true learning experience.

Pocos lectores hay que sean tan comprensivos, entusiastas, perspicaces, y conocedores tanto de la escuela como de la calle, y tan capaces de saber criticar y al mismo tiempo saber apoyar. Generosa y entregada a sus estudiantes tanto como a su investigación, la Profesora Ofelia García supo enseñarme, de hecho y de palabra, por correo electrónico y por su ejemplo personal, como se puede combinar en una misma persona el elevado logro académico y el alto altruismo personal.

[Professor García provided comprehensive, enthusiastic, perceptive and friendly cooperation, with efficiency and speed. She generously gave a constructive critical commentary with grace and gentleness. Benevolent with her students and colleagues, she extended this privilege to me via daily electronic mail. I learnt much from Professor García, not only academically, but through her personal example. Dedicated to the plight of language minorities, she elevates her academic contribution by an altruistic and compassionate personal commitment to bilingualism. (The translation to English was not given in the Acknowledgements of the first edition)]

Professor García was first introduced to me in a letter from the publishers. The letter simply said: ‘I have been in contact with one of the present top-rate people in the States’.
So have I, and I totally agree.

3. Reference for a Professorship in Bilingual Education at Teachers College, Columbia University (New York)

Date: 24th January 2002

Place: Teachers College, Columbia University, NY

Context: Extract from my reference for Dr. Ofelia García for a post at Teachers’ College, New York.

Description: After February 1993, Ofelia García and I directly communicated by email. While the text was mostly about our publications, we also shared our children’s development. I visited her again in New York and we visited schools together. She kindly took me to see Joshua Fishman, an unforgettable experience.

Ofelia García applied for a post at Teachers College, New York at the end of 2001. I was asked to write a reference. Following an interview, she was offered the post. From 2002 to 2008, she was Professor of Bilingual Education and Program Coordinator, Department of International and Transcultural Studies, Teachers College, Columbia University. Here is an extract from my reference letter.

Reference Extract: Professor García’s writings show a considerable width of scholarship. There is no myopic examination of one topic in depth but a colorful repertoire of interests that include international bilingual education, language minority economics, literacy and biliteracy, urban education, social and academic issues surrounding bilingualism, the history of bilingual education, and multitudinous Latino/Hispanic topics. This immense breadth of interest is integrated and cohesive, with cross-fertilization from one topic to another. Such width of interest has made Ofelia a prolific author, including in recent times when the Deanship at Long Island has meant many new demands on her time.

Professor García has a remarkable, almost intuitive understanding of classrooms that creates very sensitive and empathic understandings of bilinguals, bilingual education and communities. Alongside this is a deep political understanding, with a highly insightful knowledge of the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts in which bilinguals are situated. This combination of concern for individuals and a profound societal understanding ensures research and writing that is both powerful and impactive.

Professor Ofelia García has much international experience and considerable international respect. She is affectionately known in Europe from Joshua Fishman’s reputed statement that she has been the only person who fully understands his writings on sociolinguistics. She has very effectively collaborated with scholars from most continents and is certainly regarded in Europe as a scholar of international standing.

I could not finish without relating an episode. When Multilingual Matters Ltd., the major publishers in the area of bilingualism and bilingual education, wanted a comprehensive textbook in this area, they sought advice internationally for an
Academic Consultant. The selection criteria were that the Academic Consultant must be a top-rate expert on the subject, and someone whose academic career would continue to flourish. The first choice of the advisors was Professor Ofelia García.

I conclude by giving a strong recommendation that Professor Ofelia García be appointed. She has the teaching excellence, research track-record and grant-capture ability to be a first-class appointment. There are very few scholars of her all-round caliber in bilingual education, and Teachers College would gain considerably from her appointment.

4. The Birth and Development of Translanguaging

**Date:** 26th July 2012  
**Place:** Bangor University, Bangor, North Wales, UK  
**Context:** Meeting of Ofelia García and Cen Williams to discuss 'Translanguaging'.

**Description:** Between 2002 and 2012, Ofelia García and I continued to email frequently mostly about my requests for help with further editions of the 'Foundations' book. In 2012, the opportunity arose to bring her to Wales and the birthplace of translanguaging.

Ofelia García visited Bangor University, Wales, from 23rd to 30th July 2012. This was a Visiting Faculty Appointment located in the ESRC-funded ($10 million) Bilingualism Research Centre based at Bangor University. A key meeting was arranged between Dr. García and Dr. Cen Williams, the founder of the term ‘translanguaging’ on 26th July 2012. Dr. Ricardo Otheguy, her husband, and two of the Centre’s key researchers on bilingual education, Dr. Gwyn Lewis and Dr. Bryn Jones, plus myself, were also in attendance.

**Diary Entry:**

Much awaited day. First meeting of Ofelia and Cen. How will a nationally acclaimed poet from a quiet, rural Anglesey village get on with my favorite New York academic? Local lad meets Latina.

Booked a scrumptious luncheon in the Pro Vice Chancellor’s rooms for us all. Lovely food and drink.

Simple introductions. Both Ofelia and Cen rarely shy, but this time a little. Some degree of mutual awe. Room full of smiles. We all realize this is an historic occasion.

Ofelia asks Cen to tell the story of the origins of the term. He says it was during a coffee break at a Teachers' Conference in Llandudno. Probably George Hotel. Not sure of the date but probably around late 1980s or very early 1990s. Informal conversation with Dafydd Whitall (an outstanding Headteacher and late Director of Education for our Local Education Authority). Conversation in Welsh. They invented the term *trawsieithu.*
Cen then explains why she is attracted to the term and suggests it can be generalized from classrooms to the everyday language of bilinguals. She seemed to worry that Cen might not like the extension. Wrong. Cen saw the point and the potential. Wonderful! Ofelia possibly relieved and encouraged to extend and advance.

Some wonderful insights from Ricardo. Guess he has helped Ofelia develop the term as he is very perceptive and seasoned. Notice that all warm to Ricardo. Welsh rural and New York urban mix perfectly. Ricardo and Ofelia very adaptable.

We chat about bilingual education in North Wales and New York. Two-teacher and three-teacher schools locally and massive urban schools in NY are more than different. Almost total opposites. But classroom issues around bilingual education remarkably similar.

Piece of history made today. Noticed that a tip-top New York academic and a famed poet-cum-educationist might have been worlds apart. One driven by the plight of urban immigrants with many languages, while the other driven by the fight to retain the indigenous Welsh language in its heartlands. Both are driven by social and language conscience. Same underlying motivations. Both know that political action is essential and translanguaging has a positive political potential. Translanguaging to help English speakers use more Welsh; translanguaging to help immigrants use their home language in the classroom and achieve higher. Both not just academics but also activists. Separated by the Atlantic Ocean but joined by translanguaging and transformation.

5. 2016 Conference Tribute to Ofelia García

**Date:** 10th June 2016

**Place:** Reichel Hall, Bangor University, Bangor, North Wales, UK

**Context:** Bangor International Conference on Bilingualism in Education: 10th – 12th June 2016

**Description:** Ofelia García came to Wales again in 2016, following my retirement. We spent time together reflecting on language in education over recent decades. The reason for her coming was to attend a Bilingualism Conference at Bangor University.

At this Bilingualism Conference, Ofelia García and Jasone Cenoz both gave Keynote Addresses. Cen Williams, the originator of the concept of ‘translanguaging’ was also present. I was asked to introduce Ofelia García. It
gave me a golden opportunity to say a warm ‘thank you’ to her for all the help, advice, collaboration and friendship for over 25 years. Here is that speech.

**Introduction to Ofelia:**

You are about to meet the Queen.

Not Queen Elizabeth II who has reigned for 64 years but Queen Ofelia who undisputedly has reigned as THE number 1 leader of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education for more than three decades.

Ofelia was born in Havana, Cuba. She became an outstanding Cuban American intellectual. Her origins are important in understanding her passion for transformative bilingual education and her deep social conscience. She came to New York as an immigrant at the age of 11 with her family. Her father was a professional lawyer in Cuba, but to make ends meet in NY, he worked very long hours in a Deli.

To fund her BA degree at Hunter College, Ofelia worked as a key punch operator. Thus, her understanding of bilingual education is rooted in the need for social justice, for giving all children irrespective of class, length of immigration or home language, the chance to share the many advantages of bilingualism and bilingual education. This is not Fifth Avenue bilingual education, but that of the South Bronx.

For those of you who have read her books and articles, she is an intellectual heavyweight. Underneath, she is a champion of the poor, the neglected, the deprived, the needy.

After graduating, she taught in an alternative high school in New York City and has been a Professor in several New York Universities. Her list of publications, honors, visits to many Universities around the globe, her academic and professional awards, journal editorships and editorial boards, keynote addresses at major conferences, puts Hilary Clinton in the shade and Donald Trump in the dark.

There are at least 21 books and several hundred articles. She is thus the undisputed heavyweight champion of bilingual education and bilingualism.

In September 1992, I travelled to New York to meet Ofelia. The reason for my visit to Ofelia was that Mike Grover (the founder and managing director of the publishers Multilingual Matters - his wife, Marjukka, and son, Tommi, are with us tonight) had astutely spotted Ofelia as THE future academic leader of bilingual education and bilingualism. I had been told on good authority that Joshua Fishman believed that Ofelia was the ONLY person who understood his brilliant writings.

So, I went to NY in awe of her.

I still am.

Through the five editions of the Foundations book, Ofelia has always given me superb feedback, being diplomatic and constructive, wise and perceptive. Diolch Ofelia [“diolch” means “thank you” in Welsh].

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It is Ofelia that has made ‘translanguaging’ famous throughout the world. Her 2009 book ‘Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective’ showed how translanguaging was not just about classrooms and codeswitching but is the reality of the integrated everyday language of bilinguals. She has developed the term so it makes bilingualism feel more positive, more politically acceptable, more about the power of people who speak two or more languages.

Ofelia: thank you for taking a Welsh concept (trawsieithu) and making it global: global in meaning, utilized across many disciplines, and now used across the world. Thank you, Ofelia, for returning to North Wales where the term was invented, and thus making this Conference prestigious.

To me, you are a Cuban intellectual, a globally famous American educationalist, ... and from today ... an honorary Welsh academic.

You valuably took the Welsh baton of ‘translanguaging’ and have made it world famous.

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a warm Welsh welcome to Queen Ofelia García.
Book Review

Translanguaging at Work: Approaches to Dynamic Bilingualism

Meral Kaya
Brooklyn College, City University of New York (CUNY)

Book Reviewed:

Considering how diverse and global our world has become, we need more than ever a stance that will broaden our understanding of bilingualism and create space for bilingual learning and instruction. It is a challenge to address the needs of students who speak languages other than English. It is more challenging to help teachers understand and envision the ways we can reach bilingual students and make a difference in their success through valuing, embracing, and utilizing their language capabilities and skills, culture, home language, and their complex language practices. In a moment where immigration policies are changing, and while inequality continues to exist in the education system, teachers need to be effectively equipped to challenge established ideas and traditional models about how to teach to bilingual students and shift their understanding to productively accommodate and nurture students’ learning and help them achieve academic success.

In The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning García, Johnson, and Seltzer present how educators can witness this aspiring view on beliefs and pedagogy that work in harmony to educate all bilingual learners (from emergent to experienced bilinguals). The authors are distinguished educators and researchers who share similar experiences such as coming from diverse backgrounds, being bilingual learners, and bilingual teachers, which contribute valuable and credible information and experience to the book.
The volume’s organization is logical and easy for the reader to navigate. The chapters flow in a way that builds on and expand readers’ understanding about bilingualism and bilingual pedagogy. Guadalupe Valdés’ foreword echoes the fact that the book is an essential, salient, and resourceful addition to bilingual pedagogy. Bilingual education has a long history involving, policy, politics, culture, ideology, linguistics, and pedagogy. Shifts in bilingual education as pedagogy have been observed over time from traditional models of language teaching such as immersion or sink or swim approach (Bybee, Henderson, & Hinojosa, 2014; Cummins, 1989; Krashen, 1996), to models that keep languages separate, (Hadi-Tabassum, 2005; Leung, 2006; Soltero, 2004), to finally more promising and dynamic models, using the language as “medium of instruction” (García, 2009, p. 6) integratively, especially in the 21st century.

Translanguaging theory emerges as a dynamic model drawing attention to “new language practices that make the complexity of language exchanges visible...” (García & Wei, 2014). In the literature of dynamic bilingualism, this book contributes highly to effective pedagogy that promotes translanguaging and equal educational opportunities. The book is written to clarify definitions, terminology, and key understandings. The book demonstrates various and effective ways to implement dynamic translanguaging pedagogy providing examples and vignettes from teachers and classroom practices, useful templates, checklists, and forms. Its narrative is effective in reaching not only bilingual teachers but also monolingual practitioners and curriculum developers in culturally and linguistically diverse schools.

The authors’ preface addresses the possible audience regarding who might benefit from the book, what concepts are emphasized and why, and how they establish and explain their unique stance regarding their beliefs and practices. Readers are introduced to concepts such as translanguaging corriente (fluid language and cultural practices); dynamic translanguaging progression; and translanguaging stance, design, and shifts. The three major sections of the book focus on dynamic bilingualism, translanguaging pedagogy, and practical applications of translanguaging. Each section consists of three to four chapters that further expand and complement the main focus and exemplify it in a variety of ways. Within the sections, each chapter begins with concise learning objectives to help focus the reader. Questions and activities at the end of each chapter motivate readers to think critically and to reflect on their own understanding of the material. Each chapter concludes with a taking action section, where the authors suggest ways for educators to implement their teaching pedagogy to bilingual students. The Appendix provides tools and charts that teachers can utilize in their instructional practices for all bilingual learners.

In Chapter 1, Translanguaging Classrooms: Contexts and Purposes, the authors expand and enrich the concept of “translanguaging” as “dynamic communicative practice” (p. 1), situating action as the center of dynamic bilingualism. The authors state that the origin of the word translanguaging (emerging from Welsh educator Cen Williams, 1994, 2002) has evolved especially after Colin Baker’s (2001) translation and introduction of the concept to education. Although some definitions of translanguaging from different perspectives are presented in the book (for example, from linguistic perspectives by Otheguy, García, and Reed, 2015), García emphasizes her own earlier definition (2009), which states that translanguaging is “an approach to bilingualism
that is centered not on languages as has been often the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable” (p. 45). From the beginning, the authors make clear that their approach to translanguaging pedagogy in classrooms creates purposeful teaching practices. In order to emphasize and illustrate translanguaging in action authors present three teachers who create translanguaging spaces in their classroom working collaboratively with their students and providing practices that accommodate home language practices of their bilingual students. These teachers' classrooms differ from each other in various ways. For example, Carla is a 4th grade dual language bilingual teacher from New Mexico; and she is Spanish bilingual herself. Stephanie is an 11th grade social studies teacher from New York City and Justin is an ESL teacher in a math and science classroom in California. Throughout the book, the authors provide concrete examples and refer to the translanguaging practices these teachers use. This first chapter ends with four translanguaging purposes the authors identify:

(a) facilitating students’ comprehension of complex contexts, (b) supporting students’ “linguistic practices for academic contexts,” (c) making space for students’ bilingualism and “ways of knowing,” and (d) cultivating students’ “bilingual identities and socioemotional development” (p. 7). These purposes work together to create and ensure equal field (or opportunities) for bilingual students to flourish and advance in their learning.

Chapter 2 effectively presents the metaphorical concept of translanguaging corriente, or the flow of students’ bilingual practices (p. 17), as a process in which bilingual and multilingual students bring all their linguistic repertoire and language practices to make meaning. While exploring the translanguaging classroom framework, the authors discuss bilingualism as a complex process which involves socially interactive aspect of language and the dynamic interaction of languages rather than traditional bilingualism where two languages are viewed as separate entities. Since dynamic bilingualism involves complex language practices, it is translanguaging that enables “transformative and creative” meaning (p. 20). The authors emphasize that “code-switching” (p. 20) is simply alternating between two languages and does not reflect students’ complex language interaction. However, translanguaging corriente (translanguaging current/flow) manifests diversity, dynamism, and complexity of both learning and teaching, introduced as the two dimensions of the translanguaging classroom: “students’ translanguaging performances and teachers’ translanguaging pedagogy” (p. 27). Translanguaging corriente is not possible if teachers do not have what the authors call the stance, that is, the belief system that supports their pedagogy; design of instruction and assessment in which both home and school practices are included; and shifts which center teachers’ flexibility to accommodate moment to moment decision to make the best of corriente.

Consequently, in Chapter 3 the authors describe how to build a multilingual ecology where teachers gather data to identify the strengths and needs of their bilingual students. They provide useful tools and charts that teachers can adapt and use when profiling their own bilingual students. To be able to capture the complexity of bilingual students’ learning and practices the authors opt to use the concept of dynamic translanguaging progression. As the authors believe in the “dynamic nature of students’ bilingualism” (p. 35), with the help of the teachers’ pedagogy a progression will provide
more space to see what students can do through their language specific and general linguistic performances, allowing them to use their full features of linguistic practice repertoire.

Part two of the volume begins with Chapter 4, which focuses on the concept of the stance, the first strand of translanguaging pedagogy. They refer to stance as a “mindset” (p. 50) that describes how teachers view their students as co-constructors of learning, and how teachers make space to encourage students to make full use of their language practices. It also includes how teachers design their instruction to promote juntos (together; p. 50). The authors use the term juntos intentionally to suggest ways in which students’ language practice incorporates their culture, family, and community as resources. Thus, juntos works meaningfully in the education process to create a more just and democratic ground (pp. 58-59). Through the description of the case teacher’s stance, the authors show that although each teacher’s approach is different from the other, each one has a strong stance on how all students should be able to bring their entire linguistic repertoire to construct meaning and successfully grow as learners. These examples provide a model for educators in developing their own stance.

Translanguaging Design in Instruction, the title of Chapter 5, explains how teachers can design their instruction, the second strand of translanguaging pedagogy. According to the authors, instructional design is purposeful and planned. Effective design should include classroom space where collaboration and multilingual ecology help translanguaging corriente flow and acknowledge dynamic bilingualism. The authors mention the social aspect of learning and cite the important concept of Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development (1978) as well as Moll’s interpretation (2013) of bilingual zone of proximal development. Collaboration supports emergent bilinguals and planning collaboration strategically facilitates their learning. Likewise creating a multilingual ecology, of which the authors provide various ideas and examples (p. 63), will welcome all learners with their language practices, their culture, their families and communities, and invite dynamic bilingualism in action. They emphasize that, when designing units and lessons, it is important to create translanguaging practices; plan out translanguaging objectives, culminating projects, and assessment; and consider the choice of texts and materials. The five stages of translanguaging instructional design cycle-explorar, evaluar, imaginar, presentar, and implementar (pp. 72-73) are explained in detail with examples from classroom practices of the case teachers. Through keeping bilingual students in mind each stage in the cycle moves students through the process and makes them stronger and successful in their learning.

Assessment as part of translanguaging design in instruction is discussed separately in Chapter 6, Translanguaging Design in Assessment. The authors conduct a useful discussion of students’ assessment examples in the case studies that reveal the effectiveness of holistic assessment, which invites many angles. They suggest that bilingual students’ profiles are essential for assessment and delineate four principles for assessment: (a) inviting many voices such as teachers, students, peers and families; (b) allowing students to use all their resources; (c) providing authentic and performance-based tasks, and (d) including both general linguistic and language-
specific performances (pp. 81-82). All these principles support *translanguaging corriente*. As the authors say “translanguaging in assessment requires a strong juntos stance, careful design, and well-orchestrated shifts” (p. 97).

Chapter 7, Translanguaging Pedagogy in Action, gives the reader a hands-on example from a classroom situation and highlights the case teacher’s effective decision making and how this process reflects on students’ success. The example allows readers to experience her stance, a unit design, translanguaging instructional design cycle, assessment, and her use of teachable moments that are identified as shifts in her decisions based on students’ needs.

Part three, Reimagining Teaching and Learning through Translanguaging, presents a discussion of standards, content area literacy, biliteracy, and social justice. Chapter 8 sets forth a very significant aspect of translanguaging pedagogy, standards. Here they focus on the idea of “localizing standards” (p. 120) that meet students’ needs. This means selecting standards that will empower instructional design to make space for students to use their language practices, to put into good use their fund of knowledge, and to involve families and communities through expanding the standard’s meaning and function. Significantly, the authors affirm that it is essential to “make the standards work for students” (p. 118).

An additional discussion of stance, design, and shifts is included in Chapter 9, but this time focusing on teaching content area literacy. Dynamic bilingualism in content area teaching means leveraging students’ understanding of complex context and text, which is one of the purposes of translanguaging. This is accomplished via a case teacher’s example, in which the teacher’s stance, design, and shift help position herself as both a content and literacy teacher, illustrating that they go hand in hand. Further, the teacher implements content area teaching to leverage students’ engagement with and understanding of complex content and text. The authors show that it is crucial to incorporate multilingual texts and to help students access content learning via enabling their use of their entire linguistic repertoire and language practices.

Chapter 10, Biliteracy in the Translanguaging Classrooms: Making Space for Students, broadens the discussion to bilingualism and ways of knowing. This chapter expands the understanding about how to foster students’ biliteracy through translanguaging. An interesting facet of this approach is the way that teachers foster a metalinguistic discussion (p. 148) to strengthen students’ biliteracy. Translanguaging nurtures and advances students learning of both classroom language and home language since their language practices are in full use.

In the final chapter, the authors explore how translanguaging pedagogy enables bilingual students’ language practices and contributes to students’ learning and teachers’ instruction in the classroom. Valuing who bilingual students are and viewing their repertoire as powerful resources can bring justice in reaching out to students, in their contribution, and provides fair platform for students to shine and be successful.

This book is well organized and places translanguaging pedagogy in its center. Throughout the text, the real effectiveness of translanguaging emanates from the examples of the three case teachers who incorporate their stance, belief systems, how
they draw students’ full linguistic repertoire, funds of knowledge, and complex language practices along with their culture, families, and communities into their pedagogy. The authors articulate, describe, and discuss the concepts and instructional practices effectively and strengthen core understanding through case teachers’ authentic and credible practices.

However, although the vignettes and models in the book are presented from three different classroom settings, teachers of an increasingly diverse population might be looking for instructional ideas as well as student work examples from communities and languages other than Spanish. Concrete examples from other languages along with Spanish would enrich the understanding of diverse practitioners. Nonetheless, the book presents a skillful link between theoretical knowledge and effective practice and shows how students’ language practices and cultural contributions are valuable. Pedagogical ideas can empower teachers, educators, and researchers to challenge the system in order to create more applicable opportunities for bilingual students.

The volume is a wonderful aid to motivate educators to explore and challenge traditional instructional models and to examine their own pedagogical practices and assessment. Educators can reach a solid understanding and an opportunity to internalize the knowledge and practices presented in this book. Furthermore, the variety of the case studies and students’ profiles that are presented, although only representing classrooms where English and Spanish are the instructional languages, enrich the understanding of how to meet the needs of diverse bilingual learners, which could be applied to different classroom contexts. Regardless of classroom type or types of students’ bilingualism, translanguage is transformative practice that is planned and strategic, which allows and encourages students’ entire linguistic repertoire, including teachers, families, and communities. The authors promote valuing what students can offer and how teachers can nurture them as learners while committing to bilingual students’ academic excellence and social development.

References


Notes on Contributors to This Volume

Laura Ascenzi-Moreno, PhD, is an Assistant Professor and Bilingual Program Coordinator in the Childhood, Bilingual, and Special Education Department at Brooklyn College. She received her doctorate in Urban Education from the City University of New York Graduate Center. Prior to becoming a professor, she was a dual language, bilingual teacher, and coach in New York City public schools for more than a decade. Her research focuses on the literacy development of emergent bilinguals, the development of teacher knowledge, and how both of these intersect with equity. She conducts case studies to study the lived worlds of children and teachers.

Colin Baker, PhD, was Pro Vice Chancellor Bangor University, Wales, UK (2007-2012) and Full Professor of Education (1994-2012). He is the author of 20 books and over 140 articles mostly on bilingualism, with specific interests in language planning and bilingual education. His book Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism has been translated into Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Latvian, Georgian, Greek, Vietnamese, and Mandarin Chinese. The 6th edition (2017) was co-authored with Wayne Wright (Purdue University). He was awarded the California Association for Bilingual Education Special Recognition Award of 2000 for Outstanding Research and Scholarly Activity. He was Editor of the International Journal of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education for 15 years and an Editorial Board member for numerous international journals.

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Jim Cummins, PhD, is a Professor Emeritus at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto and an adjunct professor at Åbo Akademi University in Finland. His research focuses on literacy development in educational contexts characterized by linguistic diversity. In numerous articles and books, he has explored the nature of language proficiency and its relationship to literacy development with particular emphasis on the intersections of societal power relations, teacher-student identity negotiation, and literacy attainment.

Cecilia M. Espinosa, PhD, was born in Ecuador, South America. She worked for 14 years in Phoenix, AZ as a bilingual/multiage (K-2nd) teacher and a Title VII Director at a large urban public school. She received her PhD at ASU (Tempe, AZ). She is now an Associate Professor in the Early Childhood/Childhood Department at the School of
Notes on Contributors

Education at Lehman College/CUNY. She has written articles and chapters about children’s biliteracy development, translanguaging, children’s literature, and descriptive processes. Cecilia has participated in the following projects: New York City Writing Project (NYCWP), Elementary Teachers’ Network (ETN), Math UP, and New York State Initiative for Emergent Bilinguals (CUNY NYSIEB).

**Nelson Flores, PhD**, is Associate Professor in Educational Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. His research examines the intersection of language and race in the implementation of bilingual education in the United States. His work has appeared in scholarly journals such as *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies, Linguistics and Education, TESOL Quarterly*, and *Harvard Educational Review*. He received his PhD in Urban Education from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in 2012.

**Danling Fu, PhD**, is Professor in College of Education, University of Florida, with a specialty in writing and literacy instruction for emergent bilingual students. In the past decades, she has worked in schools populated with new immigrant students, involved with literacy program development, reform, adaptation, and implementation to meet the needs of those students. She has been a consultant across the nation and the world: giving keynote/feature speeches, workshops, and working closely with classroom teachers in search of effective ways to improve the outcomes of emergent bilingual students.

**Durk Gorter, PhD**, is Ikerbasque Research Professor at the University of the Basque Country, Spain. He is the head of the Donostia Research group on Education and Multilingualism (DREAM). He does research on multilingual education, European minority languages, and linguistic landscapes. Among his recent publications are *Minority Languages in the Linguistic Landscape* (2012, co-edited with Heiko Marten and Luk Van Mensel), *Minority Languages and Multilingual Education: Bridging the Local and the Global* (2014, co-edited with Victoria Zenotz and Jasone Cenoz), and *Multilingual Education: Between Language Learning and Translanguaging* (2015, co-edited with Jasone Cenoz). He also teaches in the European Master in Multilingualism and Education (EMME) program. He is the editor-in-chief of the journal *Language, Culture and Curriculum*. In September 2018, he received the award of Distinguished Scholar of Multilingualism of the International Association of Multilingualism. Further information can be found on [http://www.ikerbasque.net/durk.gorter](http://www.ikerbasque.net/durk.gorter).

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Journal of Multilingual Education Research

Publication Description

The Journal of Multilingual Education Research (JMER) is the official journal of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education. Its distinct orientation reflects what is most important to researchers, specialists, and educators in the fields of multilingualism and multilingual education. JMER is a vehicle to respond to the changes and growth of knowledge in a variety of national language education issues that have local and regional relevance. It responds to the emerging needs and interests of teachers, administrators, teacher educators, researchers, counselors, psychologists, advocates, and community leaders whose work focuses on the successful education of multilingual students.

JMER embraces a variety of cross-disciplinary interests, both theoretical and practical, to reach a broader scholarship and readership. As such, its peer reviewed publications represent an array of themes and topics including:

- Psychology, sociology, and politics of language learning and teaching;
- Issues in research and research methodology;
- Assessment and evaluation;
- Professional preparation;
- Curriculum design and development;
- Instructional methods, practices, materials, resources, and technology and media;
- Language planning, language policy, and language learning;
- Professional standards and ethics.

JMER seeks to address the implications and applications of research in a variety of fields of knowledge, including:

- Anthropology;
- Applied linguistics;
- Multilingual/Bilingual education, including biliteracy, multiliteracy;
- Communication;
- Education;
- First and second language acquisition;
- Psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics;
- School psychology, sociology, political science.

Main Sections

1. **Focus on Research and Theory**: full-length articles of 8,500 words, excluding references, which discuss empirical research and analyze original data that the author has obtained using sound research methods, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies. Articles may also critically synthesize current knowledge in an important area of multilingual education and discuss new directions for research.

2. **Focus on Practice**: full length manuscripts of 8,500 (excluding references) that focus on best practices including innovative instructional interventions, practitioner inquiry, and collaborative projects leading to meaningful changes in educational policy and practice.

3. **Scholarly Book/Multimedia Reviews**: full-length critical reviews of professional texts and multimedia. Reviews should provide a scholarly evaluative discussion of the significance of the work in the context of current theory and practice. Reviews may either be solicited by the Reviews Editor or ideas for reviews may be submitted to the Reviews Editor for consideration. Reviews should comprise between 1,500 to 2,000 words (excluding references) for a review of a single book or multimedia.
Special Issues

Topics for special issues will be considered. Topics are approved by JMER Editors. Those wishing to suggest topics or serve as guest editors should contact the Senior Editor of JMER. Issues will generally contain both invited articles designed to provide state-of-the-art reviews of the literature and directions of future research and practice, as well as articles solicited through Call for Papers. On occasion, proceedings of a major impact conference or mini-symposia in the area of multilingualism will be considered.

Guidelines for Submission

Persons interested in publishing an article or book/multimedia review in this peer referred journal may submit manuscripts for consideration. JMER prefers that all submissions be written in a style that is accessible to a broad readership, including those individuals who may not be familiar with the subject matter. The manuscript must be prepared according to the following guidelines and submitted at http://fordham.bepress.com/jmer/:

- Be no longer than 8,500 words (excluding references, notes, and tables) typed, double-spaced for manuscripts.
- If a review, should comprise between 1,500 to 2000 words (excluding references).
- Have an abstract no longer than 200 words on a separate sheet, typed/word processed, one-inch margins all around, and double-spaced.
- Have title page, without the author’s name, address, or institutional affiliation.
- Include a list of keywords.
- Include no more than two half-page size illustrations, tables or figures or one full-page size illustration, table, or figure.
- Include a complete References section following the APA 6th edition format. It is the author’s responsibility to make sure that all sources in text are credited in the References section and that all References are properly cited in the text.

A cover letter must accompany the manuscript that includes the name of author(s), a full mailing address, and e-mail address, both day and evening phone numbers, and fax number. Include the author’s name on the cover letter only.

Papers accepted for publication will need to incorporate the reviewers’ feedback. They must be submitted and reviewed in Microsoft Word format, preferably in .docx or .doc format.

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Submission Process

JMER is published once a year. The deadline for manuscript submission is August 31.

Submissions are done electronically at http://fordham.bepress.com/jmer During the submission process you will be asked to agree and consent to the Submission Agreement as found in the Journal “Policies” link. Authors are asked to adhere to the Submission Guidelines as stated above.

JMER uses a double-blind review process; therefore author(s) must exclude their names, institutions, and any clues to their identities that exist within the manuscript. The presence of such information may compromise the blind review process. If you have self-citations please use the convention of (Author, Year) in the text and also in the references, leaving out the publication information. Do not use running-heads.

All submissions should adhere to the format and length guidelines of JMER. Please indicate the number of words at the end of the manuscript or book/multimedia review. It is understood that the manuscripts
submitted to JMER have not been previously published and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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The online submission will generate an email to the author(s) with information about tracking the submission through the review and selection process. All manuscripts and book/multimedia reviews will be given careful consideration. Every effort will be made to inform the author(s) of our decision within 3 to 4 months. Types of decisions are: accept; accept with minor changes; accept with major changes; revise and resubmit; and do not accept. The editors’ decisions are final.

The editors reserve the right to make editorial changes to enhance clarity, concision, and style. The author should be consulted only if the editing has been substantial.