




2019

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### Recommended Citation

Flores, Nelson L. (2019) "Translanguaging into Raciolinguistic Ideologies: A Personal Reflection on the Legacy of Ofelia García," *Journal of Multilingual Education Research*: Vol. 9 , Article 5.  
Available at: <https://fordham.bepress.com/jmer/vol9/iss1/5>

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

### Cover Page Footnote

**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.

# 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.

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

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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 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 LTELLs 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 was 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 conversations 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 overdetermining 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/os by Spanish teachers in higher education (Valdés, González, 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

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