



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

Bilingual Education Research



Introduction to the Special Issue (Part 2!)

*...being American is more than a pride we inherit,
it's the past we step into
and how we repair it.*
- “The Hill We Climb” by Amanda Gorman

For the past few weeks, I’ve been reflecting upon these words from Amanda Gorman’s inauguration poem, considering what it means to “step into” our past, and how, upon doing so, we might begin to engage in the work of reparation. To me, these words are a reminder that we carry the past with us, that there is a through line among past, present, and future discourses that shapes how we encounter one another and how we structure our society toward inclusion or exclusion. In considering the inequities that exist in our schools and in our world, we cannot plow forward with blinders on the past, ignoring the historical legacy of systemic racism, colonization, and imperialism. Instead, we must collectively reckon with these forces, critically exploring how they manifest in our education system and, particularly for our purposes within this SIG, how they shape learning experiences for emergent bilingual students.

In this vein, we continue our inquiry into the intersection of race/racism and bilingual education in this issue of the BER SIG newsletter (to view the previous issue, click [here](#)). We begin with a reflection on anti-Blackness in bilingual education from **Patriann Smith**, who reminds us of the rich bidialectal and bilingual practices of African American and Black immigrant students and urges us to transcend anti-Blackness by using the guiding principles of a Black immigrant literacies framework.

Next, **Carolyn McKinney** provides the lens of Anglonormativity to describe the intersection of English hegemony and White supremacy in language education. Drawing upon language policy examples from her South African context, she argues, “Anglonormativity not only enables elite monolingual English speakers to

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project their own linguistic repertoire as a norm, but further devalues multilingualism in languages other than English to such an extent that *multilingualism* rather than monolingualism is constructed as the problem for students in schools.” **Younna Deiri** then shares a poignant reflection on the legacy of Edward Said, considering how his concept of Orientalism can help us to unpack White supremacy, particularly as it applies to the “tight spectrum of norms around language.” SIG artist **Chris Faltis** provides a stunning portrait of Edward Said to accompany Deiri’s critical commentary.

In addition to these thoughtful reflections on the intersection of racism and bilingual education, this issue includes the SIG Scholar Spotlight, a new initiative by our SIG social media team (headed by **Sandra Leu Bonanno**) to build community by highlighting important scholarship and scholars within our field. This Scholar Spotlight highlights **María Cioè-Peña**, whose work explores the experiences of Spanish-speaking mothers of emergent bilingual students with disabilities in New York Public Schools.

We end the issue with an insightful interview with **Danny C. Martinez**, who shares his reflections on the importance of centering the linguistic dexterity of bicultural and multilingual speakers and learners and confronting the anti-Black practices within Latinx cultural and linguistic spaces. As he puts it:

In our current sociopolitical context, we must work toward more expansive notions of what counts as language in schools and our communities. We need to recognize, as bi- and multi-lingual scholars, the anti-Blackness in our field. I am committed to this feature not only because I work with and alongside Black youth in my work, but because this is what we need to do if we stand in solidarity with Black lives.

In closing, I want to thank my incredible BER SIG newsletter team (**Chris Faltis, Giselle Martinez, Kristen Pratt, Minhye Son, Garrett Delavan, and Silvia Romero-Johnson**) for all of the work you have done to put this issue together. We (the team) hope that you enjoy this issue and welcome your feedback and ideas for future content.

Warmly,
Laura



Laura Hamman-Ortiz is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Colorado-Boulder and the Chair of the BER SIG Newsletter Working Group. She is also faculty with the English as a New Language program at the University of Notre Dame. Her research is situated at the intersection of applied linguistics and bilingual education, with a focus on the (trans)linguaging and (bi)literacy practices of emergent bilingual children and their teachers. Dr. Hamman-Ortiz’s research has been published in the *Bilingual Research Journal*, *Language and Education*, and the *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, among others.

Letter from the SIG Chair

Contributed by Maria Coady, University of Florida

Happy new year, feliz año nuevo, et bonne année a tous.

I hope that this newsletter and message find our members well. As we enter into a new year, some important things have changed that will affect the people we work with and, indeed, the work that we do as scholars and educators.

One of the most obvious changes in the United States is the new political administration under President Biden and Vice President Harris, and the hope that that brings us for bilingual education research. The administration's forthcoming Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona, is a promising boost to our work, himself bilingual and familiar with how schools function and how educational policies work, particularly those policies that affect bilingual students and families.

However, as some of our members have aptly noted on our Facebook page this fall, we have more to learn about Cardona and his relationship to private entities and how those will play out in policies. We have also just received notice from the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) at the US Department of Education that new educational funding will prioritize bilingual education (dual language) professional development. Although this is important to the work we do, I hope that we do not lose sight of the disparities in access to bilingual education programs for our communities of color and rural communities. In short, we are now entering a new political era and cautiously optimistic about what that will mean for language education policies, programs, and people. At the same time, we must keep in focus the persistent inequities we face in education in general, and in our field in particular.

Our work challenging coloniality and anti-Blackness in bilingual education must remain at the forefront of what we do. Thanks to the contributors, this BER SIG Winter Newsletter continues to center race, and invites us to reflect and reframe. Patriann Smith, for instance, writes eloquently about language(s), status, and race, and she calls us to move beyond linguistic boxes of privileged languages to varieties of language that remain racialized and invisible:

Our efforts to reframe bilingual education, as has already begun, must allow for emerging understandings through intentional and adept communication among racialized populations who present multiple languages, regardless of the power, privilege and labels typically ascribed to these languages (i.e., *dialects*).

Other reflections by the contributors are equally inviting, and I know that you will enjoy them. In the next month, we will be sharing our 2021 AERA Pre-Conference Newsletter with highlights on sessions and symposiums for our SIG. We hope you will consider participating in the conference as a Mentor to junior scholars or as a Mentee.

I believe that there is light at the end of the proverbial tunnel (the darkness of political chaos in Washington and the Covid pandemic that continues to affect our lives and loved ones).

Keep well and remain in solidarity,

Maria



Dr. Maria Coady is Professor of ESOL and Bilingual Education. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Colorado, Boulder, where she was a U.S. Department of Education Title VII Fellow. Dr. Coady prepares both in- and pre-service teachers to work with English Learners (ELs) and studies bilingual education worldwide. Her new books include: *The Coral Way Bilingual Program* (2020), *Connecting School and the Multilingual Home: Theory and Practice for Rural Educators*, (2019), and *Early Language Learning Policies in the 21st Century* (Ed., with S. Zein, forthcoming 2021).

Beyond Anti-Blackness in Bilingual Education

Contributed by Patriann Smith, University of South Florida

Beyond Anti-Blackness in Bilingual Education: Looking through the Lens of the Black Immigrant Subject

For decades, anti-Blackness has inadvertently undergirded the framing, legislation and examination of bilingual education in the United States in ways that hierarchize languages, delegitimize linguistic repertoires and perpetuate divisive rhetoric among racialized students. The persistence of anti-Blackness in bilingual education has been especially pronounced for students racialized as Black, regardless of whether they are considered U.S. nationals or immigrants to the United States (Cooper, 2020). From the vast population of Black American students who speak African American English or Spanish to the many Black multilingual youth identified as *English learners* upon their migration to the United States, anti-Blackness works to obscure the linguistic assets presented by Black students in classrooms (Bauer, 2019).

The framing of bilingual education bolstered by anti-Blackness suggests that certain racialized students who use 'two standardized languages' (e.g., Latinx speakers of English and Spanish) can be designated as *bilingual* while their racialized counterparts (i.e., Black students) who also use legitimized standardized languages (e.g., French: Haiti) as well as delegitimized standardized languages (e.g., African American English: American), cannot. Such a framing appears to insist on *bilingualism* as the use of two standardized languages while often relegating *bidialectalism* (typically, reflecting a standardized and non-standardized variety) as independent of *bilingualism* because of its somewhat inferior status. The framing seems visible in U.S. bilingual research that reflects a *bilingual education* focused predominantly on certain racialized *English learners* (i.e., Latina/o/x), a situation that has arisen given that a majority of such learners across the country are part of the Hispanic or Latino population (García & Kleifgen, 2010; United States Department of Education, 2020). As a result of this framing, there seems to have been a somewhat privileged positioning of Spanish/English speakers as *bilingual*, even while the *dialects* of large populations of *bidialectal* and *bilingual* African American English speakers are excluded from bilingual programs, and limited emphasis is placed on the *bilingualism* of Black 'English learners' at large (e.g., Haitian, Dominican Republican, Kenya) (Cooper, 2020). Through the pervasive anti-Blackness undergirding this framing, legislation and examination of racialized students has persisted in ways that tout the languages of certain populations as more privileged than others. As called for by Flores and García (2017), and as reinforced by Hamman-Ortiz (2020), there is an increasing need to address the delegitimization of the linguistic repertoires and of racialized students that have been the result (Rosa & Flores, 2017).

Transcending anti-Blackness in the framing, legislation, and examination of racialized students in bilingual education is possible and may be envisioned by considering and extending three elements presented in the framework of *Black immigrant literacies* (Smith, 2020a). The first element is understanding that all racialized students who present an individual linguistic repertoire (García & Kleyn, 2016) --where there are multiple named language systems involved, regardless of the status of these systems--must be allowed to lay claim to the struggle for linguistic justice. Our efforts to reframe bilingual education, as has already begun, must allow for emerging understandings through intentional and adept communication among racialized populations who present multiple languages, regardless of the power, privilege and labels typically ascribed to these languages (i.e., *dialects*). Recognizing the role of colonization in hierarchizing language as a mechanism to divide and conquer can form the basis for solidarity across racialized populations, whose efforts to support the linguistic assets of all students must supersede the limitations of U.S. bilingual legislation.

The second element is recognizing that all racialized students are positioned as inferior in the U.S. regardless of the privileged status that may be ascribed to the languages or personhood of certain student populations at large. Rejecting notions such as the *model minority* status ascribed to certain racialized youth and thus failing to recognize their linguistic assets as crucial to building bridges for understanding *bilingualism*, lends itself to divide-and-conquer racial politics that sustains intra-/interracial and intra-/interlinguistic divisions among bilingual and multilingual populations, a vast majority of whom are racialized (Smith, Lee, & Chang, 2022). Challenging such notions can help to sustain a journey towards linguistic equity in the support structures provided by the U.S. system of bilingual education for all racialized populations. The third element is creating opportunities for all racialized youth to identify and leverage the linguistic assets they already possess through the use of metalinguistic, metaracial, and metacultural understanding (i.e., a transraciolinguistic approach; Smith, 2019, 2020b). For Black immigrant youth racialized as Black and who are learning about Blackness and about how it positions them and their languages in inferior ways within a new context, these opportunities can be critical to facilitating immigrant racialized students' negotiation of novel understandings about race with notions of what it means to use language, particularly English, in ways that do not negate their personhood.

Moving towards anti-Blackness in bilingual education by considering the role of language in the literacies of the Black immigrant subject can reveal much about how racialization often functions in silence, implicitly undergirding *postcolonial* expectations for youth's linguistic life worlds in non-U.S. contexts even while colonial legacies remain explicitly visible in U.S. bilingual legislation, impeding linguistic opportunities for all racialized youth.

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Anglonormativity and Racism

Contributed by Carolyn McKinney, University of Cape Town

Anglonormativity and Racism

Without a doubt, one of the most powerful expressions of coloniality is the continuing denigration of the language practices and resources of Black speakers around the globe. Kenyan author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o writes particularly about the hegemony of English and the denigration of African languages by both indigenous and settler communities in Anglophone post-colonial contexts. He explains that "[t]he language of power is English and that becomes internalized," (...) "You normalize the abnormal and the absurdities of colonialism, and turn them into a norm from which you operate. Then you don't even think about it." (interviewed by Wade, 2018).

Anglonormativity, or *the expectation that people will be and should be proficient in English, and are deficient, even deviant, if they are not*, names a powerful monolingual ideology which normalises the abnormal (McKinney, 2017). The concept is informed by heteronormativity which originates from Adrienne Rich's feminist analysis of 'compulsory heterosexuality' (Warner, 1991, 9). Those who do not conform are positioned as deviant and consistently subjected to micro-aggressions. Similarly, the normative compulsory command of English that Anglonormativity captures has devastating consequences for bi/multilingual children and speakers of non-dominant varieties of English.

Anglonormativity enables English-speaking children from middle-class homes to have their language resources celebrated, and used as indicators of their engagement and intelligence, while children from non-dominant language backgrounds are recast as linguistically deficient. Because it is not only monolingual English but the kinds of Englishes aligned with whiteness that are most valorised (McKinney, 2007, 2010), the concept of Anglonormativity describes the intersection of white supremacy with monolingual, English-only ideologies and Standard English ideology. Anglonormativity not only enables elite monolingual English speakers to project their own linguistic repertoire as a norm, but further devalues multilingualism in languages other than English to such an extent that *multilingualism* rather than monolingualism is constructed as the problem for students in schools.

While official South African language-in-education policy advocates for bi/multilingualism, including bilingual languages of instruction, in practice there is no formal government support for any programme other than early exit bilingualism. Around 80% of children (who are Black and African language speakers) learn through their home language for the first three years of schooling and then are subjected to an abrupt switch to English language of

instruction for all their subjects except home language from year 4. African language speaking children are exposed at best to 1-2 hours a week of English as an additional language in years 1-2 and 3-4 hours a week in year 3 before this abrupt transition. There are NO language support programs for these children at all. It is accepted that they should follow the same curriculum using the same monolingual English textbooks and writing the same monolingual English assessments as their English home language peers. This means that, in practice, the same children who were racially and linguistically privileged during apartheid schooling, a numerical minority of home language speakers of mainstream varieties of English and Afrikaans, continue to be privileged. The acceptance of this policy and the consequent widespread failure of the system to meet the needs of Black children in schooling evidences deep-seated racism. Today South African parents largely accept the myth that African languages cannot be used for learning and knowledge production, and that any kind of education in English is superior. Teachers respond to this impossible situation by translanguaging in classroom oral discourse, but largely accept that they should hide their bi/multilingualism from education officials and view their own innovative bilingual language practices as deficient. The lack of questioning of this discriminatory implementation of language policy is one of the most pernicious forms of racism because, as Ngũgĩ argues, it is an absurdity that has become completely normalized.

Our hope lies in disrupting Anglonormativity and the deficit positioning of Black learners, which raciolinguistic theorising (Flores & Rosa, 2015) shows us is not limited to post-colonial contexts but is a powerful ideology in North America as well. This requires advocacy and activism for policy and pedagogical approaches that do two things:

- firstly, a focus on the relationship between language and power, and particularly on how languages other than mainstream or ‘standard’ English are marginalised in the language and literacy class, and in schooling more broadly (Critical Language Awareness); this learning involves a decentering of whiteness as mainstream English speaking monolinguals come to recognize the limitations of *their* linguistic repertoires
- and, secondly, enabling students and teachers to draw freely and creatively on their full linguistic and multimodal repertoires in order to learn, not only in language and literacy classes, but across the curriculum.

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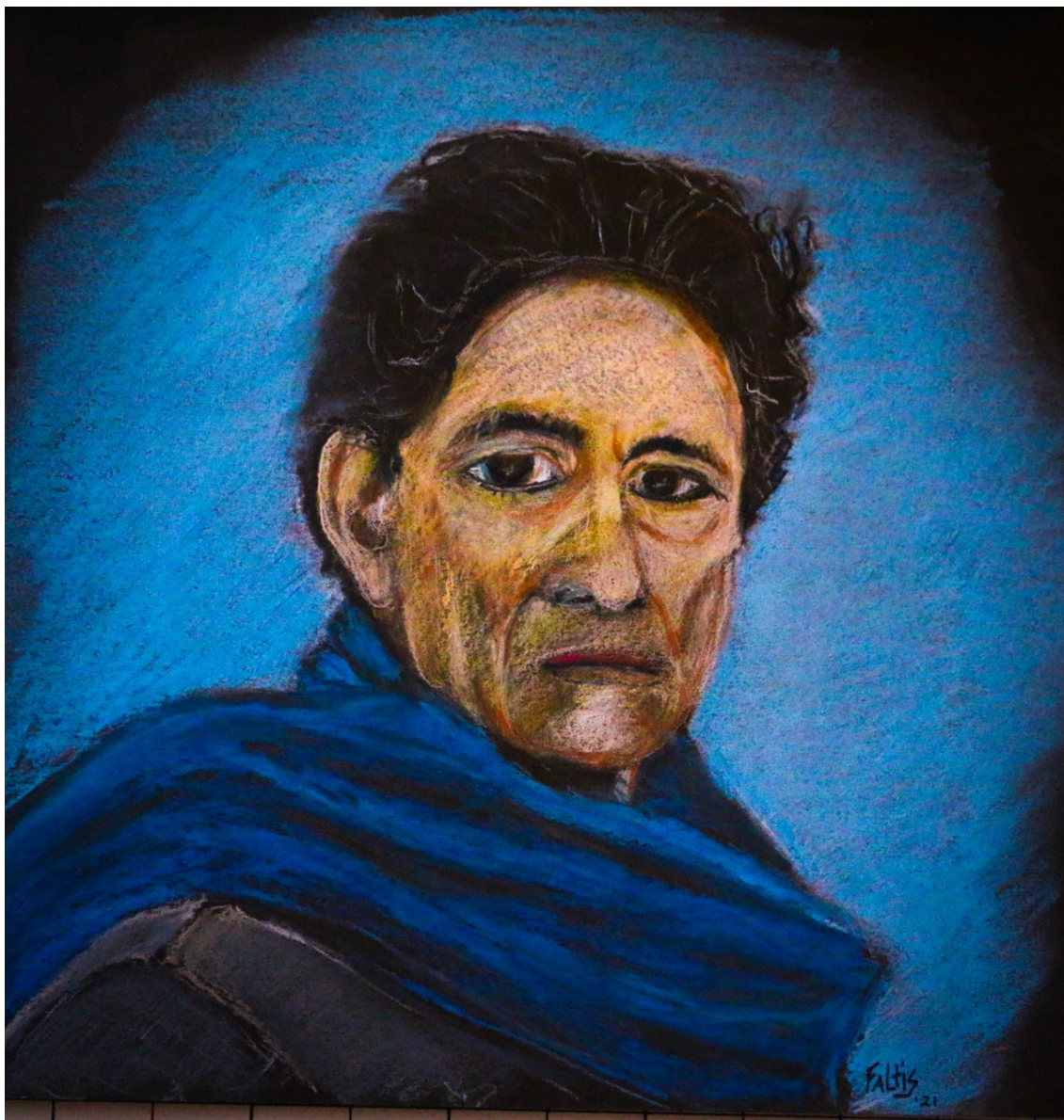
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Portrait of Edward Said

Contributed by Christian Faltis, Texas A&M International University



This is a pastel pencil rendering of a portrait of Edward Said (1935-2003), founder of postcolonial studies at Columbia University. The drawing is intended to be a visceral realist interpretation of Professor Said, a Palestinian American, who wrote extensively about Orientalism, a Western gaze held by colonizers and the Empire as a whole that imagines, conveys, and distorts differences of peoples and cultures in Arab and African regions as compared to those of (white) Western Europe and the U.S. It initially involved viewing Arab cultures (African ethnicities) as exotic, backward, uncivilized, and at times dangerous. Orientalism can also be applied to peoples of Mexico, the Caribbean, Central, and South America. To learn more about Said, Orientalism, and Education, I invite you to read Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism*. Vintage; Said, E. W. (1985). *Orientalism reconsidered*. *Race & class*, 27(2), 1-15; and Leonardo, Z. (2020). *Edward Said and Education*. Routledge as a start.



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Reflections on Edward Said and Orientalism

Contributed by Youmna Deiri, Independent Scholar

Reflections on Edward Said and Orientalism

Orientalism refers to the methods the West (Occident) has created and uses as its own version of the East (Orient) to set itself apart from it, project its superiority over it, and justify dominating it and extracting value from its peoples, lands, and lives. In constructing the inferiority of the East as the less-than-human, the "Other", who possesses an endless number of negative traits, the West (the Occident) created a fictive collective imagination that promotes its interests, benefits, and superiority over the East (Orient) through ways of being, knowing, and doing. The Occident dictates this superiority by creating a set of acceptable norms of language, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, among others, that project the empire's interest, and standards of desires to be imposed on the postcolonial subject/the Orient. The postcolonial subject is the everyday person of color who is touched by colonization and who has to live creatively within the confines and results of the imagination of who we can be from the standpoint of the Occident. In that regard, Edward Said gave us a methodology to understand the process of constructing superiority and how it is used for the purpose of subjugation. This fictive imagination allows the Occident to gain a stance of heroism to fix, save, and change the Orient, be it by knowledge or by military intervention, to impose what is considered a better, more superior way of being or knowing. However, knowledge creation and the institutionalization of such exceptionalism becomes manifest in considering these Western ways of knowing, being, and doing as the only source of knowledge that exists or worthy of existence. So much so that "Othered" ways of knowing, being, or doing, at best, are only suitable as alternatives rather than the core. It is good to keep in mind that the West and East don't refer to geographical location. Orientalism and how it relates to the field of education is explored in a fascinating new book by Zeus Leonardo (2020).

A related example of Orientalist practices is the control over the languages of students of color under the guise of assessments and word gaps, packaged as a concern for students' languages and futures. In essence, such Orientalist practices are surrogates to racial supremacy through linguistic supremacy, i.e. the superiority of the Occident and the inferiority of the Orient. Accordingly, students need to learn standardized English phonics as a required set of skills; unless these are learned, the students themselves become problems. Such assumptions have a real material impact that locks students unnecessarily in labels that limit their potential. Other disguised forms of control are splicing tones and ways of talking as "turn-taking" that disregards many ways of turn-taking that exist in the world. This type of control points down to a speaker's emotionality, and in written language, to the writer's punctuation and form without giving attention to context, content, meaning, and the lived experiences of the reader or the writer. Now, the lack of "skills" or their presence becomes a surrogate to implement the Occidents' superiority through languaging practices over the lives and bodies of "Othered" students. In short, introducing such a tight spectrum of

norms around language in which no matter what route the student takes, they will need help (and error correction) from the Occident. And in such tightening of languaging practices, accepted as norms that mirror the dominant majority's standards, i.e., white supremacy, a noose is circled on the postcolonial subject's languaging practices rendering them obsolete, inept, imprecise, inappropriate, or genre incoherent.

The lens/gaze of analysis, when tainted with the supremacy of one group over the inferiority of another, is even more problematic. In this case, the supremacy of one racial group over another, or one language group over another, as these two intertwine. Analyzing speech or writing through the Orientalist lens translates into interpreting lives within confines of control—the control of someone's emotions through a constructed norm and labels such as "angry," "playing the victim," "lacking gratitude," and asking for justice as being "vindictive," speaking the truths of lived experiences becomes a form of "disobedience," or deviant and threatening...etc. The control of behaviors by labeling people of color touched by colonization as "lazy," "hyper-sexual," or "suppressed" and/ or "oppressed." Rather than labeling the behavior, and the imagination of the Occident that confines lives. So, Orientalism decides who is worthy of knowledge through curriculum and modes of assessment, whose bodies are inferior, whose languages are inferior. Anything deviant from a Western-centric way of being, or in fact any critique of Western centric ways of knowing is not permissible because it lies without/ outside Western-centric, monolingual ways of being and doing, and knowing. While, the West had the tendency to surveil, observe, label, and disregard, and discard entire inferior humanities...any critique of such gazing is met with violent types of intellectual and military resistances from the Occident/ White supremacist. Indeed, Orientalism lives every day in the hallways of educational institutions and everyday life alike.

As an educator, I am compelled to ask a question rooted in a Saidian understanding of what sort of imaginations we are encouraging our current educational researchers and teachers to construct in our teacher education programs. In what ways are we, as educators, contributing to the promotion of Orientalism through what is called the core curriculum, which positions the ways of knowing of indigenous, black, and brown peoples whose lives have been touched by colonization as alternatives to or as less than Western knowledge? What sort of imagination allows us to think of important ways of knowing as alternatives to the centering of Western monolingual knowledge? How did it come to be that when we claim equity and social justice, we study the lives of people of color and bilingual communities, and we place these lives and communities under the microscope without foregrounding the idea of Orientalism in educational spaces? What imagination allows us to deny and accept particular manuscripts in educational journals that are written to adhere to Western ways of writing monolingually? Whose knowledge are we accepting, tolerating, or promoting in our academic journals? And how are our practices in education at large promoting and contributing to, or disrupting and dismantling the goals and sets of beliefs in the forms of ideologies about American exceptionalism--superiority-- in our educational institutions?

In the lens of which I learned to see the world, there are clear examples of everyday living Orientalism in the notions of American exceptionalism, "the greatest nation on earth," the first nation, and that these ways of thinking enable the empire to control knowledge and whose knowledge counts. Reading Said, I continually ask: What sorts of cultural, economic, military, and knowledge legacies are we imposing, negotiating, or allowing to co-exist in educational spaces when these spaces are filled with bilingual children and youth and of children and youth of color? How does Orientalism show up in these educational spaces?

On Said's Work on Orientalism and Its Relevance to the U.S. Context of Bilingualism

Let me return a bit to my experience as a student at Aleppo University with Professor Anas Maktabi, who helped us examine the language Robinson Crusoe (Defoe, 1719) used to address the black man, Friday, in his novel. He met Friday on the island near Venezuela and Trinidad. As Friday learned English, he was also taught to call Crusoe a "Master", not by will, but by the violent condescension of Crusoe. Sound familiar? That was my first encounter with the importance of analyzing language within a Western gaze that coheres to an empire that rests on the promotion of the ideals of white supremacy, violently or through the language and the intellectual. The most compelling part in analyzing the language as embedded within the power relations of white supremacy places the

gaze and the analysis on Crusoe's violence and imagination. What does it mean to be forced to learn a language that articulates us as less-human, and as the Other? Our discussion was profound because it enabled me to understand how surveilling the language of the (post-colonial) subject, and how Friday came to speak English with Crusoe changed over time, and that this was an irrefutable extension of imperial languaging practices. However and importantly, the change was a reflection of Crusoe's violence rather than Friday's obedience or choice. Therefore, putting a wrench at the heart of neoliberal concepts of choice as a fallacy. In some cases one's choices are contoured by a clear understanding of modes of survival. In reality a few hundred years later, I find the language and practices used to render us as Other is no less violent than that of Crusoe. As a student, I was asked to map out the shift and change in the language used in this novel as it progressed with regard to the power relations constructed by Defoe through Crusoe. The assertion of superiority through the language used, and the symbolism of condoning slavery through means of language on Crusoe's part, was a projection of the British Empire. In this analysis, Friday's languaging, the adoption of the imperial language, was forced but necessary for survival. After all, that is the major default of difference: what does it mean to be forced to learn a language and what does it mean to learn it on your own pace, your own time, and your own brilliance without the surveillance and the policy of assessment, skills, and other minimizing notions of languaging practices. The idea of having to learn the very languages that intend to articulate our savagery, and the status of being considered as a less-than, being labeled as "passive woman" or "the terrorist," or indicting someone for merely speaking their language in a public space. Even the modicum of surprise for being "articulate" to the Western gaze is both alarming and intriguing to me as a scholar of multilingualism, but most importantly as a human being that lives the daily violence of monolingualism. At the same time, I was aware all along that it does not have to be that way.

So, to take this memory of the Orientalism found in Robinson Crusoe on how I make sense of bilingualism, I think it was helpful for understanding how many of the language practices we use are about power, are intertwined with power, and with the construction, promotion, and projection of the empire. The Crusoe example speaks to how many of the ways we view language teaching and learning can actually be a projection of practices that promote white supremacy and the empire. I muse, what compels us to continue to do research to show the value of bilingualism/ multilingualism (e.g., cognitive advantages, or even sociocultural infatuations) when the majority of the world's communities are bilingual/multilingual instead of starting from the place where bi/multilingualism is inherently valuable and move from there? Bilingual students don't need help, their languages do not need to be harmed under the guises of "help," "skills," "assessment," or improving their accents to project the desired "perfect" ideological accent insisted upon by the empire -- this is such a futile concept to begin with...or asserting pontifications about punctuation in written language as important for rhythm... then going all over written papers with a red commentary notes, to "revise," "correct," and "give feedback" about punctuation without first considering the meaning and the content of what a person is writing or expressing. For example, when prioritizing monolingual punctuation practices as a mode to police and control bilingual students of color ways of punctuating and writing that becomes a mode of contributing to Orientalism. Simply, because there is an assumption that someone's knowledge is inferior because of its form that does not cohere to the standards of language practices or language that is considered the norm from those who live under the empire. So, I invite us to think deeply about our priorities as educators whose beliefs and ideologies have real material impact on the lives and futures of students.

Bi/multilingual students need teachers who view them as more than capable of expressing meaning in more than English or other Western languages, as members of bilingual communities, where languaging practices show how effortlessly people move through and across languages. Orientalism helps us understand the imagination of a western gaze that positions a person who speaks Arabic as an indicted subject by the mere default of speaking one's community language, or as one Arabic teacher once told me the language I learned to love with. We, in bilingual education, have much to learn from Edward Said's writings and thoughts about Orientalism as it relates to how bilingual children and youth are rendered in schools and in Western society.

As a teacher educator and researcher, Orientalism helps me understand that until the ideologies of language that are surrogate to white supremacy change, at least, we can be honest that the educational systems and teacher education programs that exist today aren't ready yet to serve students and communities of color. We don't want a generation

growing up feeling contentless just because we as a nation at large have failed to create support structures that show the brilliance of their lives, and the depth of their thinking. I am not demonizing teachers here or myself. There are so many of us educators that are over extended and underserved across the board. As an educator, I find myself having a moment of reckoning, through life experiences, that compel me to be honest that teaching sometimes creates harm. How do I own the harm I create? How do I promote internalized white supremacy? And equally, how do I receive harm? In the face of educational systems that narrow our visions of the futures and potentials of students of color, how do we educators envision a different imagination rooted in a belief about the abundance of languages, abilities, and opportunities for a life well lived for students of color? I end with these reflective questions that have answers within us when we engage in radical honesty about our roles as educators.



Youmna Deiri, Ph.D. is an independent scholar. She earned her Ph.D. at a predominantly white institution, Ohio State University. She identifies as Syrian belonging to lands that are currently named Syria. She is a scholar of multilingualism, early childhood mathematics, and Radical Intimate qualitative methods.

BER SIG Scholar Spotlight

Contributed by Sandra Leu Bonanno,
Metropolitan State University of Denver

What is the BER SIG Scholar Spotlight?

The Scholar Spotlight is an endeavor to highlight the important scholarship that forwards the field of bilingual, bicultural, and biliteracy education. This social media campaign aims to build virtual (and eventually, in-person) community by encouraging coalition-building, rigorous conversations, and connections for collaboration.



Introducing Dr. María Cioè-Peña

"Scholar Spotlight: The Bilingual Education Research SIG is proud to spotlight Dr. María Cioè-Peña from Montclair State University, her scholarship, and perspectives on bilingual education. Her work centers the experiences of Spanish-speaking mothers of EBs with disabilities in New York Public Schools. Relish in these 3 minutes to learn about the scholars and scholarship happening in your community!"

Click [here](#) to view the Scholar Spotlight video.

<https://www.mariacioe-pena.com/>

Interview with a SIG Member

Contributed by Giselle Martinez Negrette, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Interview with Dr. Danny C. Martinez

Danny C. Martinez is an Associate Professor at the University of California, Davis in the School of Education. Martinez's research explores the cultural and communicative practices of Black and Latinx youth in secondary literacy classrooms, and teacher learning as it relates to leveraging, leveling and sustaining these practices. He is a former secondary teacher of English Language Arts and English Language Development in San Francisco and Los Angeles. He earned his doctorate in Urban Schooling at the University of California, Los Angeles. Martinez's research has been published in *Review of Research in Education, Anthropology and Education Quarterly, the Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, Linguistics and Education, English Education, and Urban Education*, among others



Giselle Martinez Negrette is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She specializes in bilingual/ESL (English as a second language) education and sociolinguistics. She has worked as a language teacher in several different regions including Latin America, North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Her research interests are centered on issues of language, equity, and social justice, particularly in relation to the schooling of linguistically and culturally diverse children in the United States and other regions of the world.

Giselle: Could you please introduce yourself, including your research interests?

Danny: My name is Danny C. Martinez, currently living and isolating in Woodland, California (Patwin Lands) with la mera mera in my family, Dr. Elizabeth Montaña, and my bilingual babies, Amelia (6 years old), and Elias (2 years old). I am Associate Professor of Language, Literacy and Culture at UC Davis' School of Education. I was born and raised in South Gate, CA, a Latinx community southeast of Downtown Los Angeles, where I was immersed in a space where everything around me reminded me that I was brown, Chicano, and that I needed to learn to speak Spanish! While I understood it and could speak a few words when needed, it wasn't until I attended UCLA as an undergraduate that I had a desire to become bilingual. I was fortunate to be introduced to amazing faculty in English, Chicana/o/x Studies and Education. These three areas didn't feel separate to me and they all worked together to bolster my interest in becoming a teacher, and to take a deep interest in literacy, language, and learning. I immediately started my credential and MA program at UC Berkeley where I taught and learned from youth and their families in the Mission District. After two years in this community, I returned to Los Angeles and taught in the community I call Tajuata in my work. This is the same community where my mother was born and raised, and where father lived after arriving in the U.S. after leaving his childhood home in Mexico City. Tajuata is closely connected to my cultural historical past and continues to inform the research I conduct today.

My research explores how the languaging and literacy practices of Black and Latinx youth mediate learning in literacy classroom contexts. I am purposeful in naming Black and Latinx spaces because of my own experiences in San Francisco and Los Angeles observing how youth learn together in urban schooling contexts. I am also interested

in teacher learning as it relates to leveraging and leveling Black and Latinx languaging and literacy practices for learning.

Giselle: Could you tell us about your commitment to research and teaching in relation to serving bilingual/bicultural students and minoritized communities?

Danny: A few years ago, I had the opportunity to teach an undergraduate course that I titled *Languaging in Chicana and Latinx Communities*. In this course I highlight the racist and deficit research in anthropology, linguistics, education, etc., that painted Latinx families as intellectually inferior, deficient and belonging to a “culture of poverty.” I immediately pivot toward empirical scholarship by Latinxs and other scholars of color that highlight the linguistic dexterity of Latinxs in the U.S. and we discuss relationships toward schooling experiences of Latinx children and youth particularly. Students in this course create ofrendas to a course digital altar, write and create digital and performative sociolinguistic autobiographies, and explore a range of language topics that concern Chicana and Latinx communities. It's a wonderful class. Midway through the course, I nonchalantly told students, “This is my dream class!” As I continued teaching one student stopped me and asked, “is this really your dream class?” This student, and others had never heard their professor say this about a course they were teaching. I told them that it absolutely was my dream class. I had the opportunity to teach a class of mostly Latinx students and other students of color the historical, political, sociological and anthropological work that has gone into understanding the communicative practices of Latinxs. We do this via song, poetry, art, writing and a review of empirical and conceptual readings from the field. This course filled with undergraduates considering careers in teaching, counseling and educational research provide me a space to counter what they have experienced in their own schooling. We learn about research that can help mediate future roles as advocates and activists in their future. To have a room of mostly bilingual and bicultural students at an institution like UC Davis actively translanguage in their discussions in class and author translingual texts is what I envision for the future of all schooling. This should not be a learning space limited to a prestigious institution. On the last day of this course a Latina student who identified as Salvadoreña shared with the class, “I have never been able to speak in a large lecture and use the word *puchica*, or write it on my papers!” She was amazed but also saddened by this reality that her language had been stigmatized by not just schooling, but larger standard and Mexican-centric ideologies of what counts as language, and Spanish language in the U.S./California context.

This captures my commitment to research and teaching that upends what gets normalized as languaging practices that *count*. Like many scholars I build on and learn from, I am committed to highlighting the linguistic dexterity of bicultural and multilingual speakers and learners. Simultaneously, I am concerned with naming the anti-Black practices that we need to confront within Latinx cultural and linguistic spaces.

Giselle: You are well-known for your research with Black and Latinx youth in English language arts classrooms. Could you tell us about this work and how you see it as connected to your broader commitment to combating racism and advocating for bi/multilingual students?

Danny: When I imagine the transformative possibilities of schooling from Black and Latinx students, I imagine learning spaces where the linguistic ingenuity of these youths’ communities are treated as tools that can and should mediate their learning. In my teaching and research experiences I have witnessed the racialized reductive teaching practices that attempt to make Black and Latinx youth feel that their home and communities have nothing to contribute to their learning. I have also witnessed how teachers do the work of learning about and from Black and Latinx youth positioning themselves as co-learners. When I talk about leveraging the language and literacy practices of Black and Latinx youth, I am not simply talking about using these practices as a stepping stone or as a way to across a one-way bridge toward standard English or academic English practices. April Baker-Bell (2020) reminds us that the very notion of academic English was invented during the civil rights movement in ways that continue to stigmatize minoritized communities. Therefore, I advocate for a kind of language awareness with teachers and youth that raises the prestige of their linguistic abilities, and normalizes them as well. Margarita Zisselsberger discusses this in her notion of “leveling” languages. Given this, in my commitments toward upending racism, I believe that as

advocates of multilingualism, we need to ask who can become bilingual? We know that others have asked this question in terms of dual language education where white families are okay with their children becoming bilingual, while rarely seeing immigrant children or children of immigrant who have always been bilingual as brilliant! In this same vein, my work with Black youth and their families raises a concern about why Black youth in our schools are not seeing as bilingual themselves already, and learning from their Latinx peers to becoming bilingual in Spanish, or any other language.

Giselle: Some people argue that bilingualism is seen as an asset for white, native English-speaking children but as a deficit for immigrant children. What do you think about this statement? How do you see this unfolding in the context of California?

Danny: Ah! I spoke too soon. I completely am in agreement with this. I have lived in Davis, a college town, that offers dual language programs to the children of Davis families, many who are academics at the university. I think of Guadalupe Valdes' cautionary message to the field, and I see it alive every day! White children are becoming bilingual, and I do believe this to be a worthwhile project. However, I continue to see how bilingual and emerging bilingual BIPOC children are diverted to schools with English emergent models of learning. My family was fortunate that Amelia, my daughter, was able to join one of the first cohorts of dual language learners at the school with more diverse Latinx children and families. We saw this as one victory, but as parents, we lament and deal with decisions to keep Amelia in dual language programs since this ultimately will keep her away from Black children and Black teachers who are severely underrepresented in dual language programs. In agreeing with this statement, I also bring my own research into my family decisions. Can I be an advocate for multilingual language education for my children and other Latinx families knowing that Black children and their families are not being recruited for most of these programs? For me and my family, this is not being in solidarity with Black children and their families. Even though California reversed most of Proposition 227, there is much work to do to create equity centered schooling that works to dismantle anti-Blackness in schools. We still have a problem in California seeing bilingualism and multilingualism as a Latinx issue because we are the majority here. However, if we lose sight of other immigrant communities, Black and indigenous communities, we are not working toward a multilingual education that will shift the language ideologies folks hold that are detrimental to the state and the nation.

Giselle: Finally, how do you see the intersection of race and language playing out in our multilingual/multicultural/multiethnic school communities? Considering our current sociopolitical context, what do you think we can learn from this historical moment, and how can we use our learning to support our minoritized students?

Danny: Language and race are inextricably linked. This is why programs to increase standard or academic language are central to the schooling of BIPOC children and youth in schools. The languaging and literacy practices of BIPOC children and youth collectively are rarely treated as resources for learning in schools. I have also witnessed this in my own Latinx community where we privilege varieties of Spanish that aren't so accented (aren't they all!), or that index a lower status community. I've been accused of sounding too Chicano when I translanguage, and have experienced others being accused of sounding too rural. We also have a bad reputation of erasing indigenous languages altogether, framing young children and youth as not having a language, rather than seeing them as emerging multilinguals when they enter U.S. schools with command of Mayan and Spanish, while learning English, for example.

In our current sociopolitical context, we must work toward more expansive notions of what counts as language in schools and our communities. We need to recognize, as bi- and multi-lingual scholars, the anti-Blackness in our field. I am committed to this feature not only because I work with and alongside Black youth in my work, but because this is what we need to do if we stand in solidarity with Black lives. I have thought much about the emerging moments of solidarity between Black and Latinx youth (future work that I'm working on!) that I've captured in micro-interactions in schools. These are moments that are mundane, perhaps not part of learning experiences. I have noticed in these interactions that youth are engaging in small actions towards solidarity in literacy learning spaces. Sharing languaging practices, socializing one another toward an understanding of one

another across racial and ethnic differences as Django Paris has shared with us. Not all of these youth are engaged in large scale solidarity movements, but yet they are committed to one another as humans, and we don't give them credit. This ingenuity is what I want to highlight within this political climate.

Call for Member Updates

Have a new publication, position, or project? We want to hear about it!

Please share your professional updates from the 2020-2021 academic year [here](#).

Deadline: Friday, March 19th

These announcements will be published in the pre-conference issue (April 2021) of the BER SIG newsletter.

About the Bilingual Education Research SIG

The Bilingual Education Research Special Interest Group in the American Educational Research Association seeks:

- To provide opportunities for the exchange of information among and between researchers and practitioners interested in issues related to bilingual education as well as linguistic/cultural issues related to language minority education, through presentations, discussions, formal and informal meetings, and publications.
- To encourage qualitative and quantitative, basic, applied, and policy research in the area of bilingual education, broadly defined.
- To promote research in bilingual education and providing a forum for innovative approaches in this field of inquiry.

We accomplish these goals through a community of active and innovative scholars seeking to support as well as learn from one another for the purpose of improving the lives of teachers and students, multilingually! As a member of the SIG, you automatically receive updates, announcements and important information regarding publication opportunities, conferences, job postings and other opportunities relevant to our scholarship. SIG members also may participate in various leadership initiatives, award committees as well as in our mentoring efforts for graduate students and early career scholars. We collaborate with the Latina/o/x Research Issues SIG and the Second Language Research SIG to throw the best party (Pachanga!) during our annual meeting each year!

Please visit our website for more information on our SIG: <http://www.aera.net/SIG012/Bilingual-Education-Research-SIG-12>

We are also on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1477801139116319/> and Twitter [@AERA_BerSig](#)

Have an idea for the newsletter?

If you are interested in contributing to the next BER SIG newsletter, please email bilingualedsignewsletter@gmail.com with a brief abstract / overview of your idea.