

Reimagining Writing Assessment for Socio- and Racio-Linguistic Justice: Acknowledging the Use of Linguistic Repertoires for Black and Latinx Students

A research brief adapted for the Center for Research and Evaluation

Margarita Gomez and Kristina Collins

Why this study?

Recently, a call to action has been made for researchers and teachers to examine how they are commemorating students' linguistic flexibility, especially in the context of assessment tools. The creation of assessment tools that are sociolinguistically and raciolinguistically just is significant in working against idealized constructions of bilingualism and monolingualism, as well as crediting students for their languaging practices in school-based written expression. Given that emerging bilinguals' (EBs') repertoires often differ from "standard" American English (SAE), it is important that ways for EBs' to utilize their full linguistic repertoire in school writing be identified.

What are the research questions?

- What are the linguistic repertoires present in middle school students' writing?
- How can teachers assess the use of emergent bilinguals' (EBs') diverse repertoires within their students' writing?

What are the key findings?

- Analysis indicated that students' linguistic repertoires demonstrated translanguaging, reflecting influences of diverse Spanishes, Englishes, and home language practices.
- Findings demonstrate the complex nature of teachers' journeys towards heteroglossic language ideologies, indicating that teachers face challenges in "truly embracing" students' heteroglossia in assessments.

Implications of the study

- Results nod to the importance of viewing linguistic repertoires of students of diverse cultures and races as intelligent and resourceful rather than substandard.
- Teachers' continued comparison of students' use of repertoires against SAE show how racism and linguisticism are continually present in systematic ways.
- Additional teacher education is required for teachers to recognize and credit translanguaging writing practices of students.