

# เข้าใจ (kao jai)

Education for Multilingual Learners at CUNY



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PhD in Urban Education  
CUNY Graduate Center  
UED 7110: New York City Education after De Blasio  
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December 12, 2021



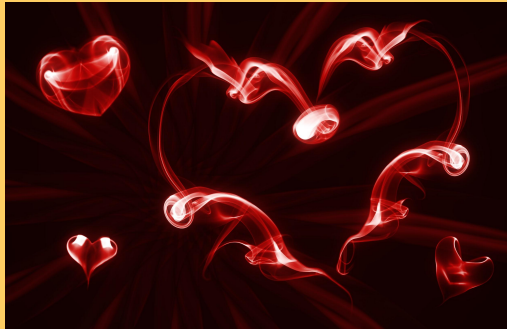
What does it mean to understand / know / learn something?



In Lao, we say ເຂົ້າໃຈ, which pragmatically means “to understand.”

ເຂົ້າ = “to go into”

ໃຈ = “spirit, soul, mind, heart”





# Positionality

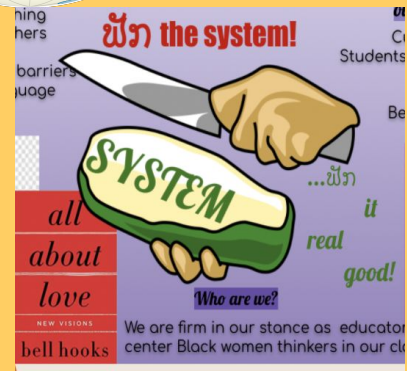


Refugee and Immigrant born in Ban Napho Camp, Thailand

Resettled Connecticut and eventually upstate New York at age 1

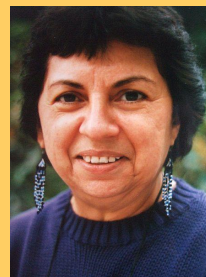
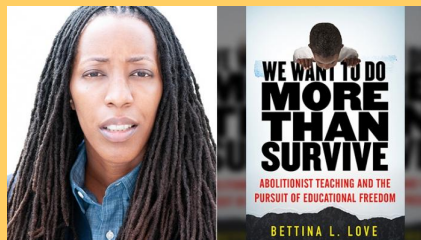
Attended public schools in Binghamton, NY and surrounding area

Acquired English through immersion beginning in Kindergarten



## Inspirations

- Amy Tan
- Gloria Anzaldua
- Bettina Love
- bell hooks
- My Mom (Vankham)



# Terms

**ESL** - English as a Second Language

**ELL** - English Language Learner

**MLL** - Multilingual Learner



# Traditional K-12 Bilingual Education Models

**ESL**

Isolated,  
one-way  
English  
language  
programs

**Transitional Dual-language  
Bilingual**

Isolated,  
two-way  
language  
programs  
designed to  
mainstream  
learner

**Bilingual**

Sustained and  
structured  
multilingual  
learning  
environment  
designed to  
develop  
proficiency in  
two languages

# Teaching and Learning Context

Currently in my 9th year of teaching ELA at The International High School at Prospect Heights

- Part of INPS (Internationals Network for Public Schools)

- NYS Consortium School

- PBATs

- Mentoring

- PROSE

- Internship

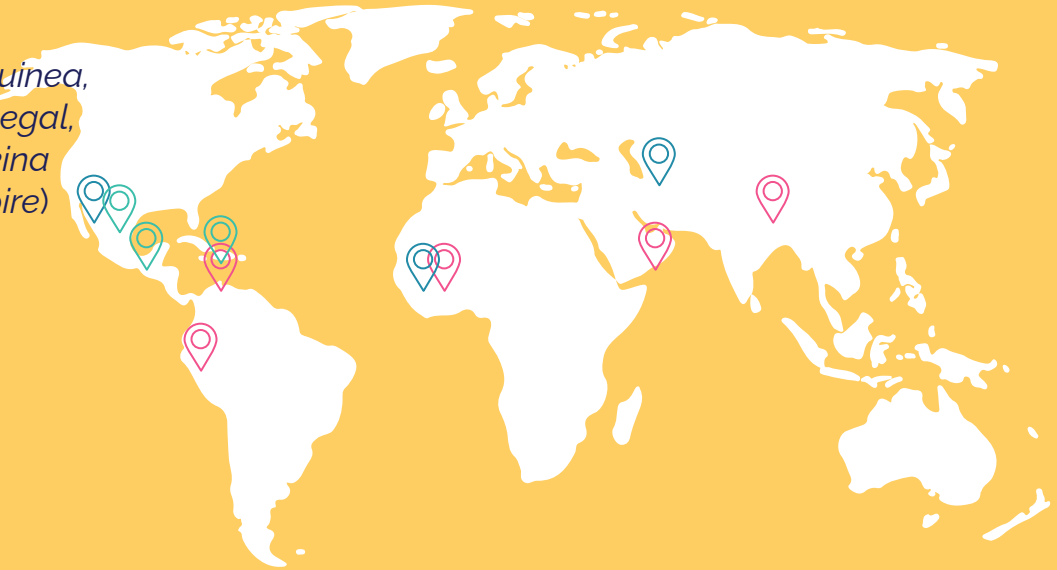
- Academic/Career Counseling



# Breaking Language Boundaries

## Languages Represented

- K'iche'
- Mam
- Fulani
- Bangla
- Arabic (*Yemen*)
- Spanish (*D.R., P.R., Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Costa Rica*)
- Farsi
- Russian
- French (*Haiti, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Togo, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire*)
- Haitian-Creole
- Urdu
- Hindi
- Lao
- Viet
- Woloff
- Mandinka
- Uzbek
- Tajik
- Punjabi



# Meet Ana

Originally from the Dominican Republic  
Recent graduate of IHS  
Enrolled in CUNY 4-year school  
SEEK program participant

Considers herself an activist, loves history and social issues, and is proud of her Dominican culture

Took ELA Regents 1x (before COVID shutdown)  
Scored 750 on PSATs (before SATs were waived)

Achieved "Outstanding/Expert" ratings on 4 of 5 of her graduation PBATs

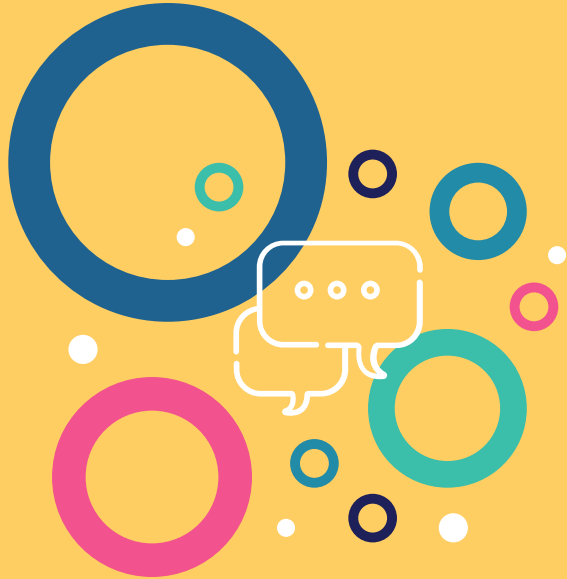
First in her family to attend college in the U.S.





# A Dream Come True!

During the 2020-2021 school year, our students were accepted to more CUNY 4-year colleges than ever before!



We've attributed this to our informative and tenacious college counselors and teachers who tirelessly wrote recommendations and helped students craft their personal statements, which were more highly prioritized in lieu of SAT and Regents waiver

# A Nightmare Hidden in the American Dream

CUNY student population is more diverse due to SAT/Regents waiver



Lack of CUNY pedagogy and curricula response



More ELLs and MLLs are restigmatized as the "problem"



Status-quo of academia is upheld, minoritized students are pushed out

**(unintended  
consequences)**



# Problem #1

## CUNY holds deficit views of ELLs/MLLs

### CUNY Proficiency Requirements

The City University of New York (CUNY) requires that all incoming degree-seeking students, as well as students entering the upper division, demonstrate proficiency in English (reading and writing) and Math in order to enroll in credit-bearing courses in the associated subject. Students may establish proficiency in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, meeting benchmark scores on the SAT, ACT, and New York State Regents exams, or demonstrating proficiency through Exemption.

Beginning Spring 2020, students who do not meet benchmark scores will no longer be administered a placement test; rather, CUNY will use a Proficiency Index to determine developmental education assignment. The Proficiency Index combines overall high school grade point average with SAT and/or Regents exam scores. There are separate Proficiency Indexes for English and Math.

Information is available on the CUNY Website concerning CUNY's Proficiency Index and Exemptions, <https://www.cuny.edu/academics/testing/testing-faqs/>

### English as a Second Language (ESL)

Students who are designated as ESL, and do not meet the proficiency requirements, and do not have a High School Diploma from the United States, will be required to take the CUNY Assessment Test in Writing (CATW) to determine appropriate course placement.

### English proficiency requirement: any one of the following:

- SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) section score of 480+
- ACT English score of 20 or higher
- NY State English Regents score of 75 or higher



# What does that mean for ELLs/MLLs?

The onus is on ELLs/MLLs to “fix” their English, despite admission to CUNY

Students like Ana, who come from progressive, pedagogically integrated schools, aren't viewed as “college-ready” and don't see the value in their multilingualism at the college-level while struggling to access traditional college curricula



# Language Programs Currently Offered

## CLIP

Non-credit bearing, 25 hours week, up to 1 year  
"Low cost"

## ESL

Credit and non-credit bearing, less hours than CLIP,  
tuition-based

## Bilingual

Use native language to learn English, only available at Hostos (2 year school in Bronx)

# SEEKING Answers

An Illuminating Call with a CUNY  
SEEK Program Counselor /  
Professor

R is a graduate of the CUNY Urban Education program

Many educators have psych, social work, mental health  
background  
"embodiment" and holistic practices

Recognized that 40% of his students were Spanish  
speakers

About 50% of SEEK counselors are bilingual

Academic Support Center divided into STEM and  
Humanities

No intentional language support

## THE PERCY ELLIS SUTTON SEEK PROGRAM

### Search For Education Elevation and Knowledge

SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge) is a New York State program at CUNY's senior and comprehensive colleges designed to assist students who are both academically and financially disadvantaged.

The SEEK program, (Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge), which in 2011 was renamed The Percy Ellis Sutton **SEEK** Program, is a four-year program established by the New York State Legislature for the senior colleges of the City University of New York to provide access to higher education for promising high school graduates who are not fully prepared but have demonstrated the potential to pursue undergraduate degrees at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

### MISSION STATEMENT

*The Percy Ellis Sutton SEEK Department aspires to promote, maintain, and graduate individuals who strive to further their education and professional success within a social justice framework. We are committed to elevating, cultivating and empowering such individuals by way of academic support, financial aid, counseling and teaching to produce life-long learners and advocates of positive social change.*

# R is Ana's Counselor / Teacher in the SEEK Program



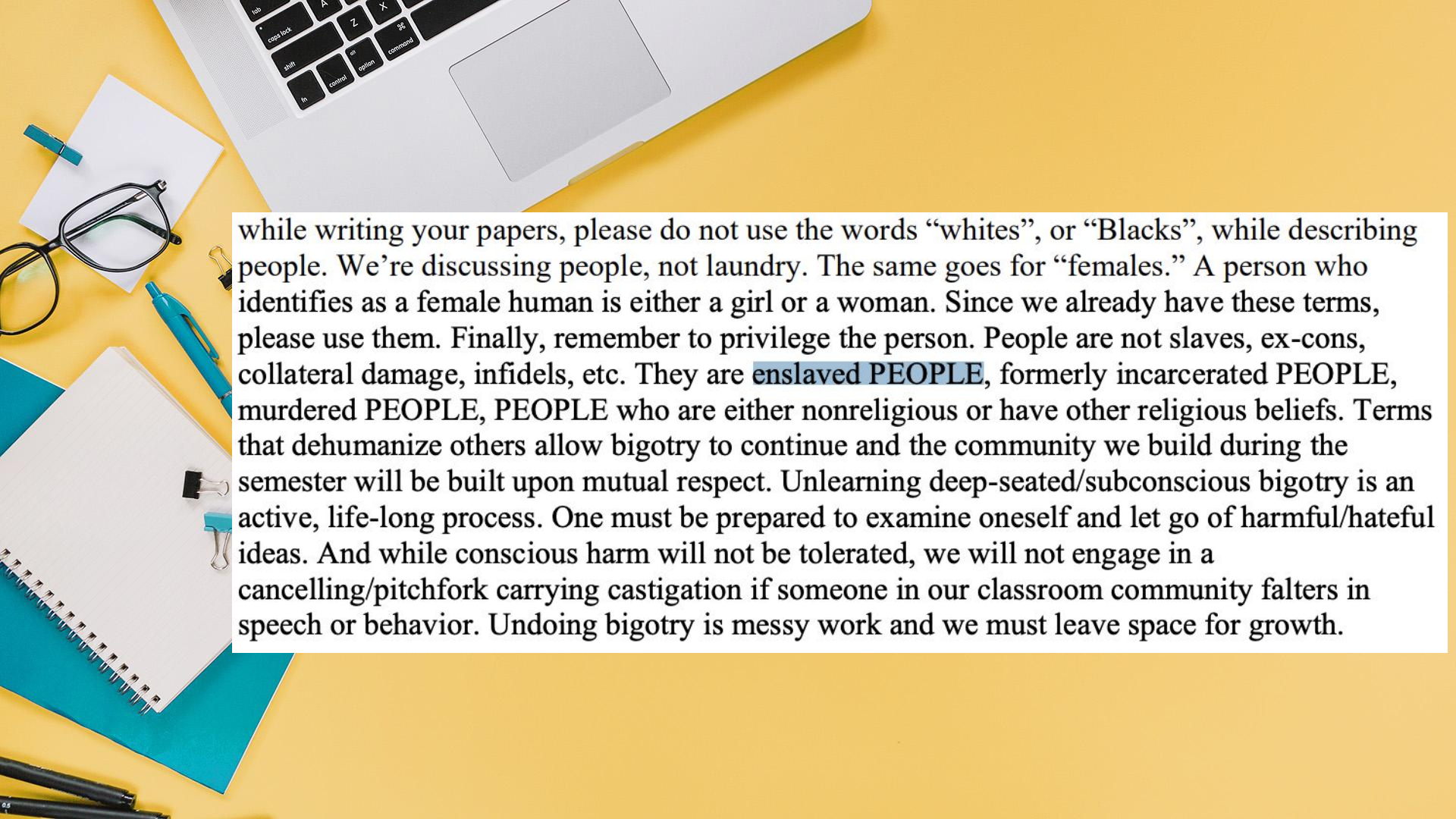
## A Case Study

R and I had an embodiment of the challenges and opportunities presented by ELLS/MLLs



## Alignment

We discussed specific strategies that he observed being used by ELLs/MLLs in his classroom and how his Critical Literacy work aligns with strategies that can be leveraged for ELLs/MLLs to support a diverse student population

A top-down view of a desk with a laptop, glasses, a notebook, and a pen. The desk is yellow. A silver laptop is in the top left. A pair of black-rimmed glasses is on a white sticky note. A blue pen is on a white notebook. A blue folder is on the left. A black pen is at the bottom left. A white text box is in the center.

while writing your papers, please do not use the words “whites”, or “Blacks”, while describing people. We’re discussing people, not laundry. The same goes for “females.” A person who identifies as a female human is either a girl or a woman. Since we already have these terms, please use them. Finally, remember to privilege the person. People are not slaves, ex-cons, collateral damage, infidels, etc. They are **enslaved PEOPLE**, formerly incarcerated PEOPLE, murdered PEOPLE, PEOPLE who are either nonreligious or have other religious beliefs. Terms that dehumanize others allow bigotry to continue and the community we build during the semester will be built upon mutual respect. Unlearning deep-seated/subconscious bigotry is an active, life-long process. One must be prepared to examine oneself and let go of harmful/hateful ideas. And while conscious harm will not be tolerated, we will not engage in a cancelling/pitchfork carrying castigation if someone in our classroom community falters in speech or behavior. Undoing bigotry is messy work and we must leave space for growth.



# The “messiness” of language



English ↔ Spanish

slaves ×

slaves slaves! slaves to fashion

esclavas *(feminine)*

esclavos *(masculine)*

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English ↔ Spanish

slavery ×

'slāv(ə)rē

slavery slavery clause

slavery clause 20 years slavery s

esclavitud

English ↔ Spanish

enslaved people ×

enslaved people

gente esclavizada

Copy

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English ↔ Bangla

**Slave**  
slāv

Clear source text

**দাস**  
dāsa

🎤 🔊

English ↔ Bangla

**enslaved**

enslaved    enslaved people  
enslaved journey to the west

🎤 🔊

**কীর্তদাস**  
Kīṛtadāsa

📄 🔊

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English ↔ Bangla

**Slaves**

slaves    slaves!    slaves to fashion

**কীর্তদাস**  
Kīṛtadāsa

🎤 🔊

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Bangla ↔ English

**কীর্তদাস**  
Kīṛtadāsa

**Slave**

🎤 🔊

📄 🔊

English ↕ Bangla

enslaved people ×

enslaved people

দাস করা মানুষ  
Dāsa karā mānuṣa

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Bangla ↕ English

দাস করা মানুষ ×

Dāsa karā mānuṣa

Slave people

Open in Google Translate • Feedback

# ILETC

Institute for Language Education in  
Transcultural Context

**Heritage Language Learner:** A person who is learning a language they already have familiarity with.

## Investigating Pedagogies for Advanced Proficiency (IPAP)

Home

Genre-Based Pedagogy

Bilingual Proficiency

Complexity

Team

The Investigating Pedagogies for Advanced Proficiency (IPAP) project studies ways to better serve heritage language learners enrolled in college level language classes. The project will deliver new knowledge on: how different pedagogical approaches support proficiency development; how proficiency in English relates to proficiency in the heritage language; and on the language-using patterns of advanced writing.

*The contents of this project were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Additional support for this project was provided by a PSC-CUNY Award, jointly funded by The Professional Staff Congress and The City University of New York.*

## Problem #2



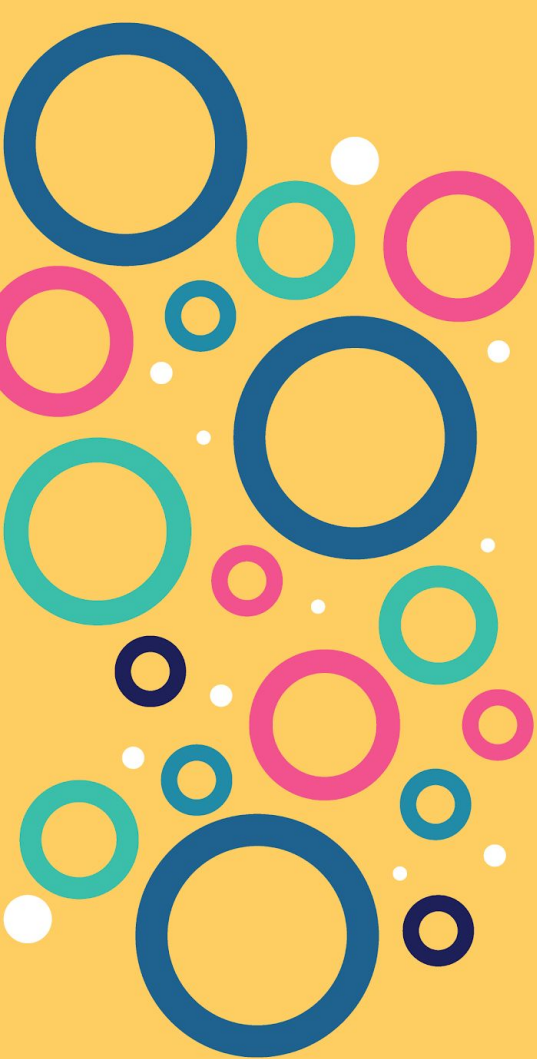
Resources for ELLs/MLLs are decentralized

CLIP/ESL/Bilingual - transitional language learning programs

SEEK, College Discovery - supports "disadvantaged students" with financial, academic support

ILETC - serves heritage language learners studying college-level classes, designed to promote transcultural and translingual skills

**Decentralization = lack of standardization and norming around language ideology and policy AND more work for ELLs/MLLs to navigate system**



What can be  
done?

# CUNY K-16 Initiatives





Graduate NYC was launched in 2010 with an initial \$3 million investment from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as part of its Community Learning in Partnership (CLIP) portfolio. Today, GNYC is funded by multiple private foundations and receives an annual funding contribution from the NYC Department of Education and The City University of New York.

There is incentive aka \$\$\$!!!



# Eric Adams

“We must also recognize that our City is not an English-only city and that needs to extend to special education services and classes. Advocates for Children estimated that almost 4,000 students required bilingual special education and almost 70 percent did not receive that. That is astounding and shameful. We will double down on hiring educators and aides who are bilingual.”

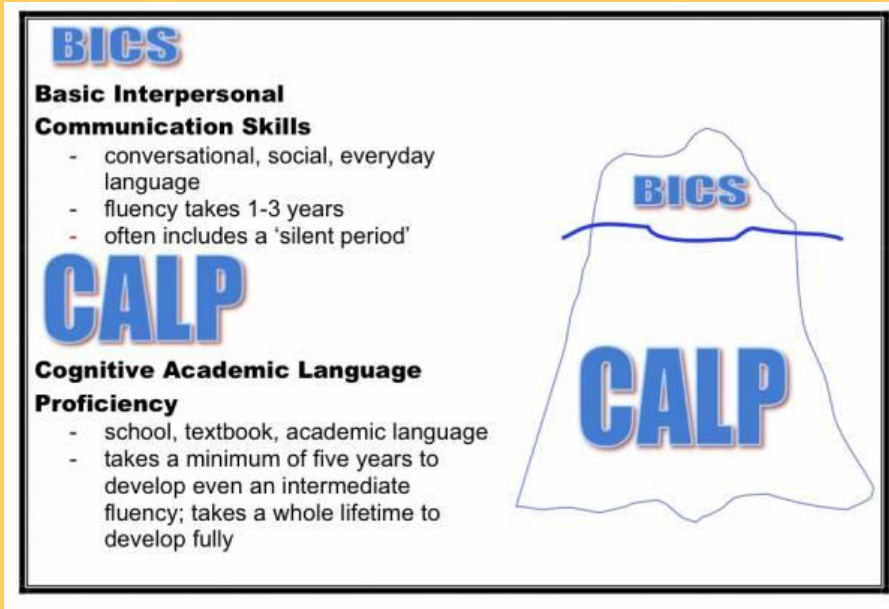
## **Limits of Dual-Language Bilingual Education**

- demands a teacher certified in both languages or co-teachers with separate certifications
- requires specific ratios of native language speakers
- vulnerable to gentrification since multilingualism is hot!
- not responsive to linguistically minoritized and racialized students
- usually



# SLA

## Why don't you just learn English?



The diagram illustrates Cummins' model of language proficiency. It features a white outline of a shirt with a blue collar. The collar is labeled 'BICS' in blue, and the body of the shirt is labeled 'CALP' in blue. To the left of the shirt, there are two sections of text: one for BICS and one for CALP.

**BICS**  
**Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills**

- conversational, social, everyday language
- fluency takes 1-3 years
- often includes a 'silent period'

**CALP**  
**Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency**

- school, textbook, academic language
- takes a minimum of five years to develop even an intermediate fluency; takes a whole lifetime to develop fully

Cummins, J.: 1979, 'Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimum age question and some other matters', *Working Papers on Bilingualism* 19, 121–129.

## Raciolinguistics



“White listening subject”

Rosa, J. & Flores, N. (2017). Do You Hear What I Hear? Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies. In D. Paris & H. S. Alim (Eds.), *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World* (pp. 175-190). Teachers College Press.



Professor  
Emerita of  
Urban  
Education and  
LAILAC at  
CUNY  
Graduate  
Center

## Ofelia García and Claire Sylvan



Founder and  
Senior  
Strategic  
Advisor to  
*Internationals  
Network for  
Public Schools*

“Pedagogies and Practices in  
Multilingual Classrooms:  
Singularities in Pluralities”

# From Bilingual Education to Translanguaging Pedagogy



# Braiding Resources



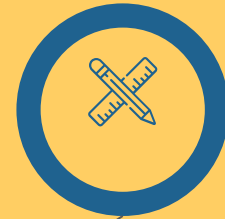
CLIP



ESL



SEEK



ITELC

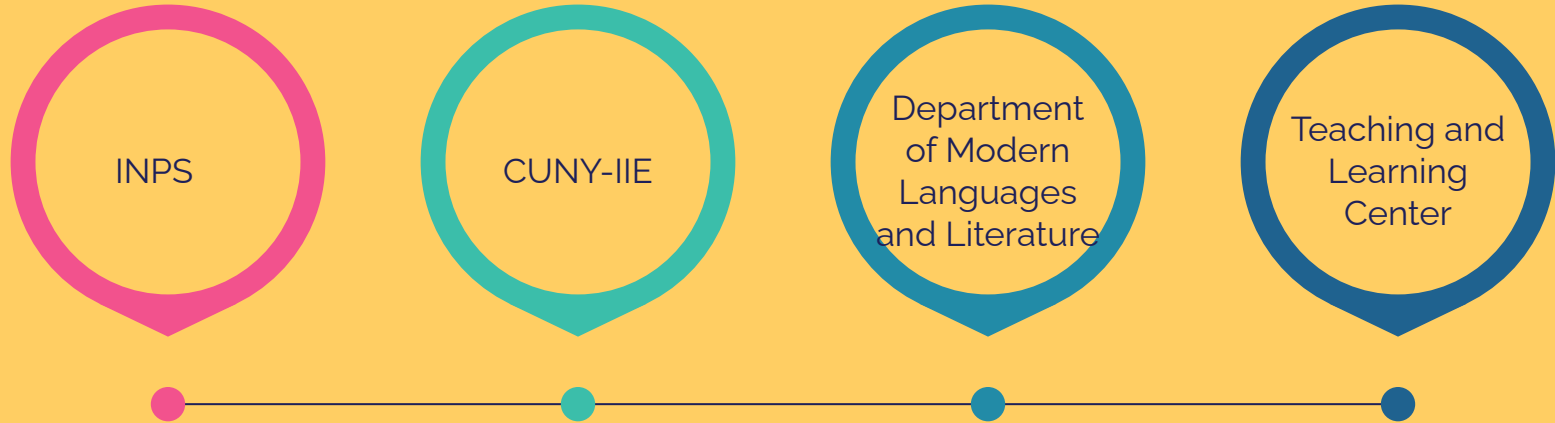
With their powers combined...

# Transformative Language Education Center @ CUNY

A Generative Space for Multilingual Learners and Educators



# What is the TLEC?



TLEC is a partnership between several key stakeholders and leaders in multilingual education that seeks to equitize learning opportunities in higher education by centralizing language policy administration.



# TLEC Supports Both MLL Students and Educators

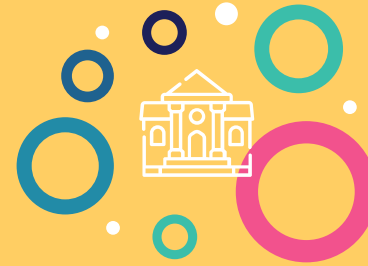


## Academic/Career Support

Tutoring, study groups, mentoring,  
and internships, pathways to  
Education

## Social-Emotional Support/Counseling

Peer support groups, mental health  
counseling for immigrants and transnational  
students



## Professional Development

Workshops, Conferences,  
Committees, Resources

# For Students



## Tutoring and Study Groups

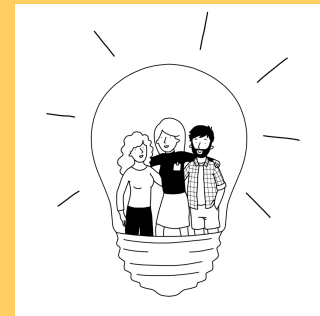
Work with homogenous or heterogeneous language tutors and peer groups.

## Mentorship

Demystify college and learn even more outside of the classroom from more senior MLLs

## Internship

Explore career possibilities through work-based learning opportunities and Teacher Residency pathway



# For Educators



## Workshops

Learn specific strategies such as how to scaffold concepts, skills, and projects for diverse learners or

## Resources

Units and activities designed by other MLL education professionals

## Committees & Networking

Informal and formal spaces to share and develop ideas.



# Is this just for Humanities?



## **Without a Margin for Error : Urban Immigrant English Language Learners in STEM** by Jeremy Heyman, PhD

dual-enrollment college courses

-trained high school teachers to become adjunct-professors

Implication: these teachers know how to teach ELLs, they will now be trained to teach college curriculum.

TLEC is a space for college-level educators to gain skills that will support the diverse ELLs/MLLs in terms of both language and content

B., Heyman, Jeremy. *Without a Margin for Error : Urban Immigrant English Language Learners in STEM*, BRILL, 2018.

*ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cunycg/detail.action?docID=5615306>.

Created from cunycg on 2021-12-12 23:15:20.

# WHAT SETS US APART



## Professional Development

Transform teachers and learners by shifting language achievement “gaps” to language learning “debt” owed to students.



## Mentorship/Internship

Democratize learning by facilitating transparency between learning and doing



## Future Teacher Development Residency

Create a pipeline of teachers who embrace multilingualism as a policy and pedagogy in K-16 and work to sustain these programs in NYC

# THANKS FOR LISTENING!

Questions?

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