2022 Thought Leader Conversation Series
Pursuing Equity at the Intersection of Language, Culture, and Disability
Foundational Session

June 7, 2022
Thank you for joining us today. In the meantime...

Please share your reflections on this quote in the chat box.

“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.”

—Nelson Mandela
The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) supports states to transform systems to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
Welcome & Introduction to NCSI (2)

We are committed to helping state agencies and their stakeholders understand the intersection of language, culture, and disability in education in order to resolve inequities that disadvantage students designated as English learners with disabilities or those who may be identified as needing special education services.
Session Agenda

Introducing our Thought Leaders
Framing Today’s Session
Background and Historical Context
Reimagining Systems
Future TLC Sessions
Introducing our Thought Leaders
Our Thought Leaders (2)

Kim Miller  
Oregon Department of Education

Cerelle Morrow  
WestEd

Esley Newton  
U.S. Department of Education

Cara Richards-Tutor  
California State University

Claudia Rinaldi  
Lasell University

Kathleen King Thorius  
Great Lakes Equity Center

Eliana Tardio  
WestEd/NCSI
Our Thought Leaders (3)

Alfredo Artilles
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Julie Esparza Brown
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

María Cioè-Peña
MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Deborah Clark
NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Our Thought Leaders (4)

Cristina C. Santamaría Graff  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY AND PURDUE UNIVERSITY

Jonathan Rosa  
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Timothy Tipton  
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Session Objectives

• Increase awareness within and among state education agencies about the complexity of the intersection of language, culture, and disability when working to improve outcomes for students designated as English learners with disabilities

• Recognize the historical treatment of individuals designated as English learners with disabilities and its impact on the outcomes for these students

• Discuss policies and procedures that maintain systemic inequities and begin to identify ways to dismantle these structures to improve outcomes for students designated as English learners with disabilities

• Increase the capacity of SEAs to use an asset-based approach to align systems and education initiatives to improve outcomes for students with disabilities designated as English learners
Framing Today’s Session

Using asset-based approaches to focus on the abilities and possibilities of students who lie at the intersection of being designated as English learners who have disabilities
Reflect & Share (1)

When you hear the term “asset-based approaches,” what does that mean to you?
Asset-Based Approaches

• Informed by an evolving body of research, asset-based approaches value the unique linguistic, literate, and cultural practices of all students.

• Value the unique linguistic, literate, and cultural practices of students and educators, contrasting with deficit-based styles of teaching that focus on inadequacies.
The Intersection of Language, Culture, and Disability
What Is Intersectionality?

Created by Kimberlé Crenshaw, the term intersectionality describes the multiple modes of marginalization operating in tandem.
**Misconceptions of Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities (1)**

Children with disabilities get confused and overwhelmed by learning or being exposed to more than one language and have more trouble learning one language; therefore, additional languages will make language acquisition more difficult for them.

(NASEM, 2017)
Misconceptions of Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities (2)

Code switching indicates confusion and inability of children with disabilities to keep the two languages separate; thus, it is a sign of a language impairment for students who are identified as English learners.

(NASEM, 2017)
Misconceptions of Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities (3)

Exposure to two or more languages will make a child’s language impairment worse and causes cognitive overload, overwhelming a child’s learning capacity and reducing the changes of the child learning English.

(NASEM, 2017)
The main goal should be to maximize opportunities to learn English. Parents should stop using the home language and only speak to the child in English.

(NASEM, 2017)
Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities
Data Overview (1)

Highlights from OSEP Fast Facts: Students with Disabilities Who Are English Learners (ELs) Served under IDEA PART B (SY 2020–21)

Percentage of Students with Disabilities who are EL, Ages 5 (School Age) through 21, in the United States and District of Columbia: SY 2020-21

Approximately 1.6% of students in public elementary and secondary schools are dually identified as a student with a disability under IDEA, Part B and an English Learner.


Data Overview (2)

Highlights from OSEP Fast Facts: Students with Disabilities Who Are English Learners (ELs) Served under IDEA PART B (SY 2020–21)

Percentage of Students with Disabilities who are EL, age 5 (School Age) through 21, from 2012 to 2020, in the US, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated States: SY 2020-21

The percent of school aged ELs served under IDEA, Part B has increased from 9.07% in 2012 to 11.78% in 2020.

(Office of Special Education Programs, 2022)
Data Overview (3)

Highlights from OSEP Fast Facts: Students with Disabilities Who Are English Learners (ELs) Served under IDEA PART B (SY 2020–21)

Percentage of Students with Disabilities who are EL Existing School, Ages 14 through 21, Served under IDEA, Part B, in the US Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated States: SY 2019-20

Source: U.S. Department of Education, EDFacts and Data Warehouse (EDW) “IDEA Part B Exiting Collection” 2019-20 Data extracted from: https://sites.ed.gov/idea/osep-fast-facts-students-with-disabilities-english-learners Totals do not ass up to 100% due to not including all existing categories in this visual
Data Overview (4)

Highlights from OSEP Fast Facts: Students with Disabilities Who Are English Learners (ELs) Served under IDEA PART B (SY 2020–21)

Percentage of Students with Disabilities who are EL, Age 5 (School Aged) through 21, by Disability Category, in the US, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated States: SY 2020-21


Totals do not add up to 100% due to not including all disability categories in this visualization.

ELs were more likely to be identified with specific learning disability and speech or language impairment and less likely to be identified with other health impairment, autism, and emotional disturbance as compared to all school aged students served under IDEA, Part B.
### Academic Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students with Disability and/or English Learners</th>
<th>Grade 4 Reading</th>
<th>Grade 8 Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SWD</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWD &amp; ELL</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither SD nor ELL</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2019 Reading Assessment.
Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities (1)

- Are eligible for both English language development/English as a second language and special education
- Are a part of both groups (ELs and SWDs), but **may have needs that are different from either group** due to the interaction of disability and language development
- Are **not a homogenous group**; these students vary widely in terms of language proficiency and learning needs and homogenizing these students as if they all fall under “one label, one reality” (i.e., dually identified) should be avoided. Individual needs and differences can sometimes be masked by intersectional labeling (Crenshaw, 1991).
Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities (2)

- Intersectional location can lead to compounded deficit views of students with multiple identities, rather than future-oriented, asset-based views.
- Students’ multiple identities should be viewed through asset-based approaches rather than the deficit views which many are currently situated in.
- We need to focus less on the many labels students receive and shift the perspective to understanding the spaces these students inhabit (the systemic conditions and constraints placed on them).
Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities (3)

- Multilingualism and disability should not be seen as challenges that should be overcome and should stop being framed as problems that need remediation through policy.
  - Students come from rich backgrounds that should be celebrated.
  - Policies that invoke thoughts and practices of assimilation to Eurocentric ideologies should be examined to truly transform systems.
  - The problems do not lie with individual students, but with systems that further marginalize students.
Benefits of Multilingualism

- Cognitive
- Educational
- Economic
- Sociocultural

“I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself.”
—Gloria Anzaldúa
“We cannot become ahistorical in this moment because what has happened in the past impacts the present.”
—Dr. Jonathan Rosa
English-Only Movement

• Movement towards monolingualism in the United States
• While monolingualism was institutionalized as the norm, bilingualism was seen as a problem
• This movement primarily targets Spanish-speaking students
### Bilingualism as Disability Timeline (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Ohio Approves German-English BE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>Louisiana Approves French-English instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Congress Bans NA from learning in own languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>New Mexico Approves Spanish instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889/1890</td>
<td>“intellectual and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled, but halved.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Bennett Act &amp; Edwards Act introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>“The use of a foreign language in the home is one of the chief factors in producing mental retardation.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920s</td>
<td>By 1923, 34 states had laws mandating English-only instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>The Bilingual Education Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Beginning of bans on bilingual education with an emphasis on sheltered English language instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>NCLB; visibility and assessment as support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cioè-Peña, 2021
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Ohio Approves German-English BE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>Louisiana Approves French-English instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Congress Bans NA from learning in own languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>New Mexico Approves Spanish instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899/1900</td>
<td>“intellectual and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled, but halved.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Bennett Act &amp; Edwards Act introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>“The use of a foreign language in the home is one of the chief factors in producing mental retardation.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920s</td>
<td>By 1923, 34 states had laws mandating English-only instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>The Bilingual Education Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Beginning of bans on bilingual education with an emphasis on sheltered English language instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>NCLB; visibility and assessment as support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cioè-Peña, 2021

The National Center for Systemic Improvement
Bilingualism as Disability Timeline (3)

- 1839: Ohio Approves German-English BE
- 1847: Louisiana Approves French-English instruction
- 1864: Congress Bans NA from learning in own languages
- 1870: New Mexico Approves Spanish instruction
- 1889/1890: “intellectual and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled, but halved.”
- 1889: Bennett Act & Edwards Act introduced
- 1926: “The use of a foreign language in the home is one of the chief factors in producing mental retardation.”
- 1920s: By 1923, 34 states had laws mandating English-only instruction.
- 1968: The Bilingual Education Act
- 1998: Beginning of bans on bilingual education with an emphasis on sheltered English language instruction.
- 2001: NCLB; visibility and assessment as support

Yong, 2016; Cioè-Peña, 2021
# Bilingualism as Disability Timeline (4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>Ohio Approves German-English BE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>Louisiana Approves French-English instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Congress Bans NA from learning in own languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>New Mexico Approves Spanish instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889/1890</td>
<td>“intellectual and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled, but halved.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Bennett Act &amp; Edwards Act introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>“The use of a foreign language in the home is one of the chief factors in producing mental retardation.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920s</td>
<td>By 1923, 34 states had laws mandating English-only instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>The Bilingual Education Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Beginning of bans on bilingual education with an emphasis on sheltered English language instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>NCLB; visibility and assessment as support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English mono. as unification and national salvation

Cioè-Peña, 2021
Bilingualism as Disability Timeline (5)

- 1839: Ohio Approves German-English BE
- 1847: Louisiana Approves French-English instruction
- 1864: Congress Bans NA from learning in own languages
- 1870: New Mexico Approves Spanish instruction
- 1889/1890: “intellectual and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled, but halved.”
- 1889: Bennett Act & Edwards Act introduced
- 1926: “The use of a foreign language in the home is one of the chief factors in producing mental retardation.”
- 1920s: By 1923, 34 states had laws mandating English-only instruction.
- 1968: The Bilingual Education Act
- 1998: Beginning of bans on bilingual education with an emphasis on sheltered English language instruction.
- 2001: NCLB; visibility and assessment as support

Cioè-Peña, 2021
Current Policy Context

• While policies for students identified as English learners with disabilities progressed throughout the years, progress was not institutionalized.
  • Prevalence of disproportionate representation of English learners in special education
  • Policies centered on the abilities of educators and not the needs of students
Disproportionate Representation of English Learners in Special Education

Although Sections 616 and 618 of IDEA specify that states must monitor disproportionality, English learners with disabilities continue to be disproportionately referred and placed into special education.

(NASEM, 2017)
Policy on Assessment and Identification for Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities

IDEA ensures assessments and tools used for evaluation “are provided and administered in the language and form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is not feasible to so provide or administer” (Section 614(b)(3)(A)(ii)).

While IDEA states that assessments must be administered by bilingual personnel and trained interpreters, there is a clause that negates this by indicating if doing so is impossible. (NASEM, 2017)
Reimagining Systems
Shifts Needed to Reimagine Systems

FROM: Clinical, discipline-specific models
TO: Educational, collaborative approaches

FROM: Decontextualized, discrete data and supports
TO: Authentic and meaningful data and supports

FROM: Supports based on labels
TO: Supports based on needs, including home language

(San Diego Unified School District)
Reimagining Systems

Three things are necessary in the pursuit of equity at a systemic level:

- Student success or failures should not be based on biases or prejudices rooted in cultural, social, or economic factors.
- The disruption of biases and oppression in policies and practices is required.
- Students’ lived experiences, talents, abilities, and multiple identities must be nurtured.

(Teemant et al., 2021)
New Mexico’s Humanizing Approach to “Reimagining”
Strategies for Overcoming Challenges Associated with the Intersection of Language, Culture, and Disability (1)

• Harness the power of professional collaboration through multidisciplinary teams, including meaningful engagement with families, to create coherent programs of instruction (to overcome fragmented programs of instruction services).

• Address language development and exceptional learning needs AND their potential interaction to offer nuanced pedagogical approaches (to overcome the homogenizing of dually identified students as if there is “one label, one reality”).

• Cultivate deep, coherent, and shared professional expertise that informs appropriate and situated practices (to overcome the “specialist trap”).
Strategies for Overcoming Challenges Associated with the Intersection of Language, Culture, and Disability (2)

- Meaningfully engage parents and families to gain their deep expertise and insights.
- Move towards an asset-based mindset (to overcome the compounded deficit view of dually identified students) when considering the system functions that lead to change in improving learning conditions and outcomes for students designated as English learners with disabilities.
Key Systems Areas to Explore in Overcoming Challenges Associated with the Intersection of language, Culture, and Disability

- Culturally and linguistically responsive data literacy
- Reciprocal stakeholder and family engagement
- Research-informed practices rooted in asset-based principles
- Aligned equitable systems to promote coherence and collaboration
Reflect & Share (2)

What supports and/or resources do you need to reimagine systems and improve outcomes for students who lie at the intersection of language, culture, and disability?
Thought Leader Conversation (TLC) Sessions:

• **Data Literacy**
  July 27 — 1:00–2:30 p.m. EST

• **Stakeholder and Family Engagement**
  September 7 — 1:00–2:30 p.m. EST

• **Research-Informed Practices**
  October 19 — 1:00–2:30 p.m. EST

• **Systems Coherence**
  November 30 — 1:00–2:30 p.m. EST
Where to Find TLC Information (1)

Materials including the PowerPoint and recording from today’s session will be posted to the NCSI website under “News & Events”

ncsi.wested.org
Where to Find TLC Information (2)

• Registration information for future sessions will be posted to ncsi.wested.org

• Please sign up for our mailing list to receive emails about future TLC sessions and registration details: ncsi@wested.org
Session Evaluation

• We appreciate your feedback on our session today so we can continuously improve

• Link to evaluation is in the chat box, or use the QR code presented

• Evaluation link will also be emailed to registrants

https://meadowscenter.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8k5vkOv3KolmQvQ
Gratitude

• Thank you to our Thought Leaders for initiating and framing this important conversation

• Thank you to all of you for your commitment to creating inclusive, equitable systems that support all students to succeed and thrive
Thank you!

The content of this document was developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, #H326R190001. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer: Perry Williams (October 2019)

WestEd is the lead organization for NCSI. For more information about the work of WestEd or NCSI, and their partners, please visit www.ncsi.wested.org and www.wested.org