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Pedagogical Translanguaging: Assessing the Credibility of Theoretical Claims

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This article proposes that two versions of translanguaging theory can be distinguished. These formulations do not differ in their pedagogical implications, but are framed theoretically in very different ways. Unitary translanguaging theory (UTT) endorsed by García and colleagues in numerous articles and books published since 2009 argues that the bilingual's linguistic system is unitary and undifferentiated and that languages have no cognitive or linguistic reality. Based on this claim, UTT rejects several theoretical concepts that claim that languages *do* have cognitive and linguistic reality and are interconnected dynamically in our cognitive functioning. These concepts include the notions of codeswitching, plurilingualism, additive (approaches to) bilingualism, the common underlying proficiency (CUP), academic language, and the pedagogical importance of teaching for transfer across languages. Crosslinguistic translanguaging theory (CTT), by contrast, affirms the legitimacy of these theoretical concepts, and argues that bilinguals actually do speak languages, involving multiple registers and fluid boundaries. Within CTT, teaching for transfer across linguistic boundaries and bringing students' languages into productive contact is a prime function of pedagogical translanguaging.

Mots-clés :
Plurilingualism, Additive bilingualism, Academic language, Common underlying proficiency, Crosslinguistic translanguaging theory, Teaching for crosslinguistic transfer, Unitary translanguaging theory

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Scholarly publication focused on the concept of translanguaging has increased dramatically during the past decade. The term was introduced originally by Williams (1994, 1996, 2000) in the context of Welsh-English bilingual programs and drew attention to the systematic and intentional alternation of input and output languages in bilingual instruction. García (2009) defined the construct more broadly to include the "*multiple discursive practices* in which bilinguals engage in order to *make sense of their bilingual worlds*" (p. 45, emphasis in original).

Within this conception, translanguaging referred to (a) the dynamic linguistic practices of multilingual individuals which are integrated within a unitary cognitive and linguistic system, and (b) models of bilingual and multilingual instruction that integrate rather than separate languages.

García's (2009) original conception of bilingual language processing as unitary with no differentiation into 'named languages' evolved over a period of several years into a

critique of the concept of codeswitching. According to Otheguy et al. (2014) the notion of codeswitching entails "a theoretical endorsement of the idea that what the bilingual manipulates, however masterfully, are two separate linguistic systems" (p. 282). Otheguy et al. (2019, p. 625) elaborated their critique of codeswitching and what they called *dual correspondence theory* by claiming that pernicious effects on educational practices have resulted from the theoretical position that the competence of bilinguals involves any language-specific internal differentiation. MacSwan and other codeswitching theorists have strongly rejected this critique (e.g., MacSwan, 2017, 2022a, 2022b).

My focus in this paper is on pedagogical translanguaging, which I define as*: instruction designed to enable students to use their entire multilingual/plurilingual repertoire in carrying out academic tasks and activities*. Although issues concerning the legitimacy of the concept of 'codeswitching' overlap with contested questions regarding the nature and legitimacy of pedagogical translanguaging, the ongoing debate regarding codeswitching will not be considered in this paper. Instead, the paper challenges a series of claims made by scholars who endorse a unitary translanguaging theory that dismiss the legitimacy of theoretical constructs that have long been central to the empirical and theoretical rationale for bilingual education for minoritized students. These constructs include the notion of *additive bilingualism*, the distinction between *conversational and academic language*, and the claim that there is a *common underlying proficiency* that enables transfer of concepts and linguistic features across languages. Unitary translanguaging theory (UTT) has also rejected both the instructional strategy of teaching for crosslinguistic transfer and the concept of *plurilingualism*, which has served as the theoretical foundation for the Council of Europe's influential framework for language education developed over the past 30 years (e.g., Coste et al., 2009).

Initially, I outline three criteria for judging the extent to which a theoretical construct can be considered legitimate. These criteria are *empirical credibility*, *logical coherence*, and *consequential validity*. These criteria are described in detail in Cummins (2021a). I then contrast the UTT critique of the constructs of 'plurilingualism', 'academic language', 'additive bilingualism', the 'common underlying proficiency', and 'teaching for transfer across languages' with the claims of *crosslinguistic translanguaging theory* (CTT). CTT argues that languages have both social and cognitive reality, and the theoretical constructs rejected by UTT are theoretically legitimate insofar as they satisfy the criteria of empirical credibility, logical coherence, and consequential validity. By contrast, the critiques by UTT researchers fail to satisfy the three criteria of theoretical legitimacy.

Criteria for Assessing the Legitimacy of Theoretical Constructs and Claims

The three criteria for assessing theoretical constructs and claims were described as follows by Cummins (2021a):

· Empirical adequacy: to what extent is the claim consistent with all the relevant

empirical evidence?

· Logical coherence: to what extent is the claim internally consistent and non-contradictory?

· Consequential validity: to what extent is the claim useful in promoting effective pedagogy and policies?

There is large-scale consensus within the scientific community regarding the first two criteria. Theoretical claims and supporting arguments must be consistent with the entirety of the relevant empirical evidence, and they must also be internally coherent and non-contradictory. Britt *et al.* (2014), for example, pointed out that in evaluating any scientific claim or argument, it is necessary to assess whether the evidence is sufficient to support the claim. This involves 'weighing the extent to which the totality of the support can overcome counterevidence or competing claims … and considering the degree to which counter arguments and opposing evidence is rebutted, explained, or dismissed' (Britt *et al.,* 2014: 116). This rigorous scientific discourse contrasts with the assertion-based discourse that is common in other spheres of human interaction such as political debate.

The criterion of consequential validity was initially proposed in the area of educational testing by Messick (1987, 1994) who argued that evaluation of the validity of any assessment procedure or test should take into account the consequences, intended or unintended, of applying or implementing this procedure. I suggested that similar considerations were also relevant to assessing the legitimacy of theoretical propositions (Cummins, 2021a):

In a similar way, the criterion of consequential validity requires that theoretical claims and constructs in the area of language education (and education more generally) should be assessed in relation to their implications for both classroom instruction and educational language policies. In other words, such claims should be subjected to a classroom 'reality check' to assess the credibility or usefulness of their instructional implications. (p. 142)

Assessing the Major Claims of UTT and CTT

Claim 1. UTT critique of plurilingualism

In several articles, UTT theorists have critiqued the construct of plurilingualism on the grounds that, as conceptualized by scholars associated with the Council of Europe (e.g., Council of Europe, 2001, 2020), it reflects and reinforces a neoliberal corporate agenda. According to this critique, plurilingualism fails to challenge linguistic hierarchies, and is complicit with unequal power relations associated with linguistic differences (Flores, 2013; García, 2018, 2019). Flores (2013) expressed this perspective as follows: "the current conceptualization of plurilingualism may become complicit in the production of a new elite class of English-speaking plurilingual subjects who have mastered multiple

linguistic codes and participate in fluid linguistic practices solely at the service of neoliberal expansion" (p. 516). García (2018) similarly argued that plurilingualism ignores power imbalances between speakers of different languages and has emerged as a product of a neoliberal economy that needs flexible workers: "In fact, in today's globalized neoliberal economy, plurilingualism is exalted as a tool for profit making and personal gain" (p. 883). By contrast, translanguaging is "liberatory and transformative [and] disrupts the inequalities caused by language hierarchies dealing with power of speakers and nation-states" (pp. 888-889).

These critiques contrast with García's (2009) original position that the "concept of plurilingualism is helpful in that it enables us to shed concepts of balanced bilingualism [and] because it extends mastery of two or more standard languages to include hybrid language practices" (p. 55). More recently, García and Otheguy (2020) have returned to this more positive assessment of plurilingualism by acknowledging the Council of Europe's promotion of linguistic human rights and its focus on extending the benefits of plurilingualism to minoritized students. "Plurilingualism insists on giving all students recognition of, and access to, their language practices and identities, even if, for those who are minoritized, these are only temporary benefits" (p. 24). With respect to classroom instruction, they also acknowledge (somewhat reluctantly) that there is no way of differentiating plurilingual from translanguaging pedagogical practices, and both constructs can be aligned, or fail to be aligned, with transformative educational goals. The major difference between the two theoretical constructs is that the UTT conception of translanguaging repudiates the construct of 'named languages' whereas the cognitive and linguistic reality of languages is affirmed within plurilingual theory (Cummins, 2021a).

CTT rebuttal of UTT claims regarding plurilingualism

In response to the UTT critique of plurilingualism, Cummins (2021a, 2022) pointed out that

the conflation of plurilingualism with a corporate neoliberal agenda is simply asserted, without empirical evidence. Furthermore, there is clear inconsistency between the unequivocal rejection of plurilingualism in Garcia's 2018 and 2019 articles and the relatively positive assessment of the construct in García (2009) and García and Otheguy (2020). Also, the claim that the concept of plurilingualism ignores power relations and promotes a neoliberal political agenda is inconsistent with the fact that immigrant-background and marginalized groups are explicitly included within the Council of Europe's advocacy of plurilingualism (e.g., Little, 2010). Cummins (2020) also pointed out that the acquisition of any set of skills or abilities that could qualify as economic cultural capital would be subject to the same problematic claims of neoliberal complicity:

For example, because gaining a university degree is consistent with corporate

priorities and contributes to a nation's economic development in a neoliberal society,

should we then shut down universities? By the same token, because expanding our plurilingual abilities potentially contributes to social mobility and economic development, should we then stop teaching languages in schools and universities? (p. 121)

Cummins (2022) also pointed out that the construct of plurilingualism is consistent with the criteria of empirical adequacy, logical coherence, and consequential validity. For example, the construct of plurilingualism is firmly rooted in dynamic conceptions of multiple language use which are endorsed by virtually all applied linguistics researchers. It highlights the fact that language users draw on the totality of their linguistic resources, with the logical implication that classroom instruction should encourage and promote this dynamic and integrated use of multiple registers and skills. Its positive influence on language teaching and intercultural education can be seen in the imaginative instructional resources developed by the Irish Department of Education's *Languages Connect* initiative (https://languagesconnect.ie/) and the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) (https://www.ecml.at/Thematicareas/Plurilingualandinterculturaleducation/tabid/4145/language/en-GB/Default.aspx).

Claim 2. UTT assertions regarding the cognitive unreality of 'named languages'

The core argument advanced by UTT theorists is that the cognitive organization of multilingual individuals' linguistic system is unitary with no demarcation or differentiation between so-called 'named languages'. According to García and Lin (2017, p. 126), "bilingual people do not speak languages". Otheguy et al. (2015, p. 256) expressed the same claim: "a language is not something that a person speaks".

According to UTT, claims of psycholinguistic or neurolinguistic language demarcation derive from colonial-era 'abyssal' or deficit-oriented thinking, but also sustain and perpetuate these racist ideologies (García et al., 2021). An implication of this position is that any theorist or educator who claims that languages do have psycholinguistic reality is implicated in hegemonic ideologies, variously termed abyssal, colonial, deficit-oriented, and raciolinguistic. This includes theorists (e.g., Cummins, 1981, 2021a; MacSwan, 2017, 2022) who claim that the competence or cognitive/linguistic system of multilinguals reflects both shared and language-specific components. UTT theorists label this position 'dual correspondence theory' which they view as

essentially indistinguishable in its destructive educational effects from monoglossic ideologies that advocate complete instructional separation of languages. These arguments are illustrated in the following quotations:

Our proposal advocates effacing the line of cognitive demarcation purportedly separating the languages of the bilingual, a line that, born of abyssal thinking, is sustained by hegemonic sociocultural structures and ideologies but not by psycholinguistic reality" (García et al., 2021, p. 13).

In our view, the myriad lexical and structural features mastered by bilinguals occupy a cognitive terrain that is not fenced off into anything like the two areas suggested by the two socially named languages... [The] position that, while allowing for some overlap, the competence of bilinguals involves language specific internal differentiation... which we have called the dual correspondence theory... has had pernicious effects in educational practices. (Otheguy et al., 2019, p. 625)

CTT rebuttal of UTT assertions regarding the cognitive unreality of languages

In contrast to UTT, CTT claims that bilinguals actually *do* speak languages, involving multiple registers, and effective teaching promotes conceptual and linguistic transfer across languages. CTT proposes fluid social and cognitive boundaries between languages whereas UTT proposes no boundaries and no languages. The unitary hypothesis is immediately challenged by empirical data from studies of aphasia. Bhatt and Bolonyai (2019, 2022), for example, have reviewed compelling evidence from studies of aphasia demonstrating that the different languages of bilinguals have specific patterns of neural representation and organization. They cite the case of JZ, a Basque-Spanish bilingual individual with aphasia, whose linguistic functioning in each language was affected in markedly different ways by his aphasia:

JZ's aphasia impacted his languages to different degrees: his first language, Basque, was more impaired than his second language, Spanish. In particular, the Bilingual Aphasia Test revealed deficits in first language production, but intact production in his second language. Such differential language loss does not find an account in translanguaging theory: a unitary linguistic system cannot explain why one language is impacted (more) than another in differential bilingual aphasia". (2019, p. 18)

These findings clearly refute UTT claims, but are entirely consistent with CTT which allows for both shared and language-specific organization of languages in our cognitive system.

Multiple examples of logical incoherence are evident in the UTT position. For example, García and Kleifgen (2019) argue that "A translanguaging literacies approach also includes strategies such as translation and cross-linguistic study of syntax, vocabulary, word choice, cognates, and discourse structure" (p. 13). As pointed out by Cummins (2021b), this statement raises questions such as the following:

· If languages are real only in a social sense but not a linguistic sense, what are we translating between?

· What does crosslinguistic mean if languages don't exist within the individual's linguistic system and if there is no transfer between

languages?

· If languages have no cognitive or linguistic reality, how should we interpret cognates?

With respect to consequential validity, the claim that bilinguals and multilinguals do not speak languages is likely to sow confusion among multilingual teachers and students who believe that they *do* actually speak multiple languages. Cummins (2021a, 2021b) pointed out that there are no differences between UTT and CTT with respect to pedagogical practice. All pedagogical initiatives or activities that are implied by UTT are also implied and endorsed by CTT. However, many of these instructional strategies (e.g., drawing students' awareness to cognates, teaching for two-way crosslinguistic transfer) are easier to communicate within CTT than within UTT which denies the cognitive reality of languages. For example, it is clearly anomalous for a teacher to draw students' attention to similarities among English/Spanish cognate pairs such as 'encounter' and 'encontrar' while at the same time denying that these cognate pairs have any distinct reality in their cognitive systems.

Claim 4. UTT rejection of additive (approaches to) bilingualism

García (2009) rejected the concept of 'additive bilingualism' on the grounds that it reflects a monoglossic orientation to bilingualism and multilingualism in which bilingualism is positioned as two separate, isolated languages rather than as an integrated linguistic system. In more recent papers, she has elaborated what she sees as the negative consequences of this separation of languages by arguing that additive bilingualism involves "the enforcement of named languages as wholes to be used separately [which] stigmatizes even further [minoritized speakers'] more dynamic and fluid multilingual practices" (García, 2019: 157). She expressed the deficit orientation implied by the construct of additive bilingualism as follows: [S]tandard language and additive bilingualism have been used as instruments to minoritize the language practices of some bilinguals and rendering them as deficient (García, 2020, p. 16). Flores and Rosa (2015) similarly argued that discourses of appropriateness rooted in raciolinguistic ideologies lie at the core of additive approaches to language education (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In a paper described as a 'manifesto', García and colleagues linked the construct of additive bilingualism to abyssal colonial ideologies and contrasted it to dynamic conceptions of bilingualism:

The notion of additive bilingualism took root in bilingual education programs all over the world, bolstering the colonial lines that had been established between dominant and non-dominant people and their languages and histories, as well as between native and non-native students. To combat the form of abyssal thinking that continually stigmatizes colonized populations' language practices as deficient based on a static notion of linguistic legitimacy, we conceptualize bilingualism as "dynamic". (García et al., 2021, p. 11)

CTT rebuttal of UTT assertions regarding additive bilingualism

Cummins (2015, 2021a, 2022) argued that UTT assertions regarding the nature and pernicious consequences of additive bilingualism are devoid of empirical support, logically incoherent, and misrepresent the origins of the construct and its role in actively challenging coercive relations of power. The flawed logic underlying the false opposition

between ‘additive’ and ‘dynamic’ conceptions of bilingualism was outlined as follows:

UTT theorists have presented no empirical evidence or coherent logical argumentation that additive conceptions of bilingualism are non-dynamic (Cummins, 2021a). The purported oppositional status of additive versus dynamic ignores the fact that the antonym of additive is subtractive and the antonym of dynamic is static. The absence of any logical connection, let alone oppositional connection, between additive and dynamic hardly constitutes a robust foundation for claiming that additive bilingualism is nondynamic. Thus, the equivalence between additive and static has simply been asserted without logical argumentation or empirical justification. (2022, 44-45)

Cummins (2021a, 2022) pointed out that the term ‘additive bilingualism’ was introduced by Lambert (1975) to highlight educational alternatives to the subtractive experiences of minority groups who were pressured to replace their home languages with the dominant language. Thus, from its origins, the term constituted a sociopolitical challenge

to the raciolinguistic societal and educational forces that, for centuries, have denied minoritized students opportunities to develop literacy in their home languages, and in the process, undermined their language and literacy development in the school language. Furthermore, none of the many language education researchers and theorists who have invoked the construct of additive bilingualism over the past 45 years to challenge subtractive and assimilationist educational provision have made any claims regarding the cognitive or neurolinguistic organization of languages associated with additive bilingualism. UTT advocates fail to cite any empirical research to support a connection between the construct of additive bilingualism and patterns of bilingual language processing *for the simple reason that there is none*. The construct is sociopolitical in nature rather than psycholinguistic. In short, there is no empirical or logical basis for conflating additive bilingualism with ‘two solitudes’ or dual correspondence theory, let alone claiming that it has had pernicious effects on the education of minoritized students.

Claim 5. UTT rejection of the ‘common underlying proficiency’ construct and teaching for crosslinguistic transfer

The common underlying proficiency (CUP) construct was proposed to explain the fact that in well-implemented bilingual programs, instruction through minoritized students’ home language (L1) entails no adverse effects on the development of literacy in the dominant societal language (L2) (Cummins, 1981). The shared crosslinguistic space signified by the CUP makes possible transfer of concepts, skills, and learning strategies across languages.

García and Li (2014) critiqued the notion of a common crosslinguistic proficiency, because, in their estimation, it still constructs students’ L1 and L2 as separate: “Instead, translanguaging validates the fact that bilingual students’ language practices are not separated into… home language and school language, instead transcending both” (p.

69). They argued that we can now “shed the concept of transfer… [in favour of] a conceptualization of integration of language practices in the person of the learner” (p. 80). More recently, García et al. (2021) rejected the theoretical legitimacy of teaching for crosslinguistic transfer as follows:

> The two named languages are entities with linguistic features that are viewed as separate, even though language proficiency is common to both languages. But we believe that the notion of cross-linguistic transfer, when both languages are conceived as separate and autonomous entities, has proven harmful to the education of racialized bilinguals. (p. 11)

CTT rebuttal of UTT assertions regarding the CUP and teaching for crosslinguistic transfer

García et al. (2021) express their *belief* that the notion of crosslinguistic transfer has proven harmful to the education of racialized bilinguals, but, once again, they provide no empirical evidence, documentation, or instructional examples to support this belief. They also ignore the extensive empirical evidence supporting the reality of crosslinguistic transfer. This evidence was summarized in the comprehensive review of research on the education of English learners in the United States conducted by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) (2017):

A growing body of research dating back to the 1960s reveals that the two languages of bilinguals do not exist in isolation and to the contrary, are highly interactive... The two languages of bilinguals share a cognitive/conceptual foundation that can facilitate the acquisition and use of more than one language for communication, thinking, and problem solving. (p. 243)

The beliefs expressed by García et al., (2021) are also logically incoherent. They acknowledge that the CUP construct and teaching for crosslinguistic transfer conceive of language proficiency as common to both languages. Yet, they simultaneously argue that these constructs conceive of languages as separate and autonomous entities.

With respect to consequential validity, Cummins (2021a, 2022) challenged the assertion that the CUP construct and teaching for crosslinguistic transfer had proven harmful to the education of racialized bilinguals. Case studies of teachers who incorporated students’ multilingualism into the instructional process and encouraged students to bring their languages into productive contact have repeatedly shown how these instructional strategies connected instruction to students’ lives, affirmed their identities, expanded language awareness, and increased their active engagement with language and literacy (e.g., Carbonara & Scibetta, 2020a, 2020b; Cummins, 2021a; DeFazio, 1997; Little & Kirwin, 2019). In short, these teachers challenged the raciolinguistic exclusion of students’ linguistic and cultural capital from curriculum and instruction.

*Claim 6. UTT characterization of the construct of '**academic language**' as inherently and inevitably raciolinguistic*

Flores (2020) expressed this claim as follows: “academic language is a raciolinguistic ideology that frames racialized students as linguistically deficient and in need of remediation” (p. 22). The same point was made by García et al. (2021):

We argue that raciolinguistic ideologies undergird the notion that racialized bilinguals lack a construct known in schools as “academic language.” Efforts to purportedly teach racialized students to use academic language are fundamentally flawed. These efforts emerge from abyssal thinking claiming that there is an inductively established set of features that defines academic language that distinguishes it from non-academic language. But all we have, in fact, is the a priori category of academic language-assumed, not discovered-deductively supported by a meager number of defining shibboleths. (p. 7)

García and Solorza (2020) dismiss empirical evidence that demonstrates clear differences in the *relative frequency* with which certain linguistic features (e.g., passive voice, low frequency vocabulary) are employed in educational contexts as compared to everyday face-to-face interactions (e.g., Bailey, 2007; Schepergrell, 2004; Uccelli et al., 2015; Wong Fillmore, 2014). They acknowledge that “formulations such as these often describe the language of written academic texts” (p. 5), but claim that this language is not characteristic of typical teacher-student classroom interactions.

CTT rebuttal of UTT claims in relation to ‘academic language’

Wong Fillmore (2021) pointed out that arguments that dismiss the legitimacy of the construct of ‘academic language’ ignore the fact that this construct refers essentially to the language of literacy, and success in school depends on the extent to which students develop expertise in reading increasingly complex written texts and learning how to write coherently for a variety of audiences and in a variety of genres across the curriculum. Many other researchers and theorists have likewise argued that equitable education must equip minoritized students with academic language registers that enable them to progress through the grades and graduate from high school. They also argue that these academic registers must include critical language awareness that enable students to decode how language and literacy intersect with societal power relations (e.g., Delpit , 1995; May, 2011, 2022).

There are multiple logical inconsistencies in UTT arguments regarding academic language (for a detailed analysis, see Cummins, 2021a). García (2009), for example, argued that standard academic language must be taught to minoritized students:

Because literacy relies on the standard, the standard language itself is taught explicitly in school, and it *certainly needs to be taught...* We are not questioning the teaching of a standard language in school; without its acquisition, language minority children will continue to fail and will not have equal access to resources and opportunities. But we have to recognize that an *exclusive* focus on the standard variety keeps out other languaging practices that are children’s authentic linguistic identity expression. (p. 36; emphasis in original)

This insistence on effective teaching of literacy, which relies on standard academic language, to minoritized students is clearly at variance with García's (2020) statement that efforts "to purportedly teach racialized students to use academic language are fundamentally flawed" (p. 7), and even more so with Flores' (2020) statement that "academic language is a raciolinguistic ideology" (p. 22). Cummins (2021a) also pointed out that no researcher over the past 60 years has argued that instruction should focus *exclusively* on the standard variety and prohibit minoritized students from using their authentic spoken varieties of L1 and L2. Instead, there is consensus among researchers that schools should build on the linguistic resources that students bring to school as part of a process of affirming the funds of knowledge that exist in minoritized communities.

The empirical credibility of UTT claims regarding the construct of academic language is minimal in light of the fact that UTT theorists make no attempt to address the empirical evidence advanced in support of the legitimacy of the distinction between conversational and academic/literate language (e.g., Cummins, 2021a; DiCerbo et al., 2014; Uccelli et al., 2015). Assertion and rhetoric are no substitute for analysis of empirical data.

Conclusion

In a similar way to the concept of plurilingualism, the concept of translanguaging has highlighted the dynamic intersections of the languages of bi/multilinguals in our cognitive processing and functioning. Pedagogically, these concepts have challenged the prevailing wisdom that languages should be kept separate within second language teaching and bilingual education. Unfortunately, however, one version of translanguaging theory, namely unitary translanguaging theory (UTT), has extended translanguaging theory in ways that are counterproductive instructionally and untenable empirically and theoretically by arguing that bilinguals don't speak languages, which are conceived as having no cognitive or linguistic reality within our cognitive apparatus. This claim has resulted in the rejection of theoretical concepts and pedagogical directions that have long been seen as foundational in the education of minoritized students. These concepts include the notions of codeswitching, plurilingualism, additive (approaches to) bilingualism, the common underlying proficiency, academic language, and the pedagogical importance of teaching for transfer across languages.

By contrast, CTT affirms the legitimacy of these concepts and argues that they are fully compatible with dynamic conceptions of bi/multilingualism. The major theoretical difference between CTT and UTT is that CTT proposes fluid and porous boundaries between languages in the multilingual's linguistic system, whereas UTT proposes no boundaries and no languages.

I analyze these competing claims in relation to three criteria for assessing the legitimacy of theoretical propositions, namely, empirical credibility, logical coherence, and consequential validity. I conclude that the claims of UTT are inconsistent with the empirical evidence, logically contradictory, and counterproductive when applied to classroom instruction. CTT claims, by contrast, are empirically credible, logically

coherent, and have demonstrated their positive impact on the education of minoritized students over the past 50 years.

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