

## **Developing Linguistically Responsive Teachers: Learning through Latino/a Student Stories**

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I like to tell stories. I make a story for my life, for each step my brown shoe takes.  
(Cisneros, 1984, p. 109)

We must risk telling new stories in and by many voices. This is an act of hope.  
(Florio-Ruane, 1997, p. 160)

### **Abstract**

To develop dispositions essential to linguistically responsive teaching (Lucas & Villegas, 2011), preservice teachers need opportunities to engage in reflection and dialogue about the sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of identity, language and culture pertinent to Latino/a English language learners. In this article, we present two profiles of linguistically diverse students, highlighting linguistic and cultural elements present in their stories. These profiles of individual English language learners are useful because they personalize the experiences of students and they bring questions and themes relevant to linguistic diversity into the teacher education curriculum. We argue that profiles of students, either presented to preservice teachers in classes or developed as a result of field experiences can help preservice teachers to better understand linguistically diverse students and to develop orientations conducive to meeting the needs of these students.

### **Introduction**

Scholars argue that teacher education programs need to place more emphasis on preparing teachers with the expertise to work with linguistically diverse students (Ball & Tyson, 2011; Costa, McPhail, Smith & Brisk, 2005; Lucas, 2011; Lucas, Villegas & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008), the majority of which are Latino/a students (Valdés & Castellón, 2011). All teachers are now more likely to encounter linguistically diverse students in their classrooms; therefore, teachers should be prepared to both address the educational needs of these students and build on the opportunities that these students present (Valdés & Castellón, 2011). Yet, this remains a challenging endeavor partially due to lack of expertise among teacher education faculty on second language learning and identity (Costa, et. al., 2005), a history of subtractive linguistic practices in U.S. schools (Anzaldúa, 1987; Valenzuela, 1999), and English-only and anti-immigrations initiatives and legislation (Fránquiz & Escamilla, 2010; Valdés & Castellón, 2011). Furthermore, preservice teachers tend to be white and female and are much more likely to grow up in monolingual contexts than the Latino/a students they will eventually teach (Nieto & McDonough, 2011); thereby, preservice teachers often have limited personal or academic experiences related to managing bilingual identities or to learning English as a second language in school (Lucas, 2011). The history of subtractive schooling practices for linguistically diverse students, our national climate related to multilingualism and immigration and the state of affairs in teacher education programs do not engender a fertile context for fostering the dispositions, perspectives and commitments that preservice teachers need to teach linguistically diverse students. Given that Latinos/as play the most dominant role in diversifying the demographic, linguistic and cultural profiles of U.S. public schools (Irizarry, 2011), the preparation of teachers with the expertise to improve achievement and provide educational opportunity for Latino/a linguistically diverse students must become a priority in teacher education.

How then, should teacher educators develop the capacity of preservice teachers to teach and relate to Latino/a students in ways that honor and support their diverse linguistic practices and identities? Lucas and

Villegas (2011) introduce the concept of linguistically responsive teaching into the teacher education literature as a way of making language and linguistic diversity a more central dimension of teacher preparation. According to Lucas and Villegas (2011), linguistically responsive teachers should develop expertise that includes: a) particular orientations related to linguistic diversity, b) knowledge about second language learning, and c) pedagogical skills related to the needs of English learners and bilingual students. In this article, we focus on the first of these three areas of expertise: orientations related to linguistic diversity. We argue that profiles of students, either presented to preservice teachers in classes or developed as a result of field experiences can help preservice teachers to better understand linguistically diverse students and develop orientations conducive to meeting the needs of these students. Below, we present two profiles of Latino/a students, highlighting themes that teacher educators can explore with their preservice teachers as they help them develop orientations, inclinations and tendencies that are part of a linguistically responsive teaching framework. Before turning to the student profiles, we present the conceptual framework that we use for analysis and discussion of the profiles, and we describe the study's data sources and methodology from which we developed the profiles.

### **Conceptual Lenses**

The teacher orientations emphasized in the linguistically responsive teaching framework include sociolinguistic consciousness, a value for linguistic diversity and an inclination to advocate for linguistically diverse students (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). Sociolinguistic consciousness involves understanding the interconnections between language, culture and identity and becoming aware of the sociopolitical dimensions of language use and language education. A sociopolitical understanding of language use acknowledges that language use practices and policies are partially determined by the power accorded to speakers of particular languages in our society (Nieto, 2010; Nieto & Bode, 2012). Furthermore, language use and policies are political because they are tied to historical and contemporary issues of citizenship and belonging in the U.S. and to civil rights struggles for equal educational opportunity (Nieto & Bode, 2012). To develop sociolinguistic consciousness, teacher educators must provide opportunities for their students to understand the link between language and cultural identity development, the ways particular languages are given differential values based on a person's sociocultural and political positioning and the linguistic complexity that exists within particular classrooms and communities (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). Teachers with a sociolinguistic consciousness are aware that attitudes and policies related to language can impact students' sense of belonging to particular ethnic/racial groups and to school communities (De Jong & Harper, 2011).

Our conceptual framework also draws on the concept of hybridity because it can help linguistically responsive teachers understand the complex nature of linguistic identity development for Latino/a students. Understandings of cultural and linguistic identities based on hybridity acknowledge that constructing identities is more than a simple choice between two languages or two distinct cultural groups (Lowe, 1996). Rather, hybridity is an alternative or third way of being that can provide what Bhabha (1994) describes as an "interstitial passage between fixed identifications...that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (p. 5). A hybridity framework advances the idea that cultural identities, choices and practices can be formed in creative and ever-changing ways as individuals and groups respond to particular social, cultural, economic and political contexts (Lukose, 2007; Nieto, 2010).

Hybridity is also a useful notion for linguistically responsive teachers to understand because of its interrogation of power in exploring identities. The dichotomous conflicts that arise in colonized relationships create a context for hybridity to develop (Yazdiha, 2010). Thus, hybridity draws attention to the complex ways that Latinos/as negotiate the multilayered tensions and power dynamics embedded in their socio-political positions as Spanish/English/Spanglish speaking (im)migrants, sometimes living and forging identities in relation to more than one country and more than one language and in the context of multiple histories and cultural traditions.

### **Data Sources and Methods**

The profiles of these students were developed as part of a study conducted in 2008 by the first author. The study participants, Latino/a students who graduated from U.S. high schools were part of a program that sought to recruit and enroll U.S. Latino/a students at the University of Puerto Rico (UPR). Ethnographic methods were used to examine the cultural and linguistic identities and experiences of the students and to document their educational histories. The students' experiences with ESL or bilingual education varied as did their language use preferences and skills in Spanish and English.

Data gathering was conducted in English and Spanish according to the preferences of participants. As part of the data organization and analysis, profiles were developed of each of the 39 students, providing a narrative of the educational histories of each student and their cultural and linguistic experiences. The data for the profiles were primarily drawn from survey information and from the semi-structured 60 to 90 minute interviews that were conducted with each student. The interviews focused primarily on the educational histories of the students, asking them to reflect on how their experiences in and out of school contexts shaped their linguistic and cultural identities. The surveys gathered information on students' educational history, extracurricular interests and activities, and their linguistic practices and preferences.

Each of the student profiles presented unique experiences but there were some thematic strands found across the profiles. The students highlighted in this article were chosen because their profiles were particularly useful in illustrating themes related to the orientations to linguistic diversity that are part of the linguistically responsive teaching framework. While the majority of participants in this study were Puerto Rican, the themes raised in this article are pertinent to Latino/a students from varied sub-groups who face similar attitudes, values and ideologies in schools related to Spanish language use, bilingual identities, and the positioning of Latinos in U.S. society. Like Puerto Ricans, many other Latino/a sub-groups also face a mismatch between their identities and those of their teachers, and have histories marked by patterns of political subordination and oppression.

## **Developing Linguistically Responsive Teachers: Learning from Students**

Profiles that highlight linguistic elements present in the stories of students provide one way of personalizing the experiences of students and of bringing questions and themes relevant to linguistic diversity into the teacher education curriculum. The profiles that follow highlight several themes that are important to the development of linguistically responsive orientations in preservice teachers. Some of the themes can be found across both profiles but we focus special attention on the sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of language use in the first profile and the interconnections between language, culture, and a hybrid identity in the second profile.

### **Profile 1: Understanding sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of language use**

Nadine Sánchez was born in Puerto Rico. At age six, she moved with her mother and siblings to a city in Florida. She described herself as Puerto Rican from a middle class background. When she started school in the United States, she was placed in a program for English Language Learners (ELL's). Nadine described her mother as her educational advocate. She explained, "you know if something's wrong she would go to the school and find out, even if she had to get a translator or had to drag me along to talk to people." An example of her mother's proactive role was her request that Nadine be pulled out of the ELL program after two years. Her reasoning was that some students were kept in the program for too long and this was detrimental to their academic progress. Nadine described feeling somewhat lost when she transitioned out of the ELL program.

At home, Nadine primarily spoke Spanish with her mother and spoke a combination of Spanish and English with her siblings and peers. Her mother watched Spanish language television and this provided another source of Spanish input for Nadine. Her grandparents, who lived in Puerto Rico, sent Spanish books to Nadine so she "would read them and not forgot how to speak Spanish." Nadine's mother sent Nadine to visit her grandparents in Puerto Rico during summer or holiday school breaks. Nadine explained that her mother "wanted us to still have that connection with my grandfather and my grandmother and for us to learn about where we came from in like an unconscious way."

Nadine reported that as she grew older she became comfortable speaking both Spanish and English. She

explained,

I worked it out that I if talk Spanish in one place then I talk English in another. Like I talk English in the classroom, I go home and I talk Spanish. Here [in Puerto Rico], it's the other way around.

Nadine also changed her language practices over time. For example, although Spanish was the primary language she spoke to her mother, in high school she began to speak more English at home because of her mother's desire to learn English. With friends, she used Spanish and English, depending on their preferences and the particular friendship circle. As a student at the University of Puerto Rico, she reported that she felt very comfortable participating in class discussions and writing and reading in English for academic purposes, somewhat comfortable writing and reading in Spanish for academic purposes, and somewhat uncomfortable participating in class discussions in Spanish.

As Nadine grew up, she used and developed linguistic skills along a bilingual continuum. However, her bilingual use and identity was not always welcome in school or among peers. For example, one middle school teacher responded to Nadine's Spanish language use by stating, "You're in America, and you should speak English." Nadine shared this incident with her mother and other family members and stated that she started "looking for an answer, can we talk Spanish? Are we allowed? It really bugged me." In response to this incident, she called her grandfather in Puerto Rico, who was a lawyer, and he informed her, "you have the right to talk any language that you want in the United States cause it's in the constitution. It doesn't state a specific language." Nadine reported that this incident sparked her interest in the history of the Civil Rights movement and that it fueled her desire to pursue law as a field of study because she wanted "to defend people that are considered unequal or immigrants."

Nadine also noticed tensions related to language use and identity among the different Latino/a sub-groups in her high school. At the time, the Latino/a population in the Florida high school she attended was experiencing rapid growth, partially due to an influx of Puerto Ricans moving to the area. She explained,

There were people who knew English who only spoke English because they were second generation. There were people that had just come from other countries and then there were the Spanglish speakers. And I was the Spanglish. Even though I spoke a lot of English, I always incorporated Spanish in some way.

She explained that recent migrants would question whether students who spoke English could really be Hispanic. She stated,

I think that was more of the problem, the pushing out of the people that spoke English, that you can't be Hispanic if you don't speak Spanish. And I don't think that's true. I think you can be. I think that most people that came from South America or Puerto Rico or whatever tended to push out people that didn't speak Spanish.

Nadine reported that her high school did not offer opportunities for her to develop her Spanish language skills. She saw the opportunity to study at the University of Puerto Rico as a way to "perfect my Spanish. I wanted to learn how to write it better and how to talk it better and what better way to be in a place where they speak only Spanish. Well, they speak English here but it's mostly Spanish."

## Profile Analysis

The use of both Spanish and English is a natural part of Nadine's life as she travels between the U.S. and Puerto Rico, adapts to the linguistic demands placed upon her as her community's linguistic profile changes and as she responds to the shifting linguistic identities and practices within her own home. Nadine's linguistic practices are not easily compartmentalized under categories of English or Spanish dominant, rather Nadine draws on her wide linguistic resources to respond to the linguistic needs and preferences she faces across a range of contexts. In doing so, however, she confronts and negotiates monolingual ideologies that discourage bilingualism. For example, her middle school teacher's policy related to language use reinforces the notion that linguistic assimilation is necessary for belonging in the United States. The teacher employs the institutional power accorded to her through her position as an educator in ways that promote reductionist notions of identity that do not account for hybrid linguistic practices and identities, suggesting that in the United States, one language

needs to be chosen at the expense of the other language. Lowe (1996) reminds that the violence of uneven power relations can serve as a catalyst for hybridity to emerge as individuals or groups produce new cultural alternatives. In community spaces and in schools, Latino/a youth continue to negotiate power dynamics and sociopolitical ideologies expressed in and through their use of language and the identities they and others attach to their language practices. Rather than adopt her teacher's monolingual bias, Nadine draws on her connections with her grandfather in Puerto Rico who helps her assert a more inclusive notion of language use and identity. Nadine's use of both Spanish and English suggests a hybrid stance as she seeks to insert an identity that includes influences from more than one language and culture in the social context of schooling.

Nadine also notices a monolingual bias among some of her peers and questions the association that they make between Spanish use and a Latino/a identity. Nadine sees herself as Puerto Rican regardless of what language she is speaking. Having grown up in a community that includes students who are first, second and third generation migrants and having friends and family members in different locations along a bilingual continuum, she argues that being Hispanic is not limited to a singular linguistic expression or identity.

The sociocultural and sociopolitical nature of language use is illustrated in Nadine's case as the ideologies and policies she confronts in school are deeply tied to notions of cultural belonging in the United States and to the rights of certain language speakers to use those languages in schools (Nieto & Bode, 2012). The power dynamics at play in Nadine's experiences are striking as they highlight the ways that languages and the groups that speak those languages are pitted against each other, reflecting monolingual ideologies rooted in the notion of prioritizing one language over another. Nadine's case points to the importance of learning about how students negotiate tensions and conflicts and manage their language use and identities in relation to the cultural and linguistic identities and preferences of other speakers, the policies and practices of their home and school contexts and the resources available to them that nurture linguistic diversity. Nadine's experiences also point to the importance of educating teachers to understand the ways that language use is tied to the cultural, political and historical underpinnings of public schooling and to the ways that language policies can advance or disrupt educational inequity (Darder, 2012, Nieto & Bode, 2012). Nadine's experiences begin to nurture her own sociocultural and sociopolitical awareness as she begins to understand linguistic policies through the lens of civil rights and as she observes the identity politics that occur between her Hispanic peers and between teachers and students. Profiles of students that bring out themes like those featured in Nadine's case can thus be helpful to teacher educators as they seek to develop linguistically responsive teachers with a consciousness of the sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of language use, identities, and schooling.

## **Profile two: Nurturing a Bilingual Hybrid Identity**

Voy a estar brincando de inglés al español porque lo hago automáticamente, OK? Es complicado también. Yo originalmente trato de hablar español, ciertas palabras en inglés se le zafa a uno, pero tú sabes, es natural.

[I'm going to be jumping back and forth between English and Spanish because I do it automatically, OK? It's complicated. I originally talk Spanish but certain English words they slip out, but you know, that's natural.]

Samuel Calderón began a conversation with the first author with the above words, explaining that his use of both Spanish and English in a single conversation was automatic, complex and natural. He also explained that he used "special strategies" to nurture and develop both his English and Spanish depending on whether he was living in the United States or Puerto Rico. Samuel was born and raised in a primarily Latino neighborhood in a U.S. Northeast city. He lived with his parents and a younger sibling and described his family as somewhere between poor and working class. For most of his schooling, he attended his city's public schools. On two different occasions his family moved to Puerto Rico, and Samuel completed half of his first grade year as well as fourth and fifth grade years in Puerto Rican schools. Samuel remembers using both Spanish and English during his pre-school years, speaking mostly Spanish at home and English at a Head Start program. His parents both came to the U.S. as young adults and spoke mostly Spanish at home. Samuel explained,

My mom really did stress, when I was a little kid, Spanish as a first, primary language. My mom

was on point when it came to speaking Spanish. And I would listen to love songs in Spanish and stuff like that, and they have some really big words in there, you know, I would ask her, “What do these words from the song mean?” And she would tell me (portions of quote translated).

Similar to his bilingual identity, Samuel also described his cultural identity as both Puerto Rican and American. He stated,

I identify as American but I also identify as Puerto Rican. It’s a double bond. I make that choice because I feel like I can’t put aside, even though I was born in the States and people talk about all the stuff that the United States used to do to Puerto Rico, all that history stuff, but I still can’t put aside the fact that they have provided me that high level of education. And I have read several stories that discuss that indirect war between Boricuas and Nuyoricans — Boricuas from the island and Boricuas from the United States. And I want it to be known that I was raised here and I was raised there. I’m 100% Puerto Rican and 100% American.

As Samuel talked of his future, he also envisioned his children would be bilingual and bicultural. He said, I have always said that if I have children, or better said, when I have children, here in Puerto Rico we are going to speak English at home and when we are over there [in the U.S.], we are going to speak Spanish in the house (portions of quote translated).

Samuel described the linguistic adjustments he made in schools in Puerto Rico and the United States as challenges that he embraced and learned from. For example, he reflected that his time in Puerto Rican schools provided an opportunity to improve his written Spanish and remembered a fourth grade teacher who helped him learn how to accentuate words in the Spanish language. In the U.S., he went from a head start program into a mainstream English-only classroom because there was not a bilingual program in his elementary school. He described himself as a quick learner who eventually became a part of the mentally gifted program at his school. His excellent academic record through middle school allowed him the opportunity to enroll in one of the top academic high schools in his city, open to students with the top standardized test scores and grades.

Samuel described his high school experience with great fondness, explaining that he loved the opportunities he had for taking courses that challenged him intellectually in an ethnically and linguistically diverse school. He explained that four years of studying Italian in high school helped him better understand the structure and grammar of English and Spanish. An English teacher also encouraged his use of Spanish and exposed him to Latino/Latin American literature. He explained,

[She] loved Latin American literature, and because of her, I got into it as well, and I saw Latin American literature as an opening to me, you know, respect for my other side. And I saw it as a chance to better my Spanish. For instance I read *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in eleventh grade. That book is hard enough and I read it in Spanish. And the thing is that the teacher bought me a Spanish dictionary to help me. And I also got *Chronicles of a Death Foretold* in Spanish (portions of quote translated).

Samuel also reported that his high school offered him the opportunity to become involved in a local chapter of *Aspira*, developing his leadership skills, connecting him with other Latino students across the city and helping him gain a richer understanding of issues pertinent to the Puerto Rican community. Samuel pointed to his involvement in *Aspira* as a key factor in helping him navigate the college admissions process, including introducing him to the possibility of studying at UPR. Samuel explained that the transition to completing the majority of his academic work in Spanish required extra effort on his part but he welcomed this opportunity to “improve his Spanish.” Field notes documenting Samuel’s participation in a social science course for students in his program at UPR show that he usually initiated class participation in Spanish, sometimes switching to English in mid-sentence as he expressed himself. The professor facilitated bilingual use in this classroom as he allowed participation in both languages and often switched back and forth between Spanish and English in his teaching. He explained that he did this as a strategy to make sure that all the students in the class understood what he was saying. In addition, students could submit their work in Spanish or English and purchase class texts in either language.

## Profile Analysis

Hybrid identities emerge as individuals creatively define themselves in ways that capture the multiplicity of their experiences and attachments. Samuel's assertion that he is both one hundred percent American and one hundred percent Puerto Rican and his fluid use of both English and Spanish in his conversations exemplify hybrid and creative processes, demonstrating new possibilities for cultural reconstruction and identity formation (Bhabha, 1994; Lukose, 2007). Samuel's description of his identity and his linguistic practices move away from assimilation and monolingual models of identity; instead, Samuel engages in creative processes of identity formation that embrace the multiple facets of his life that shaped who he is and who he wants to become. Samuel's explanation of his multiple identifications as a "double bond" illustrates how Puerto Ricans and other Latinos/as assert cultural identities that transgress or straddle cultural and linguistic borders (Duany, 2002).

Samuel's hybrid identity and bilingualism is also nurtured through experiences in his English class; his teacher acknowledged and supported Samuel's bilingual linguistic repertoire by encouraging Samuel to use Spanish texts as he completed assigned work in a literature class. Samuel's Spanish repertoire was thus valued as a resource that facilitated his learning of Latin American literature and was regarded as legitimate and important in the school curriculum. The policies and practices in both his high school English classroom and his social science course at UPR exemplified creative and flexible ways of addressing students' bicultural, bilingual or hybrid identities. This flexible use of languages is affirmed by scholars who use the concept of hybridity to provide insights on the ways children and youth, their parents, or educators can affirm and build on student's linguistic repertoires and resources (Enright, 2010; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, Alvarez & Chiu, 1999; Manyak, 2001).

Exposure to and discussion of students like Samuel can help preservice teachers develop orientations of linguistically responsive teachers. More specifically, Samuel's case points to the creative process that some students demonstrate as they shape their identities in relation to multiple linguistic environments and affirm new ways of being that challenge assimilationist and reductionist notions of identity. Lucas and Villegas (2011) explain that teachers who have grown up in the majority culture and language need to understand how language is a medium that communicates cultural norms and values and is deeply entwined with students' identities and feelings of belonging. Samuel's story illustrates the important ways that his linguistic practices shape his identity, outlook, and experiences.

Samuel's profile is also helpful in opening up discussions about how teachers can demonstrate the orientations of valuing linguistic diversity and advocating for linguistically diverse students. The responses of Samuel's high school literature teacher and university professor to his linguistic identity and practices stand out as unique and creative because they demonstrate orientations of linguistically responsive teachers. His high school teacher, for example, showed that she valued linguistic diversity and that she was an advocate for Samuel by opening up the social context of a traditionally monolingual classroom to Samuel's bilingual repertoire. Viewing Samuel's experiences of hybrid cultural and linguistic identity development as a resource to be nurtured stands in contrast to the overused deficit perspectives that mark students with hybrid characteristics as deficient. Samuel's experience in high school did not occur in the context of an ESL or bilingual program. Instead, it points to ways that teachers across all classrooms can employ linguistically responsive pedagogy by finding creative ways to attend to the linguistic context of their particular classrooms and students.

## Conclusion

The education of linguistically diverse students is no longer the sole responsibility of bilingual or ELL specialist teachers (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). Rather, teacher education programs must prepare all teachers to effectively educate learners with diverse linguistic practices and identities (Nieto, 2010). Teacher educators need multiple approaches to help their preservice teachers know and understand the lived realities of linguistically diverse students. Within teacher education, narratives or autobiographical writing and reflection are often used as a means to help preservice teachers explore their own sociocultural identities, ideologies and issues of power and privilege in education (Lea, 2004; Hale, Snow-Geroni & Morales, 2008). As preservice teachers engage

in this self-reflection, they also need opportunities to know and better understand the diverse cultural and linguistic stories of the Latino/a students they are likely to encounter in their classrooms. While the particular cultural and linguistic histories of each Latino/a sub-group are important to understand, there are similar themes that reach across sub-groups making the stories such as the ones of Puerto Rican students featured in this article helpful and relevant to understanding other Latino/a students.

Profiles such as the ones presented in this article provide an accessible entry point for teacher educators to engage their preservice teachers in learning more about connections between language, culture and identity and the sociopolitical and ideological dimensions of language use. The stories of individual students personalize experiences of managing tensions, conflicts, and challenges related to language use and identity. Stories of students thus allow preservice teachers, particularly those who grew up in monolingual environments, a way to imagine new possibilities and beliefs related to language, culture, and identity. The stories of individual students can be used to help preservice teachers understand themes that are relevant to other students with diverse linguistic experiences. Reading and discussing the stories of individual students can develop essential dispositions and orientations that preservice teachers can then use as they observe, interact and learn from the linguistically diverse students they encounter in their school settings. Service based learning opportunities or field experiences should integrate assignments that highlight the stories of individual Latino/a students with diverse linguistic profiles. For example, preservice teachers can conduct interviews of students and gather observational data in ways that will help them write profiles that tell the stories of individual students. To develop the orientations of linguistically responsive teachers, preservice teachers need to be taught how to interpret these stories from a sociocultural and sociopolitical framework (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). This means that teacher educators need to help preservice teachers understand and discuss the power dynamics inherent in both individual choices and language policies that impact students; the cultural meanings students attach to their language identities; and the ways that language use, identities and policies are nested in broader school, community, and national contexts (Nieto, 2010). As preservice teachers become skilled in both listening to or telling the stories of linguistically diverse students, they can learn to honor and support diverse linguistic practices and identities and thus improve their ability to effectively relate to and teach the Latino/a students that they will likely serve in their future classrooms. As preservice teachers learn to pay attention to the stories of linguistically diverse students their own sensibilities and beliefs related to language use and linguistic diversity can be reexamined and expanded, providing a first step in developing orientations conducive to linguistically responsive teaching.

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