



Applied linguistics

with Dr Caroline Payant

Talking points

Knowledge

1. What is plurilingualism?

Comprehension

2. How might a person's language repertoire influence their identity?
3. Why is it important to recognise the complex relationships between language, society and identity?

Application

4. How can making connections between languages aid in language learning?
5. How could plurilingualism be used in content-based classes, e.g., a science, history or mathematics lesson?

Analysis

6. How can a plurilingual approach improve inclusivity in the classroom?
7. What challenges do you think teachers face when implementing a plurilingual approach?
8. In Canada, <1% of people speak an Indigenous language as their first language. What does this indicate about the power of language as a colonial tool?

Evaluation

9. Without worrying about proficiency, which languages can you use to communicate? How does your language repertoire reflect your identity and personal experiences?
10. In your opinion, how might plurilingual approaches in education challenge existing societal norms and ideologies regarding language hierarchy?

Activity

Create your own language portrait

Caroline encourages students to create language portraits to explore how their language repertoire shapes their identity. For example, Caroline associates French with her heart (as it represents her family, roots and heritage) and the colour green (the colour of the Franco-Ontarian flag).

Take a moment to reflect on the languages you speak, understand or communicate in:

- What language(s) do you speak at home with different family members? Do you use a specific language variety when communicating with your friends? Which language(s) are you learning at school? Do you know words or phrases from other languages through the names of foods or from songs?
- How does each language or word/phrase from another language contribute to your identity? How do they relate to your personal experiences?

Draw a silhouette of a body (as simple or detailed as you like) on a piece of paper. Connect various body parts (e.g., eyes, hair, heart) with words and symbols that represent your language repertoire. Use meaningful colours for each body part/language.

Write a description of your portrait (in whichever language(s) you prefer), explaining how and why the different words, colours, images and symbols represent your identity.

When you have finished, discuss your portrait with your classmates and reflect on the following:

- How did creating your language portrait make you feel?
- What similarities and differences exist between your language identity and those of your friends?
- Which languages are most meaningful to you, and why?

More resources

- Lost Wor(l)ds provides a range of activities and resources to promote multilingualism in schools: www.multilingualism-in-schools.net
- I am plurilingual! Je suis plurilingue! lists websites and apps to help create plurilingual classroom resources: www.iAMPLURILINGUAL.com