

**Who are we centering when
talking about children and
caregivers who are bilingual, or
who speak a language other
than English?**

Soto-Boykin, Larson, Olszewski,
Valury, & Feldman, 2021




Deficit-Based Language:

- Is English-Centric
 - "English Language Learner"
 - "English Language Proficient"
 - "Limited English Proficiency"

Strength-Based Language:

- Focus on individuals' bilingualism
 - "Emergent Bilinguals"
 - "Dual Language Learners"
 - "Multi-Lingual"

Soto-Boykin, Larson, Olszewski,
Valury, & Feldman, 2021



**From the 30 articles published in
top peer-reviewed early childhood
journals, only 2 used solely
strength-based language when
referring to children and caregivers
who were bilingual.**

Soto-Boykin, Larson, Olszewski,
Valury, & Feldman, 2021



Using deficit-based language that centers English when talking about children and caregivers who are bilingual or who speak languages other than English is problematic because it assumes that the English spoken by White monolinguals is "standard."


Soto-Boykin, Larson, Olszewski,
Valury, & Feldman, 2021



**There is NO STANDARD
English....**

**However, the English spoken by
White monolinguals from middle
class has been "standardized" due
to a history of linguistic racism
and bias in the U.S.**

**Soto-Boykin, Larson, Olszewski,
Valury, & Feldman, 2021**



Racialized individuals who are bilingual or who speak a variation of English that is not standardized are linguistically oppressed and minoritized.

Soto-Boykin, Larson, Olszewski,
Valury, & Feldman, 2021

The background is a solid teal color. There are two large, irregular brown shapes, one in the upper right and one in the lower left. Overlaid on these brown shapes are white line-art drawings of hands, with fingers spread, as if holding or presenting something. The text is centered in the teal area between the hands.

**Let's call out and dismantle
linguistic racism.**

**Let's reframe deficit-based
narratives.**

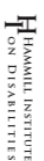
**Let's center and value
individuals' language
backgrounds.**

Let's be strength-based.

Soto-Boykin, Larson, Olszewski,
Valury, & Feldman, 2021

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1-13

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Who is Centered? A Systematic Review of Early Childhood Researchers' Descriptions of Children and Caregivers From Linguistically Minoritized Communities

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Abstract

Young children with and without disabilities who are bilingual or in the process of learning multiple languages have many strengths; however, educational policies and bias related to bilingualism for children from linguistically minoritized groups have typically included deficit-based views. The purpose of this systematic review was to identify how researchers describe these children and their caregivers. Thirty research studies were included in the review. Each study was published in *Infants and Young Children*, *Journal of Early Intervention*, or *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education* between 1988 and 2020. Studies were coded to determine participant characteristics and whether deficit- or strength-based descriptions of participants were used. Although researchers' descriptions of participants' linguistic backgrounds varied, most were English-centric, and deficit-based descriptions of bilingualism were more prevalent than strength-based descriptions. Preliminary recommendations are provided for describing children and families from linguistically minoritized communities and including strength-based language in research and practice.

Soto-Boykin, X. T., Larson, A. L., Olszewski, A., Velury, V., & Feldberg, A. (2021). Who is Centered? A Systematic Review of Early Childhood Researchers' Descriptions of Children and Caregivers From Linguistically Minoritized Communities. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121421991222>