

# VS 3.2: Resistance



## Think About

- How can I support language minority students through Inclusive Pedagogy?
- How can I engage with other people in different disciplines within my educational setting to support students' development as knowers?
- Who are our language minority students?

### Conceptual Outline

### Meaning Making

#### Social Theories

Social Theories can explain academic achievement and schooling experiences of language minority students from two perspectives:

1. **Cultural difference** explains academic achievement using MICRO or INTERNAL FACTORS.

- Cognitive styles
- Language variation
- Language use patterns

**Individuals exercise control over these forces.**

2. **Social Reproduction** theories explain academic achievement using MACRO or EXTERNAL FACTORS.

- Efforts to reproduce in society
- Socioeconomic patterns
- Political patterns

**Individuals have little control over these external forces.**

**Cultural and social identity formation** is influenced by both micro and macro factors.

#### Four Social Theories:

- Deficit theory
- Cultural capital
- Resistance theory
- Funds of knowledge

**Deficit Theory (DT)** is the belief that manifestations of cultural difference provide evidence of individual deficiency. It is represented in the language as a problem orientation. There are two varieties of the theory. In one instance, there is a belief that the cultural difference represents genetic inferiority. In the other, there is a belief that the minority culture is impoverished and as a result impairs the ability of those in the minority culture to participate successfully in the majority culture.

In student's control?

In society's control?

My cultural and social identity?

## Conceptual Outline

## Meaning Making

**Cultural Capital (CC)** is a theory of cultural difference expressed as an economic metaphor. It asserts that cultural traits actually represent a form of capital that students can build upon to respond successfully within the dominant culture. It is represented by an understanding of possible unwritten social rules and norms which guide social interaction and access to resources in institutions like schools.

**Resistance Theory (RT)** is a theory of behavioral response to cultural contact which reinterprets the acting out behaviors of individuals from the minority culture. It holds that after prolonged lack of acceptance by the dominant culture, individuals who belong to a minority culture may rebel emotionally and exhibit their resistance to acculturation or assimilation into the majority culture through anti-social behaviors.

**Funds of Knowledge (FK)** is a theory of cultural resources expressed again as an economic metaphor. This theory asserts that through study of the social organizations and structures and the products, technology, and processes of production within a minority culture, teachers will be able to access stores or funds of knowledge from the minority culture which have direct application in the schooling and education of students from that culture.

### Deficit Theory

A perspective suggesting that differences between dominant culture (mainstream/majority) and non-dominant culture (minority) are problems, problems that are to be fixed in minority groups.

Examples?

### Two Types of Deficit Theories

#### 1. Genetic Deficit

A perspective suggesting that poor school performance by minorities is attributed to genetic inferiorities.

Intelligent?

#### 2. Cultural Deficit

A perspective suggesting that minority group culture is impoverished; therefore, poor academic achievement is attributed to impoverished home environments.

Culturally deprived?

Holding a deficit theory perspective impacts how teachers interact with language minority students and their families.

My interaction?

**Lynne Diaz-Rico** (California State University, San Bernardino)

"I think many people equate language acquisition difficulties with cognitive defects. I think we now realize that bilingualism is associated with increased cognitive skills, with cognitive flexibility, with metalinguistic strengths of all kinds."

Bilingualism a defect?

**Lynda Hales** (District ESL Specialist)

"If I went to Russia to get a master's, I wonder how they would treat me in Russia. Would they put me in a special education class because I wasn't quite keeping up with my peer group? Would they wonder what my academic background was because of a language deficiency I had?"

Another relevant comparison?

"I feel very strongly that we need to be very careful about labeling these children with special needs when in reality their special need is just learning the language."

**Virginia Collier** (George Mason University)

"If the general impression, perception of the school staff is these kids have a terrible problem, and we have to send them to the specialist until they're fixed, the kids can get pretty isolated. You can have loving ESL/Bilingual staff who are just really wonderful with the students, but if they don't get that regular interaction with the whole student body, they know that they're perceived as 'We're in the class for the dummies.' Socially they know it."

My impression?

"We struggle with that in our field in general. We know that they need special help and that we need to provide them the comfort and support emotionally and socially. And sometimes they need to be in a special class with special teachers who really know exactly what to do."

**Ann Snow** (California State University, Los Angeles)

"It's a philosophical decision if they want to take that attitude and not be willing to adjust their repertoire of skills to meet the needs of their students."

My decision?

### Cultural Capital

A social theory that asserts that cultural traits can be considered capital, which can be used in society. In the United States, the cultural traits of dominant culture—white, middle class, English speaking people—are the most highly valued.

My cultural capital?

Language minority students need to be taught how to play the mainstream culture game—how to participate in school, how to be a student in dominant culture settings—without diminishing these students' own minority culture traits.

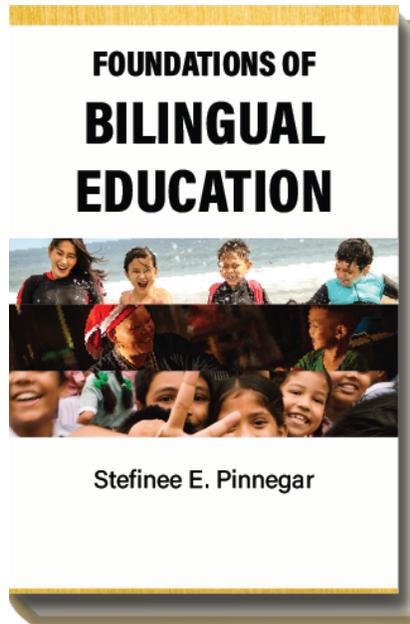
The school game?

*Example:*

Jorge Chacon takes his children to school early to practice opening lockers and walking to school to minimize the shock of the first day of school.

His cultural capital?





Pinnegar, S. E. (2019). *Foundations of Bilingual Education*. EdTech Books.  
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