

## Language Ideology Guide for Reflection and Action

### Reflection

**My Language Use:** What language(s) and/or language varieties do I use regularly at work and outside of work? Try naming the varieties and the contexts in which you use them.

**My Language Beliefs:** What are my beliefs about language use and variety? To what extent have monolingual ideologies influenced me, first as a student and now as a teacher?

**My Language Teaching Practices:** How “monolingual” is my approach to language teaching?

- How do I involve different languages/varieties of language in my classroom?
- What beliefs about language do I act out when I create and describe assignments?
- What beliefs about language do I act out when I model “exemplary” language in the content areas?
- How do I react to students’ language use? What beliefs about language do my words and actions reflect?

### Action: How can I embody more plural language ideologies in my thinking and teaching?

#### Instead of...

Characterizing students mainly by their English proficiency level

Requiring all classroom talk and writing be in English

Explaining “academic language” to students as something that just is the way it is

For example:

*We don’t say ‘I think’ in science. It’s just not the way it’s done.*

*Essays always have a thesis up front.*

Accepting the privileged status of English in school and society

#### Spend time consciously...

→ Paying attention to students’ home language(s). Ask yourself: Do I know what they are? How? Am I making any assumptions?  
→ Relating to students, noticing their cultural and linguistic differences, and routinely valuing them out loud

→ Noticing signs that multilingual students feel worried they will lose their language(s) as they move forward in your class  
→ Finding ways to create a classroom ecology that takes “losing a language” off the table

→ Inquiring critically and systematically about how different texts work and whose perspectives they represent

For example:

*Why did the author choose these words/images?*

*What meanings are ascribed to them?*

*How do they differ from uses of these choices elsewhere?*

*What do they achieve by the way they are used, contributing to whose loss and to whose benefit?*

→ Imagining what classrooms could look and sound like if other languages were valued as much as English

→ Exploring how the status of standard English intersects with other forms of privilege (e.g., Whiteness, social class)