

Dominant language constellations approach in education and language acquisition

Larissa Aronin & Eva Vetter, Cham

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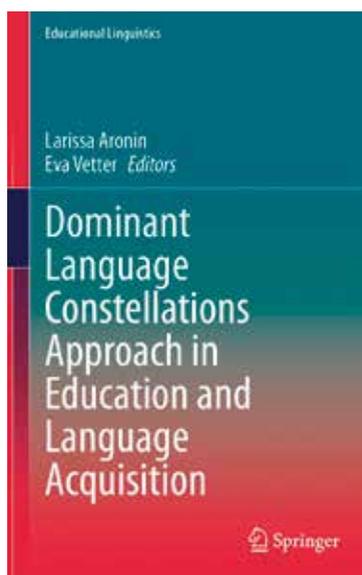
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Multilingualism in language teaching and learning has long been supported by different scholars across the globe (Cummins, 2009; Gao & Yang, 2023; García, 2014). The expanding endorsement of multilingualism and innovative studies on this area have led to the coinage and emergence of a new term called Dominant Language Constellations (DLCs), which is a collection of one's significant languages that functions as a single entity in specific contexts for specific goals (Bianco & Aronin, 2020). This concept highlights one's active languages that are used for communication and daily practices (Aronin & Jessner, 2016). To provide an analytical lens for multilingual studies and their impacts on language education from several perspectives,

Aronin and Vetter edited this volume entitled "*Dominant Language Constellations Approach in Education and Language Acquisition*".

The book expands upon the DLCs concept and offers advanced research in several domains of sociolinguistics and multilingualism. This book investigates the phenomenon of multilingualism in its contemporary context. It analyzes the intricate aspects of language instruction and literacy development. The concept of DLCs provides a valuable framework for understanding the diverse linguistic groups educators encounter in various cultural contexts in this book. Moreover, it functions as a theoretical framework that aids scholars in gaining a more comprehensive understanding of these multilingual occurrences. In addition, this book comprises ten chapters divided into three sections, each containing extensive information.

This book is the inaugural installment dedicated to the discourse-based language teaching and learning methodology within the field of education. After a brief introduction by Joseph Lo Bianco, this book is organized into three parts, each dedicated to a specific overarching topic including language regulations and school practices, the manifestation of digital language classrooms in formal settings, teacher training, and the representation of identity



through visualizations and tangible aspects of digital language classrooms. Part I focuses on DLCs within the context of language education policy and school practices. This part comprises articles that discuss different DLCs observed in official and institutional settings, encompassing schools and language education programs. The contributions situate the DLCs within the framework of relevant language policy studies in the national or institutional context. The five chapters of this part delve into various aspects related to the utilization of DLC in urban multilingual schools across Europe.

Larissa Aronin's chapter "*Dominant Language Constellations in Education: Patterns and Visualizations*" describes the main patterns and visuals of DLCs in school settings. It explains the main ideas behind the DLCs method and gives more information using ideas from complex theory and different social and educational views. It elaborates on how DLC is structured in a way that can and should be changed to fit the educational needs of other places. However, Aronin describes images of DLCs and how they can help researchers understand concepts and further their work in areas like identity, learning and teaching languages, and multilingual education. Through the lens of DLC analysis, Eva Vetter's chapter "*Language Education Policy Through a DLC Lens: The Case of Urban Multilingualism*" looks at the critical role of language education policy in modern Vienna, a diverse and bilingual city. Vetter argues that language education policy should be seen as a whole that connects different levels of context and uses both top-down and bottom-up methods to plan and guide language use. It fits together very well; in fact, the DLC idea comes about as a way to bring together or harmonize the different points of view of top-down and bottom-up processes. However, Vetter's three snapshots of Viennese schools show a persistent tension between uniformity and pluralism.

Caterina Sugrañes's chapter "*Promoting Plurilingual Competences in Primary Schools in Barcelona: A Dominant Language Constellation Approach to Teaching and Learning Languages*" discusses ways to teach and learn languages using a DLC model. In this chapter, Sugrañes talks about the good things that happen when students write and translate storybooks and use them in the classroom. She says this process made the students more aware of their language clusters and changed their feelings about and learning languages. It is suitable for learning to be open to different languages in a translanguaging space at school. Her study also shows how a storybook project can be combined with and influenced by the idea and method of DLC.

The chapter by Nikolay Slavkov, titled "*Family Language Policy and Dominant Language Constellations: A Canadian Perspective*," redirects the focus of the discourse from educational institutions to examining strategies for managing language use within families in Canada. The data presented in this chapter is derived from a research study that employed a combination of methodologies. Questionnaires were distributed to the families of 170 school-age children exposed to and acquiring multiple languages. Subsequently, 20 families were selected for in-depth interviews to gather further information. The research demonstrates that implementing a family language strategy is crucial in preserving and transmitting minority languages. Nevertheless, the linguistic development of children's digitally mediated communication was also influenced by the language practices employed by their families and educational institutions.

The chapter "*Educational and Career Opportunities for Refugee-Background Adults in Norway: A DLC Perspective*" by Anna Krulatz and Anne Dahl explicates the job and school

options for adults in Norway who come from a refugee background. It talks about the DLCs of the refugees in the framework of Pakistan's schools and society as a whole. The chapter discusses how the refugees' DLC differs from most communal DLCs, the wanted or imagined DLCs of adult refugees, and the officially recognized DLCs of refugees. The authors used interviews with teachers and managers at two chosen refugee programs to conclude that the Norwegian government does not fully support adult refugees' successful integration because they do not allow them to improve their English as part of their DLC.

Part II encompasses two distinct contributions that examine the opportunities provided by schools within a multilingual working environment and the framework of an immigrant teacher training program. The chapter "*Embracing Multilingualism in the Finnish Teaching Practicum? DLC as a Tool for Uncovering Individual and Institutional Multilingualism*" by Mikaela Bjorklund and Siv Bjorklund examines how teachers are trained in Finland. It uses DLC ideas and way of thinking to analyze multilingualism in policy and practice. This chapter talks about teacher education in one country, but their stories can help teachers in other parts of the world think about what they call the dormant affordances of multilingual schools. Judith Yoel's chapter "*The Dominant Language Constellations of Immigrant Teacher Trainees in Israel: Russian, Hebrew, and English*" looks at the DLCs of teacher trainees who are immigrants in Israel. Russian, Hebrew, and English are the languages used. It looks closely at the DLCs of these immigrant foreign teacher trainees and talks about how they changed as they became more involved with Israeli society.

Part III introduces compelling methods for acquiring a more profound comprehension of DLCs and identity through narratives and visualizations. Anna Krulatz and Jennifer Dugan's chapter, "*Exploring Identities and Life Stories of Multilingual Transnational Couples Through the Lens of Multilinguality and Dominant Language Constellations*," examines five bilingual transnational couples' identities and life stories. The DLC idea explores the details, changes, evolution, and the fact that the partners speak more than one language. The lives of transnational immigrant couples show how difficult it can be to adapt to new languages and social situations. They also explored the personal and social factors that affect how multilingual people see and understand themselves, and they added to the idea of DLC by focusing on shared DLCs between people. Silvia Melo-Pfeifer's chapter "*Understanding Dominant Language Constellations Through Analysis of Visual Linguistic Autobiographies by Foreign Language Student Teachers in Germany*" shifts the focus to how visual, linguistic autobiographies from research with foreign language student teachers in Germany can help us understand DLCs. Using empirical data from the study and looking at how DLCs might be used to explain language biographies establishes a preliminary differentiation between potential/latent and actual DLCs. The final chapter, "*Languages as Ways of Being: The Linguistic Biography of a Nordic Nomad*", composed by Guðrún Gísladóttir, presents a personal account and experience of using a multilingual repertoire in a sort of memoir of life periods. The ways the author developed personal linguistic repertoire across situations are also explained in detail.

This resource created a clay model of digital learning content to enhance its expressive diversity and message. The statement goes beyond contemplating the essay's ideas about languages as a way of life. Language representation, conceptualization, and visualization of emotions, feelings, and personal experiences are also acknowledged. The use of empir-

ical data and original research findings is a commendable feature of this column. Another merit is the inclusion of personal, institutional, and socio-cultural experiences of DLCs and multilingualism, which makes the book comprehensive and overarching for a wide range of readers across the world. The connection made between DLCs and language education policy and practice by the authors and editors is another positive characteristic of this resource. It is clearly explained how DLCs can inform policies and practices, which is hardly observed in similar books on multilingualism in the market. Nevertheless, the books could have added voices of individuals from non-Western and Anglophone countries. Life histories of multilingual people in Asian and African countries can be added to future editions. Since there are many technical terms related to multilingualism, it would have been a good idea to provide the readers with a glossary of terms in the chapters or at the end of the book. The identity part of the book is short and cursory; it could have been devoted to a separate section with some including chapters to unveil how multilinguals shape their identities in light of DLCs. This edited volume can assist teachers and scholars in different fields such as education, linguistics, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and social psychology by raising their knowledge of multilingualism and language learning experiences beyond classrooms.

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