

Translanguaging and Multimodality: Teaching and Learning through Embodied, Emplaced, and Ensembled Communicative Repertoire

Dr. Zhongfeng Tian
The University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Sunny Man Chu Lau
Bishop's University

Translanguaging (TL) furnishes a *trans-systemic* knowledge-making process that underscore the inherent multimodal nature of human communication. Drawing on New Literacies, Multiliteracies and communication studies, TL articulates a multimodal view of literacy, attending to not only language as languaging, but also the complex interactions and indexicalities between the linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial, and other modes (Kress et al, 2005). It reshapes our understanding of individuals as agentive actors in their dynamic mixing and meshing of semiolinguistic resources for transfer and performance (Canagarajah, 2013). Drawing on New Materialism and posthumanism, scholars extend TL theory to include a materialist view of language as “embodied, emplaced, and ensembled” (Lin, 2019, p. 8) working with other semiotic resources as assemblages (Canagarajah, 2018) and flows (Lin, 2017) over space and time. These new theoretical understandings engender new implications for language pedagogy.

This panel features four presentations, showcasing creative and critical use of semiolinguistic resources in fostering complex knowledge construction in various educational contexts: 1) interviews with transnational authors/illustrators to unpack the picturebook making processes and to further inform a new pedagogy of writing that supports minoritized students’ translingual, historical, and material ways of knowing/being/doing; 2) a case study on transvisuality in children’s creative representations of Chinese characters for potential critical learning on word knowledge and intercultural values; 3) a systemic functional-multimodal discourse analysis of preschool children’s languaging and multimodal practices in block play; and 4) a nexus analysis study on the dynamic processes of online tutoring, focusing on the interface between the material objects, bodily movements, communications inside/outside class as an eco-social system to shed light on trans-semiotizing as an extension/alternative to TL.

Our discussant, Angel Lin, will synthesize ideas and guide overall discussion to help develop further theoretical understanding, practical applications, and future research directions, particularly the pedagogical intersections between translanguaging and multimodalities.

Keywords: translanguaging, multimodality, semiolinguistic resources, new materialism, trans-semiotizing

1. Experiencing Translingual Composition as Material Becomings

Dr. Angie Zapata
University of Missouri

A hegemonic tradition of linguistic purism and Standardized Written English (SWE) has long shaped the pedagogies and practices lived out in K-12 writing classrooms, and in turn, delegated many linguistically diverse students as “non-writers.” SWE pedagogies have also severed students from their cultural and linguistic resources for writing and as meaningful connections to their past/present/future. Given the increasingly global and networked landscape that continues to shape a dynamic cultural and linguistic contact zone across public school classrooms, I reframe a new pedagogy of writing that is deeply entangled with translingual, historical, and material ways of knowing/being/doing that re/design imaginations, identities, and possibilities in K-12 writing classrooms (Appleby & Pennycook, 2017; Canagarajah, 2012; Pennycook, 2016; Zapata et al., 2018).

In this presentation I focus on the relational materialism (Barad, 2007; Lenz Taguchi, 2011) and spatial repertoires (Pennycook, 2017) of picturebook making, as animated through the craft of award-winning authors/illustrators Duncan Tonatiuh and Yuyi Morales. Through interviews with these two transnational authors/illustrators, I re/enter their Indigenous and cultural ways of knowing/being/doing/feeling in the process of making translingual picturebooks. I think with posthuman and translingual scholarship and put them in conversation with the interview data alongside Tonatiuh’s and Morales’ picturebook. This process produces a theoretical orientation to think about how picturebooks come to be through entangled histories, languages, cultures, materials, and...and...and...of picturebook makers.

Studying/experiencing the picturebook making processes of Tonatiuh and Morales is a generative way to support students’ understandings of how their own cultural and linguistic past/present/futures inform their composing practices. Attention to the sensory, affective, historical, and material matter of language can reorient humans toward their ethical intra-dependence with the material/Indigenous/cultural world(s). This orientation to translingual writing as *multimodal/multilingual/material becomings* provides needed supportive and responsive possibilities for the writing classroom, particularly for historically marginalized students.

Keywords: spatial repertoires, relational materialism, translingual literacies, transnational picturebooks, composition, multimodal, multilingual

2. Translanguaging and Transvisuality in Chinese Vocabulary Lessons: Potential for Creative Intercultural Education

Dr. Zhongfeng Tian
The University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Sunny Man Chu Lau
Bishop's University

Translanguaging theory underscores individuals' agentive deployment of linguistic and non-linguistic resources to construct and communicate meaning (Li Wei, 2018), highlighting language as one among many semiotic resources in one integrated communicative repertoire. Given orthography of any language system is fundamentally visual, alphabetic, syllabic or logographic alike, transvisuality becomes an essential element of translanguaging. Lee (2015) argues that transvisuality as part of translanguaging is a pertinent resource for linguistic creativity in communicative and aesthetic practices. Transvisuality refers to the "slippage or sliding between orthographic forms" (p. 445). Analysis of transvisuality in scriptural writing or representations can shed light on individuals' creative play with diverse (non-)linguistic features with their different spatial and temporal resonances (García & Li Wei, 2014, p. 32), and more importantly, on individual's sociocultural values and reality for potential critical engagements.

This presentation describes a case study in a multiethnic Grade 3 class in a Mandarin/English dual language bilingual education (DLBE) program in a public school in Massachusetts, US. We focused on one Chinese Language Arts literacy activity in which students were asked to use their imagination to create pictures of different simplified Chinese characters based on orthography and semantics. Using the four elements of visual grammar proposed by Serafini (2009): narrative processes, visual symbolism, composition and perspective, we analyzed and coded the visual data recursively to identify topics to be further categorized into themes and patterns. Analysis of students' artistic representations of different Chinese characters illuminates their varied degrees of word knowledge and reveals their tacit sociocultural values and assumptions related to their interculturality. The case study points to the educational potential of engaging students in etymological study to foster metalinguistic awareness, particularly through transvisuality to promote creative and critical exploration of intercultural meaning and values linked to Chinese language learning.

Keywords: transvisuality, translanguaging, Chinese characters, linguistic creativity and criticality, artistic representation

3. Emergent Bilingual Preschoolers' Talk and Multimodal Practices in Support of Block Play

Dr. Sabrina Sembiante
Florida Atlantic University

Dr. Alain Bengochea
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Dr. Mileidis Gort
University of Colorado-Boulder

Investigations of preschoolers' block play have explored children's spatial talk and geometric and mathematical thinking but have yet to identify how children's speech supports their play intentions. Studies documenting children's block-centered multimodal practices have found that these facilitate children's symbolic representations, but this work is focused on monolingual students, necessitating inquiry into emergent bilinguals' (EB) multimodality, with translanguaging as a component of their semiotic resources. Using Systemic Functional Linguistics, Multimodality, and Translanguaging frameworks, we explore the speech genres and connections between EB children's multimodal practices (inclusive of translanguaging) during block play in a dual language preschool.

Situated in a dual language preschool classroom, our study included a systemic functional-multimodal discourse analysis of EB children's languaging and multimodal practices during block play. Our results indicated that children engaged in the following speech genres: recounting (e.g., "I made the prince castle"), exchanging/requesting information (e.g., "Do you want to race?"), planning (e.g., "This is going to take so long."), and arguing ("You're getting close to my sub, and there's not enough space for the torpedo."). To support these speech genres, children drew on actional, visual, and verbal modes, such as pointing and gazing at blocks and peers during exchanging/requesting information, engaging in self-talk and spatial movement during planning; and incorporating sound verbalizations during recounting; and eliciting joint gaze while manipulating objects while arguing. Our results illuminate EB children's speech genres and how they are varying supported through their transmodal/translingual practices in hybrid early childhood activities.

Keywords: multimodality, translanguaging, play, bilingual, preschool

4. Analyzing the Meaning-Making in the Eco-Social System of an Online Language Tutoring Course

Mr. Qinghua Chen
Simon Fraser University

Prof. Angel M. Y. Lin
Simon Fraser University

Translanguaging research has problematized the static view of language and argued that translanguaging is a dynamic, material, social and historical process across multiple time scales in complex eco-social systems (Lin, Wu & Lemke, 2020). The distinction between “first order happening” and “second order phenomenon” (Lin, Wu, & Lemke, 2020, p. 8; Thibault, 2011) has pointed out the necessity to delve in the complexity of real-time meaning-making. Lin (2015) further proposed the term *trans-semiotizing* as not only an extension of translanguaging but also a call for using alternative theoretical and methodological resources to research. Also, in the context of this study, understanding the dynamics of learning and teaching online requires careful analysis regarding involvement, presence and reality from the perspective of both the teacher and students (Ruth, 2004).

To capture the dynamic process of online teaching, multiple cameras were set up to record the teaching from different angles which includes the teacher’s physical environment (i.e., the teacher’s computer, the teacher’s facial expressions, body movements and the use of material teaching resources at hand) and the framing generated out of the teacher’s physical environment to engross the student in the teaching activity (i.e., the interface of the teaching software, the reward system in teaching). Besides, this eco-social system also incorporates several significant aspects: (a) other stakeholders, such as the course consultant and course administrators, (b) out of class communication such as feedback provided on chat apps and teacher-students interactions on social network apps, (c) material objects, e.g., the computer, the internet connection and the learning and teaching resources. This presentation explores specifically the mediated practice of *trans-semiotizing* and the affordances and constraints in the eco-social meaning making system of the online language tutoring course. This study also explores how different combinations of semiotic resources may generate different types of presence and involvement.

Keywords: eco-social system, *trans-semiotizing*, online tutoring, translanguaging

5. Discussion

Prof. Angel M. Y. Lin

Simon Fraser University

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Keywords: translanguaging flows, multimodality, trans-semiotizing, new materialism, first order and second order languaging