



THE RI-TELLER

*The Newsletter for Rhode Island Teachers of
English Language Learners & ELL Professionals*

www.ritell.org

Issue 17: Spring 2019

Welcome, muchachas from Teocaltiche,
in this class we speak English refrito,
English con sal y limón, English thick a
mango juice. English poured from a clay
jug. English turned into a marinade from
Uruapan, English lighted by Oaxacacan
lawns, English spiked with mezcal from
uchitan, English with a red cactus flower
blooming in its heart. Welcome, welcome
amigos del sur, bring your Zapotec
tongues, your Nahuatl tones, your pa-
tience of pyramids, your red suns and

TRANSLANGUAGING

- 3 News & Notes**
- 4 Photos from Fall 2018 Conference**
- 5 Translanguaging for Social Justice**
Maria Cioè-Peña and Tom Snell
- 8 Bilingüismo, Translanguaging y Estudiantes Bilingües Latinx**
Ofelia Garcia
- 10 Translanguaging in the Drafting Process: Writing across Cultural Style**
Rachel Toncelli
- 13 RITELL: Tenets**



OFELIA GARCIA is Professor in the Ph.D. programs of Urban Education and of Latin American, Iberian, and Latino Cultures (LAILAC) at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She has been Professor of Bilingual

Education at Columbia University's Teachers College, Dean of the School of Education at the Brooklyn Campus of Long Island University, and Professor of Educatino at The City College of New York. Among her best-known books are *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective* and *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education* (with Li Wei, 2015 British Association of Applied Linguistics Book Award recipient).



MARÍA CIOÉ-PEÑA earned her PhD in the Urban Education from The Graduate Center - City University of New York, where she was also an Advance Research Collaborative fellow and a Presidential MAGNET Fellow.

She is a former elementary school teacher whose passion for children and social justice in education pushes her to fight for equity and full inclusion for children of diverse backgrounds and abilities. With a B.A. in English and a M.S.Ed. in teaching urban students with disabilities, María's research focuses on bilingual children with dis/abilities, their families and their ability to access multilingual learning spaces within NYC public schools. Her interests are deeply rooted in language practices and dis/ability awareness within schools and families. María is currently an Assistant Professor at Montclair State University.



RACHEL TONCELLI is as Assistant Professor in the TESOL Program at Rhode Island College. She received a Master's degree in Anthropology from the Università degli studi di Firenze and an M.Ed. in Teaching English as a Second Language

from Rhode Island College. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, and Leadership at Northeastern University. Rachel began her career teaching EFL in Italy and has since taught university-level ESL, Italian, and a variety of courses in TESOL to graduate students. Rachel comes to RIC from Brown University where she was the Director of English Language Learning and Assistant Dean of the College. While at Brown, Rachel co-founded

the International Writers' Blog, a platform for international and ELL writers to explore cross-cultural experiences. Rachel speaks English and Italian and lives in Cumberland with her husband and three children.

MITCHELL SANDERS is a talented student of photography who specializes in portraiture and astrophotography. At 20, Mitchell has an unusual amount of experience in the field and has worked with well known artist mentors for years. Currently based in southern Rhode Island, he attends Salve Regina University in Newport and is continuing his freelance photography business and artistic endeavors.

EDITORS



DOUG NORRIS is the vice-president of the RITELL Coordinating Council and a lead teacher with the R.I. Family Literacy Initiative. He also serves on the Library Board of Rhode Island. He holds a master's degree in TESL from Rhode Island College and a

bachelor's degree in Communications/Journalism from Long Island University. In previous lives, he was the arts editor of Independent Newspapers of Southern Rhode Island, the Rhode Island editor of Art New England, and the news director at Plymouth State University in New Hampshire. In his spare time, he is a vagabond traveler, freelance writer, occasional poet and amateur photographer.



ANKE STEINWEH is a member of the RITELL Coordinating Council and teacher at North Providence High School. She also serves on the ELL Advisory Council of Rhode Island. She holds a master's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Rhode Island and is a K-12 ESL Specialist. She received her undergraduate degree in English and Psychology from Rhode Island College where she was also an editor of Rhode Island College's literary magazine many moons ago. Hailing originally from Germany, she lives with her husband, three children, two cats and five chickens in the south of our beautiful state.



LAURA FARIA-TANCINCO is a member of the RITELL Coordinating Council and has taught Adult Ed ESL in universities & institutions all over RI. She has been in the ESL field for 10+ years. She began her ESL

journey in 2006, after a degree and professional attempt in Graphic Design left her wanting more. She moved to Quito, Ecuador where she lived and worked for 2.5 years before backpacking around South America. Upon her return, she began adjuncting at colleges and universities around RI. She completed her M. Ed in TESL from RIC in 2015 and is currently the Coordinator of the ESL Intensive Program and Project ExCEL at RIC. She always says, the best people in the world arrive in her classroom. She enjoys all the challenges & rewards that come with the profession.

NEWS & NOTES

Recognition

Nancy Carnevale Award Winner: Mary Helldorfer-Cooney

Mary Helldorfer-Cooney, the ELL teacher at Stephen Olney School in North Providence, received RITELL's annual Nancy Carnevale Award during RITELL's 2018 Fall Conference at Rhode Island College

last October.

The grant will help Cooney expand a project she guided at the school, an International Night inviting students and families to Stephen Olney School to celebrate, explore and share the sights, sounds and foods of cultures represented in the community.

In her project description, Cooney noted that the "English Language Learners at Stephen Olney School in North Providence come from six different countries around the world, and represent five unique languages...With an affective objective of welcoming our ELLs and their families into our Stephen Olney community, we will begin our project by focusing on their home countries."

As part of the project, each classroom selected a country to study over the Spring semester, beginning with countries represented by the ELLs at the school. Studies and activities involve language, literature, art, music, games and dance. From her description: "Olney students will be engaged in learning as they play a traditional game, learn how to say 'hello' in a new language, and create art based on the art of the country they are studying. Social studies lessons will include facts such as location, population and geography, and will be enhanced when students read historical fiction or folktales from that culture. Guest speakers will read stories originating from around the world (folktales), and bilingual students will be encouraged to read to their classmates in their native language."

Another component to the project is to feature ELLs as "experts," teaching their classmates from their own base of knowledge and experience. The International Night will include a "Journey around the World," a parade of flags, games, food, music and dance. A PowerPoint presentation will showcase photos of learning in action, as students teach their friends and families how to say "hello" in various languages. Artwork will be displayed throughout the building.

Comments supporting Cooney's nomination for the award noted that she "has been an integral part of our school's mission to embrace students' diversity, and to weave these cultures into the fabric of our school culture."

Recognition

Adult Practitioner Award

Thomas Larrabee, a Lead ESOL Teacher with Progreso Latino, received the 2018 RITELL Adult Practitioner Award, voted on by RITELL's Adult Education Special Interest Group (SIG).

Larrabee was honored for his inclusivity and insight in teaching English to all levels of learners. Comments nominating Larrabee noted that his "respectful disposition, high expertise and kind mentorship make a great impact on teachers, students and the whole Central Falls community."

RITELL Carnevale Grant Recipient

International Night at Stephen Olney School

On Thursday, February 22, Stephen Olney School celebrated its 2nd annual International Night. Students from grades K-4 came in to celebrate the cultures of North Providence with their family and friends. Students opened the evening with a parade of flags, marching through the gym to the tunes of the national anthems of the countries they studied: India, the Dominican Republic, the United States, Nigeria, China and Italy. Each grade/class chose a country to study, based on the population of our English Language Learners (ELLs) in our school community.

Students were proud to show-off their work and projects, on display in each classroom and throughout the building. Families pitched in and brought their favorite dishes from to represent their cultural cuisine, and was enjoyed by all.

The evening concluded with a slideshow of pictures of the students putting together their projects and displays, reading intercultural books, creating global art and playing traditional games. Guest speakers came in throughout International Week, wearing traditional clothing and uniforms (U.S. military families) and shared their experiences with the children. The in-depth, cross-curriculum study was informative and FUN!

Thank you to RITELL for sponsoring this project.

Sincerely,
Mary H. Cooney, ELL Specialist, N. Providence

POEM CREDIT (front cover): English con Salsa by Gina Valdés

Using Home Language as a Classroom Resource

Photo Credits: Mitchell Sanders



Ofelia Garcia



Maria Cioè-Peña



Rachel Toncelli

Nancy Carnevale Award Winner



Mary Helldorfer-Cooney



Conference Candid



Translanguaging for Social Justice

Maria Cioè-Peña and Tom Snell

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In speaking about newcomers who are identified as

English language learners, teachers can at times be heard saying that these children come to school “with nothing.” What teachers mean by “nothing” can vary. The word can be used to express limited literacy or numeracy, as defined in the most orthodox fashion. However, more often this determination of something versus nothing is based on a student’s ability to communicate and produce work within the rigid standards of “academic English” and “grade-level.” It is for this reason that the use of translanguaging in all classrooms could be very beneficial to the way that teachers interact with their students and the way that student abilities are evaluated.

Translanguaging is the discursive practice, widely used among bilingual communities, in which linguistic features are adopted from fixed languages and combined into an integrated repertoire. Translanguaging, in an educational context, is situated within a constructivist and culturally responsive pedagogy that honors the richness, complexity, and fullness of students’ linguistic repertoires. Translanguaging creates a learning space for emergent bilinguals that more fully realizes the possibilities of social justice. It does this by shifting the discourse away from a deficit model of students with diverse languages, and creating translanguaging spaces that students

experience as empowering, adaptable, relevant, and reflective of their own life experiences.

Translanguaging creates a learning space for emergent bilinguals that more fully realizes the possibilities of social justice.

INTRODUCTION

When people in bilingual communities use language, the linguistic features at their disposal are adapted across what are considered separate languages. These features are used freely, interchangeably, and in novel combinations, and combined into an integrated whole that exceeds traditional language boundaries. We call this discursive practice translanguaging. Translanguaging recognizes

Social justice in education is, at its core, the demonstration of a deeper reverence for humanity.

a formal equality among all languaging features and practices, because these features are situated as part of a complete system that is fully “owned” by its user. Like translan-

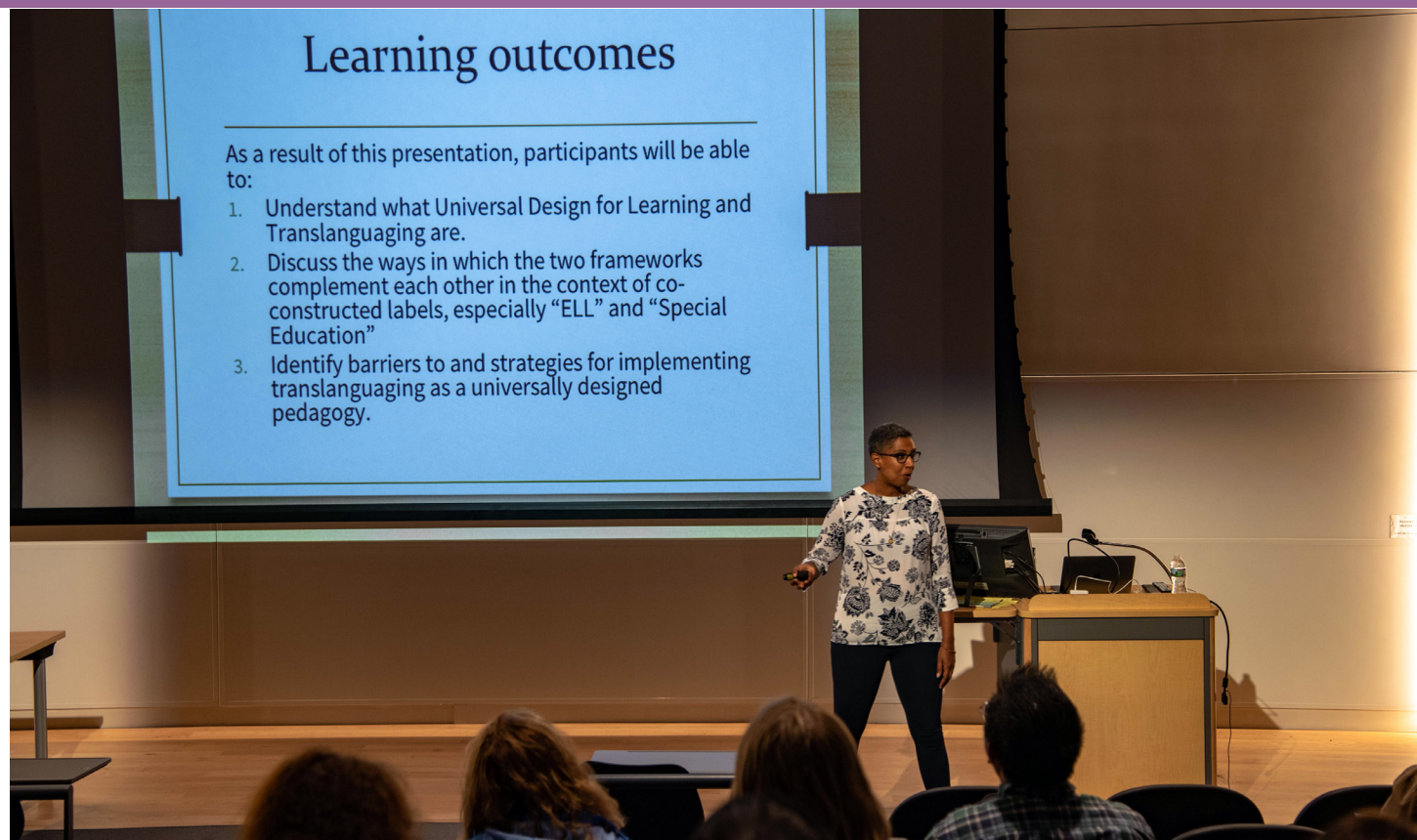
guaging, social justice education challenges us to expand traditional forms of thinking and use culturally responsive or culturally sustaining pedagogy to create greater equity in access and achievement for all learners. Translanguaging is an essential part of this approach.

Translanguaging is an organic response to a world in which objects, ideas, and actions can be described and captured in a multitude of varying language codes, styles and modes. Translanguaging in an educational context allows teachers

and students to have access to the full range of their linguistic practices, as they share in the collaborative construction of knowledge. Because each person’s linguistic repertoire is unique, translanguaging brings all the potential of all those resources to bear as teachers and students co-create knowledge in the classroom. Thus translanguaging is firmly situated in the tradition of constructivist pedagogy, with its emphasis on learning through negotiation and social interaction, as students make their objects of study relevant to themselves. By honoring the richness, complexity, and fullness of students’ linguistic repertoires, translanguaging creates opportunities for deeper understanding, as learners produce new knowledge and claim ownership of their effort and its results.

APPROACHES

The use of translanguaging in any classroom is itself a socially just act because it shifts the discourse from a deficit model to an additive model.



What does this mean? For most multilingual students, school represents a place where they must go to acquire the English language. English is presented as the language of power and progress; as a result, their home language practices, which are meaningful to individuals, are placed in a position of weakness and degeneration. However, being multilingual is actually quite valuable. In the American education system the approach has been towards home language suppression and English language acquisition through a process of encouraging a functional monolingualism. Although this may be carried out with the best of intentions, it nonetheless results in a negative and unjust learning environment for children. These English-only environments can often result in feelings of failure and shame when students are unable to learn English quickly enough, or oppression if they are successful at acquiring English but suffer home language loss potentially losing their ability to communicate with their families and “native” community.

Translanguaging creates a space within schools where the practice of social justice can thrive. At the

core of social justice work within education is the desire to transform the world through teacher action, collective student action, and the empowerment of individuals to create change that is meaningful and sustainable. One of the primary goals of social justice curricula is to highlight for students their ability and responsibility to enact change within their communities. By creating translanguaging spaces, we create spaces that students experience as empowering, adaptable, relevant, and reflective of their own life experiences. These spaces create real learning opportunities as students can immediately have a greater impact on their environment. Beyond that, students’ socio-emotional development is nurtured in translanguaging spaces because these spaces emphasize students’ rightful place in their community, as well as our interconnectedness. Through the recognition and support of linguistic variance, students gain an increased level of independence, a higher level of confidence in their abilities, and a greater degree of competence, engagement and productivity.

The incorporation of translanguaging spaces in the social justice classroom also creates an opportunity to reproduce in classrooms the inclusivity that students seek in their communities as they search for a safe space to construct their identities. Small-group work is a powerful tool for activating these spaces. It allows students to talk directly to each other without having their discourse constantly mediated by an instructor. It creates novel possibilities for authentic collaboration, and allows students to rehearse new skills in a lower-stakes setting. Small group work also has the potential to give students the tools they need to share their experiences in a safe space, dispelling stereotypes while developing confidence in their abilities.

By incorporating translanguaging spaces into their practice, teachers have the potential to change the discourse, the perceptions, and judgments that are placed on their students. Teachers enable students to recognize their own innate abilities and build on the strong foundation that exists by allowing students to use their home language to communicate and facilitate their learning. Additionally,

students can then perceive their home language not as something that is hindering their progress but as a tool that can enhance it. A student who has limited English proficiency may remain silent in an English only classroom, inadvertently showing a lack of progress and comprehension simply because they lack the English language skills needed to express themselves. However, in a translanguaging space that same student would be able to use his or her home language skills to facilitate their learning and to communicate understanding, incorporating them more fully as a member of the learning community rather than just a silent observer. English-only spaces can be very lonely, so by opening up these translanguaging spaces teachers can introduce community and interconnectedness as well as exhibit an appreciation of diversity. Translanguaging is a sterling example of culturally responsive pedagogy in action, as students’ linguistic resources are valued and brought to bear on the learning process in all contexts.

Translanguaging spaces are enhanced by culturally and linguistically responsive practices. Texts that reflect learners’ experiences, culture, and language repertoires have a much greater likelihood of engaging them in authentic discussion and higher-order thinking. These texts activate students’ prior knowledge and lower the barriers to engagement. Teachers who make multilingual and/or multicultural texts available to their students let their students know that their experiences are valued while increasing their access to achievement. In this way, translanguaging goes beyond a simple recognition of diversity, but rather employs the diverse linguistic repertoires in the classroom as meaningful resources for learning.

While translanguaging may seem to be in conflict with traditional means of assessment, especially in an era of hyper accountability, it has the potential to give teachers access to the full academic capacities of their students. This can be accomplished through the use of multilingual assessments,

which can give both a broader and deeper picture of a student’s knowledge and skills. For example, if a student is asked to recall a list of details or a narrative, and is only allowed to use a small portion of her linguistic resources, she may produce a response that is reflective of linguistic capacity only, and not the full range of her awareness. Given the opportunity to use all her linguistic resources, she can demonstrate a more extensive understanding of the concepts being assessed.

Social justice in education is, at its core, the demonstration of a deeper reverence for humanity. When we honor the human spirit and all its potential in every single learner, we bring the project of social justice to the reality of our teaching practice. Translanguaging allows us to form deeper connections to each member of the learning community, by recognizing the unique linguistic repertoire of each person as a complete and integrated whole—while we challenge each learner to add features to their repertoire and expand the audience they can reach. Translanguaging also allow learners to explore their own experiences more deeply, by allowing them to construct an understanding of their own selves in a language that is deeply meaningful to them.

IMPLICATIONS

Translanguaging for social justice through education opens up a world of possibilities for emergent bilingual students. Translanguaging practices may include multilingual and culturally-responsive texts, small group collaborations, and performance-based assessments. The power of culturally-responsive texts can be accessed through resources as simple as a song, a website, a film or YouTube video, or a newspaper article. For example, teachers can introduce newspapers in a variety of languages which the students can use to assess multiple perspectives regarding a major event or social

issue. These ideas can be discussed and explored in a small group, which could then be developed into a collaborative project such as a poster or presentation. In small groups, students share responsibility for a final project, develop leadership abilities and cooperative working skills, and create a product that is reflective of their collective voice. Finally, when students share their small group work with their peers, teacher create an opportunity for authentic, performance-based assessment. It is authentic because students feel a real investment in their work and the understanding they have created; it is performance-based because it is grounded in their actual linguistic abilities and lived experiences. Teachers who want to extend these possibilities can use multilingual assessments to grant their students a higher capacity to show what they know. These assessments could be papers written in a variety of languages, mixed-media projects, or multilingual presentations.

These are just a few examples of how translanguaging can be used to preview, develop and assess academic development. The key here is for teachers to constantly be thinking about how to make learning more accessible, by opening up the possibilities inherent in the multiple languages students can use. This can and should be done regardless of the teacher’s linguistic repertoire since the goals of translanguaging in this context are not grounded in the teacher’s ability to understand what students produce but rather to give students an opportunity to create. More broadly, translanguaging grants all students a space to feel successful and interact with the curriculum when they are able to engage with content using language features of the own choosing

Note: This article has been reprinted with permission. It was originally published in *Theory, Research, and Action in Urban Education*. Cioè-Peña, M. and Snell, T. (Fall 2015). [Translanguaging for social justice](#). *Theory, Research, and Action in Urban Education*, 4(1).

Bilingüismo, Translanguaging y Estudiantes Bilingües Latinx

Ofelia Garcia

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

In this short text, I extend some of the ideas that I presented at the fall RITELL conference where I presented on the differences between additive bilingualism and the concept of translanguaging. Here I am including my own translanguaged voice, as a Latina scholar, in the written text. I do so, to show some challenges that translanguaging presents, while highlighting the potential it has for all of us as listeners/readers, and the subsequent education of bilingual children.

El bilingüismo has been mostly studied desde una perspectiva monolingüe, in which las lenguas are said to be separadas, autónomas. Pero all speakers who regularmente usan two lenguas in comunidad know that this is imposible. Perhaps it works en la clase y la escuela, where la lengua is used artificialmente. But it doesn't work that way para los millones de personas bilingües en el mundo.

The question then is: Cómo/How is bilingualism best developed in school? There is no answer that is separate from people and comunidad. If la educación bilingüe is to serve la comunidad bilingüe, then a translanguaging approach que refleje el modo dinámico de usar la lengua of that comunidad is most apropiado. If however, the goal of la educación bilingüe is simplemente to add una lengua foreign/extranjera sin respeto nor conexión a una comunidad bilingüe en los Estados Unidos nor una identidad bilingüe, then translanguaging has a limited función.

For monolingües to become bilingües, translanguaging could serve as scaf-

fold for understanding la instrucción, but nothing more. For children who live en comunidades bilingües, however, translanguaging has the potencial to be transformative, allowing them voz and expression that uplift them en sus comunidades, ensures their self-esteem as bilingües and permite la flexibilidad lingüística que acompaña thought, creatividad y criticality. Through translanguaging children bilingües can speak as bilingües, advocate for themselves as bilingües and demostrar what they know, without the shackles of always having to do so en una lengua o la otra sin the intermingling of words and worlds that they experience.

So for me, the question/la pregunta es: What do we want of bilingual education? If our interés es la comunidad bilingüe en los Estados Unidos, then translanguaging in carrying out its transformative acto político is most important. However, if that is not our interés, then translanguaging loses, for the minoritized comunidad bilingüe, its potencial to transform some of the ideologías lingüísticas that the comunidad holds as a result of escuelas —epistemologías of pureza lingüística with which la escuela opera y que mantienen las jerarquías de poder y las desigualdes estructurales en que many U.S. bilingües live.

Writing the above text is for me, and reading it is for you, an exercise in transgressing the limits of communication that have been imposed by national languages. Many bilingual Latinx students have access to this entire repertoire and activate it frequently in oral communication,

especially in their homes and communities. But literacy is a function of school. And in U.S. schools, it is English-only literacy that is acknowledged, measured and privileged. In some bilingual schools, Spanish literacy is taught and developed, although biliteracy in schools is always defined as the ability to make meaning of a written text in the same language as that of the written text. Translanguaging literacy proposes, however, that for bilinguals to truly make meaning of written texts requires that they leverage their entire repertoire. This means, for example, discussing in Spanish a text written in English, or vice-versa. Or it means responding in written English to a text read in Spanish. Or it means just using in academic writing all the many features of one's repertoire, whether verbal and considered English or Spanish, or visual and multimodal.

By disrupting the monolingual act of reading in the second to fourth paragraphs of the text, readers are differently engaged in two ways. On the one hand, it enables them to see in writing some of the ways in which bilingualism is manifested orally among bilingual speakers. On the other hand, it makes them work on listening to bilingual speech. Changes to U.S. monolingual ideologies will not come about by forcing speakers to manifest their bilingualism. Changes can only occur if we transform how so-called monolinguals listen to bilingual speech. If every time we hear something in a language other than English we stop listening, then those who are deemed to speak differently will never be heard. If on the other hand, we learn to listen deeply, to engage in conversation, to ask for clarifications, to raise questions, to become comfort-



able with the incompleteness of all communication, there might come a time when U.S. bilinguals will not be viewed with suspicion. Only by developing a generous deep hearing, one that listens with generosity and without racialized ideologies, will we be able to transform the future of bilingual children in the U.S. This is especially so for bilingual children who come from Latinx communities and have been recently reduced to criminals, thieves and drug traffickers by our President.

Understanding the translanguaging of bilingual students has the potential to engage educators in pedagogical practices that can educate deeply instead of focusing on just getting the language "right." But beyond the education of bilingual students, translanguaging can educate all of us to hear the sounds that have been hidden in homes and ethnic communities, "sounds of silence" that must

be heard. By showing some of it in my writing, I begin to carve out a space for a different type of listening in which all of us must engage in our increasingly multilingual world.

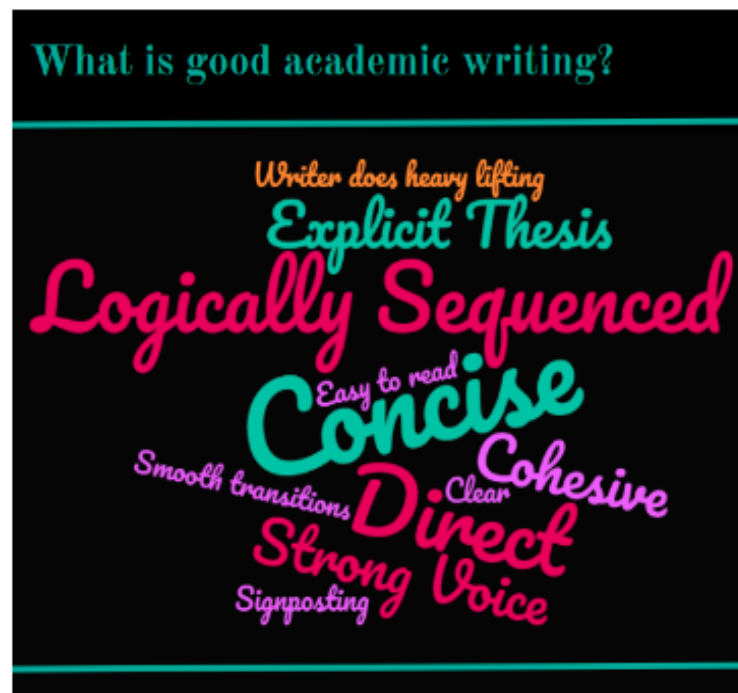
I was thinking, what am I going to do with this problem? Solve it or try something different. First, I needed to keep myself calm. Breathe. What could be some other options?



Translanguaging in the Drafting Process: Writing across Cultural Style

Rachel Toncelli

Often when we think of good academic writing in the US, we think of concise, logically-sequenced sentences that merge into paragraphs, each of which generally expands upon a singular idea on the journey towards providing evidence for a thesis which has been explicitly and clearly stated at the outset. What we may not consider is that this linear definition of writing is just that, a definition. Unless we venture beyond traditional American writing style, we cannot see that the definition of good writing is very much a cultural construct. The more we know about cultural variations on good writing, the more we can support developing writing skills as a powerful means of communication among our emergent bilingual students.

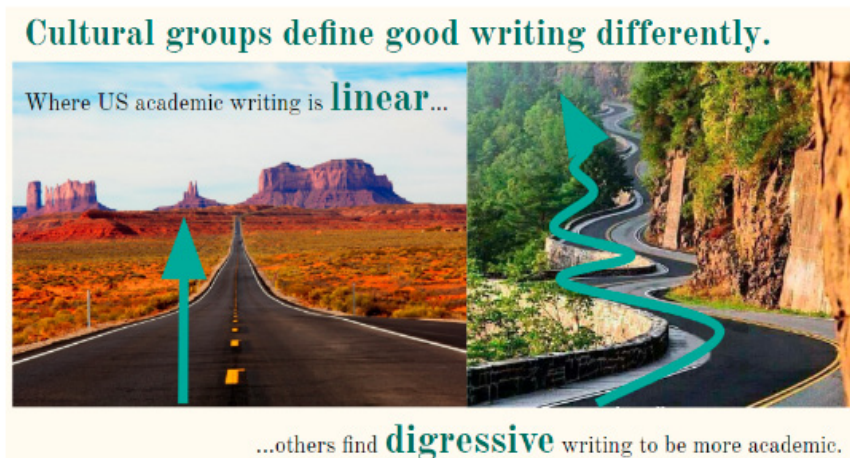


If American academic writing is linear, what do other cultural writing styles look like? Kaplan (1966), in his landmark review of contrastive rhetoric, made the differences in cultural definitions of good writing visual: he presented linear American writing with a straight arrow while other cultural styles took on different shapes with the digressive styles of Romance languages represented by a meandering arrow and more circular and subtle Asian styles, a spiral (p. 15), thus denoting how academic writing that follows a linear path from introduction to conclusion is prized in the US, yet many other cultures prize alternative organizational and structural pathways. If teachers are not aware of varying definitions of good writing, they can easily mistake students making use of cultural style for poor proofreading or a lack of focus. For example, academic writers in Romance languages prefer more digressive writing pathways which favor longer, more complex sentence structure and encourage including what American writers would consider tangential information as a tool for showing breadth of knowledge (Bowe, Martin, & Manns, 2014). In

extreme contrast to American linear style, Japanese writing favors a spiral approach which only subtly makes reference to a thesis, if at all, so as not to offend the intelligence of the reader (Bowe et al., 2014). Kaplan's review of contrastive rhetoric was not global and did not include the many languages which are spoken but not written. Often these languages have deep and rich roots in oral storytelling, which informs the way speakers of those languages might organize a written draft when asked to write in

English. Though Kaplan's work was important for considering contrastive rhetoric, how we think about language acquisition has changed much since 1966. Even still, his work remains critically valuable because the more we know about home language rhetorical styles, the more we can welcome those as valuable resources in our classrooms.

As we support English language development, these considerations of home language writing styles are of



great importance for a variety of reasons. First, when encouraged to write in home language and then in English, emergent bilingual writers produce more and with greater depth (Cummins as cited in Fu, 2009, p. 27); they also engage more deeply with content and keep frustration at bay. Because their ability to write in English "doesn't match the thoughts they yearn to convey" (Fu, 2009, p. 14), allowing access to ideas via home language can be a powerful tool for classroom inclusivity. Second, because students internalize "rules" of good writing, adolescent and adult learners often rely on the rhetorical patterns common to their home languages (Fu, 2009) and it is easy for teachers to mistake a different rhetorical pattern for a lack of careful thought to organization. Third, and most importantly, dynamic bilingualism, our most current understanding of how languages are acquired, posits that all individuals have one set of linguistic resources, and encouraging emergent bilinguals to translanguange, or make use of all of the linguistic features within their repertoires, will actually support English language development and also the maintenance of bilingualism (García & Wei, 2014).

So how can we make use of students' full linguistic repertoires and reduce frustration as they approach writing? We can be explicit about what it means to write for a specific audience, which has implications for organizational style and language choices, and we can discuss what that means across languages. We can encourage flexible thinking, talking, and writing that makes use of home language, English, or a mix. When students are allowed to convey a complex thought in home language, they tend to reach for more complex structures when they convert these ideas to English (Fu, 2009). In addition to affirming the intrinsic value of home language, English language development occurs through this process. Regardless of the number of languages teachers speak, they can easily enact linguistically and culturally flexible writing practices by learning more about rhetorical styles of students' home lan-
cont'd on next page

Tips for Enacting Linguistically and Culturally Flexible Writing Practices... and useful resources

- 1. Familiarize yourself with the rhetorical styles of the home languages of your students.**
 - Review studies in contrastive rhetoric.
 - Look for patterns in writing.
 - Use your students as a resource for this information too. (Kaplan, 1996; Ulla, 1996; Martin & Manns, 2014; Quinn, 2012)
- 2. Let thinking happen in any language.**
 - Encourage students to talk before writing.
 - Brainstorming should occur in any language. (Fu, 2009; García & Wei, 2014)
- 3. Read and build vocabulary connections in multiple languages.**
 - Create a multilingual library.
 - Use language experience (retelling of home and community events/life experiences) to create materials.
 - Make use of cognates and similar lexical phrases in academic writing. (Biber, 2009; García & Wei, 2014; Li & Schmitt, 2009; Umlu & Mancha, 2010)
- 4. Let drafting occur in a variety of styles.**
 - Write in a variety of genres/styles (on same topic) to create opportunities for thinking from different perspectives. (Fu, 2009; García & Wei, 2014; Quinn, 2012)
- 5. Create many opportunities for informal writing to occur.**
 - Use home language, English, or both!
 - Students need to see themselves as writers, so writing shouldn't only be for the goal of final drafts.
 - Let the writing process be recursive and flexibly move between languages. (Fu, 2009; García & Wei, 2014)
- 6. Use samples to analyze form.**
 - Be explicit about English language goals in writing
 - Honor that differences in rhetorical style and organization are not better or worse from one group to another. (Martin & Manns, 2014; Perez-Llantada, 2014; Staples, Egbert, Biber, & McClair, 2013)
- 7. Give writers choices about which language to use in final drafts.**
 - Consider ways that mixing of languages can be powerful as a means of communication.
 - Share bilingual authors who make choices about which language to include.
 - Encourage intentional choices about language used for final draft. (Fu, 2009; García & Wei, 2014; Quinn, 2012)
- 8. Consider your cultural positioning when giving feedback.**
 - Your way is not the only way; it is just a way.
 - Avoid feedback like: "Lacks focus" or "Needs proofreading" as you may be missing an opportunity to recognize and discuss the rhetorical pattern.
 - Remember that writing is about communication; target that first and then build developmentally appropriate structures and mechanics along the way. (Fu, 2009; Martin & Manns, 2014)



guages; welcoming thinking, talking, and drafting in all languages, seeking connections across those languages (e.g., by learning about cognates or similar lexical patterns in academic writing); using writing samples to explicitly analyze form; and encouraging student writers to make intentional choices about language use and form of final drafts. In conclusion, teachers should make an ongoing effort to critically consider their own cultural positioning when giving feedback. Rather than making assumptions about a student's intentions and efforts, teachers can react to ideas and discuss choice, structure, and style as tools for communication. When teachers remember that their definition of good writing is a definition, not *the* definition, new space is opened to value the linguistic and cultural diversity of emergent bilingual writers.

References

Biber, Douglas. (2009). A corpus-driven approach to formulaic language in English: Multi-word patterns in speech and writing. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 14(3), 275-311.

Bowe, H. J., Martin, K., & Manns, H. (2014). *Communication across cultures: Mutual understanding in a global world*. Melbourne, VIC: Cambridge University Press.

Connor, Ulla. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second-language writing*. Cambridge Applied Linguistics Series. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Fu, D. (2009). *Writing between languages: How English language learners make the transition to fluency, grades 4-12*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: language, bilingualism and education*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kaplan, R. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning*, 16(1-2), 1-20.

Landis, D., Umlu, J., & Mancha, S. (2010). The power of language experience for cross-cultural reading and writing. *Reading Teacher*, 63(7), 580-589.

Li, J., & Schmitt, N. (2009). The acquisition of lexical phrases in academic writing: A longitudinal case study. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 18(2), 85-102.

Perez-Llantada, C. (2014). Formulaic language in L1 and L2 expert academic writing: Convergent and divergent usage. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 14, 84.

Quinn, Janet M. (2012). Using contrastive rhetoric in the ESL classroom. *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, 40(1), 31-38. *Year College*, 2012, Vol.40(1), p.31-38.

Staples, S., Egbert, J., Biber, D., & McClair, A. (2013). Formulaic sequences and EAP writing development: Lexical bundles in the TOEFL iBT writing section. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 12(3), 214-225.

RITELL: Tenets

As approved by the RITELL Coordinating Council, November 2018

1. Our mission is to inform, educate, and raise awareness among all stakeholders in Rhode Island as to best practices for the education of English Learners Prek-Adult. In doing so we aim to collaborate with other organizations in the state that are charged with serving English Learners/Emergent Bilinguals.*

2. Our primary goal is to support excellence in teaching and learning for English Learners/Emergent Bilinguals of all ages. The strengths and needs of ELL and bilingual communities are varied and complex, therefore we strive to support teachers and their learners through responsive professional development, networking, and advocacy.

3. We support:

a. Fair and humane immigration policies for immigrant, migrant and refugee students and their families.

b. Effective, research-based approaches for ELL education including bilingual, dual language, and ESL programs.

c. Adequate funding for education and support of programs for Emergent Bilinguals from early childhood to adults.

d. Clear lines of authority and decision-making at the Rhode Island Department of Education for all Prek-12 programs serving ELLs, under the direction of the ELL Program Coordinator in the RIDE Office of Student, Community and Academic Support. As outlined in Chapter 16-54-Education of Limited English Proficient Students, this includes six program models designed to serve English Learners, including two bilingual (Bilingual Education, Two-Way/Dual Language).

e. Monitoring practices that hold schools accountable for successfully educating ELLs, irrespective of district/program size or current personnel limitations. We aim to increase the visibility of English Learners' experiences and emphasize multiple and effective pathways to college and/or career success.

f. Advocacy efforts for Emergent Bilinguals and their families, collaborating with other educational and community groups and focusing on full access and educational equity.

g. Language education as a part of all learners' educational experience, collaborating with organizations that advance language competence in our state and beyond.

*Throughout our core tenets, we use the terms "English Learners" as well as "Emergent Bilinguals". The use of both of these terms is intentional, in order to recognize the specific group of students deemed "English Learners" by the state for purposes of allocating services, while also recognizing students' emerging bilingualism and multilingualism through the term "Emergent Bilinguals".