

HAAL 2023 Invited Symposium on:
**Translanguaging as theory and method: Implications for language planning and
classroom practice**

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The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

Convener & Chair: Edward Wen

Presenters: David C.S. Li; Kevin W. H. Tai; Mark Teng Feng, Edward Wen Zhisheng

Summary:

This Invited Symposium sets out to review and transform some traditional and current theoretical frameworks and practices in language learning and teaching, language policy and planning, and classroom pedagogy and practice. To achieve this goal, we apply and incorporate theoretical insights and related research methods from the increasingly well-established translanguaging paradigms and pedagogical approaches. Specifically, contributions are invited to discuss central issues related to language policy and planning (LPP), language learning and teaching, as well as classroom practice across a broad spectrum of contexts (Hong Kong, Macau, mainland China, USA etc.). It is hoped that this symposium will provide not just an interactive platform to present and discuss theoretical issues and empirical investigations, but also an opportunity for stakeholders of language education and planning to reflect upon current practice.

Paper 1:

Trilingual and Biliterate Language Education Policy in Hong Kong: Past, Present and Future

Prof. David C. S. Li, Professor and Head, Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies (CBS), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Designed with essentially Cantonese-dominant Hongkongers in mind, the ‘trilingual and biliterate’ language-in-education policy (TaB) has been implemented for over two decades, but most students’ language standards still fall short of the TaB target. Driven by the monolingual ‘late immersion’ model, secondary schools are divided into CMI (70%) and EMI (30%) streams. The TaB target has proved to be a tall order for NCS (non-Cantonese-speaking) and Cantonese-dominant students alike. After assessing the effectiveness of government support measures to date along five dimensions: contrastive linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, cognitive neuroscience, and instructional strategies, the following LPP (language policy and planning) measures are recommended:

- (i) strengthen language input at key stages of learning (age 3–9, K1–P3);
- (ii) implement total immersion in Putonghua for three years (P1–P3, age 6–9);
- (iii) abandon the ‘no language mixing allowed’ dogma and promote CLIL and action research in translanguaging and bilingual pedagogies;

- (iv) attract academically bright and linguistically gifted students to receive professional training in language teaching through ‘prestige planning’; and
- (v) engage civil servants, schoolteachers, and university staff in a bottom-up ‘speak English/Putonghua where we can’ campaign.

For these LPP measures to produce the intended effect, concerted actions by teachers, school principals, educationalists and language experts in academia are needed.

Reference: <https://sfeducation.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40862-022-00168-z>

Paper 2:

Transforming Students' Learning Through the Creation of a Translanguaging Space in an English as a First Language Classroom

Prof. Kevin W. H. Tai, Assistant Professor of English Language Education, Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong

Despite the extensive research on translanguaging in bi/multilingual classrooms, research in the context of first language (L1) classrooms remains scarce. This study fills the research gap by examining how a translanguaging space was created in an L1 classroom to prepare students to inhabit a world with different linguistic and cultural practices. The data were based on a linguistic ethnographic project in a first-grade L1 English Language Arts classroom in the U.S. Multimodal Conversation Analysis and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis methods were employed for data analysis. This study revealed that such a translanguaging space encouraged students to view diverse languages as resources and appreciate linguistic and cultural diversity in the community. The teacher’s ability to create a translanguaging space for her L1 English students was shaped by the pedagogical translanguaging knowledge gained from her teacher training programme. As such, we posit the significance for all pre-service and in-service teachers to acquire knowledge of translanguaging to develop students’ social-emotional well-being and their identities as citizens in this multilingual and multicultural world.

Paper 3:

Pedagogical translanguaging for vocabulary learning

Prof. Mark Feng Teng, Associate Professor, Center for Advanced Linguistics Sciences, Beijing Normal University

The term “translanguaging” has become trendy, permeating bilingual and multilingual education in many parts of the world. This notion is meant to broaden bilingualism and multilingualism. In this talk, I will reflect on theoretical and pedagogical translanguaging. The former is typically related to social and political aspects, while the latter covers linguistic, cognitive, cultural, affective, and other classroom-related factors that can facilitate or hinder language acquisition. In particular, my focus in this talk is on pedagogical translanguaging in vocabulary learning. I am interested in how pedagogical translanguaging might operate in

learning vocabulary: could it help language teachers and learners develop confidence for social and academic purposes in the classroom? How can instructors leverage learners' linguistic repertoires as a resource for meaning making or communication and help students develop flexible, plurilingual spaces in vocabulary learning? Does language learners' proficiency level need to be considered when applying translanguaging as pedagogy? This talk ends with some translanguaging activities for vocabulary learning.

Paper 4:

Language portraits going digital and multimodal: Deciphering the translanguaging space and linguistic repertoires among multilinguals

Prof. Edward Wen Zhisheng, Professor and Interim Head, Department of English Language and Literature, Hong Kong Shue Yan University

(In collaboration with Mu Siqing and Lili Han, Macao Polytechnic University)

Abstract: Language portraits (LPs) have emerged in recent years as a viable device to portray multilingual learners' linguistic repertoires visually. However, previous studies have mostly relied on the traditional way of inviting participants to sketch on a template of LPs on paper with pens and crayons. In this paper, we propose to employ the digital method to collect and analyze data of language portraits to examine the translingual practices and negotiations of meaning among multilinguals. Through the Synchronic Computer-Mediated Communication platform, BroadMix, participants' multilinguistic and multi-semiotic resources in lived experience are solicited and collected through a biographic survey and a sketch of the language portraits in digital form, which is then further triangulated by follow-up interviews. The data from the participants' LPs and their oral narratives during the interviews are then coded and subject to qualitative visual discourse analysis. We argue that these digital language portraits (DLPs), with their major features -- digital affordances and multimodality, tap into the translanguaging space and linguistic repertoires arising from the creative and critical meaning-making process among multilinguals in virtual exchanges.