Preparation of Teachers to Support Multilingual Learners through Translanguaging and Multiliteracies Pedagogies in K-12 Classrooms

Teatime Research Circle Talks: 1st Presentation in 2022

Presenters:
Dr. Shakina Rajendram, Jennifer Burton Wales Wong & Dr. Jeff Bale

Abstract
This session reports on a SSHRC-funded study examining pre-service teacher candidates’ (TCs) knowledge and orientations towards using translanguaging (García & Li Wei, 2014) and multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996) pedagogies to support K-12 multilingual learners (MLs), particularly in their writing. Data was drawn from a three-year case study of a mandatory course on supporting MLs in a teacher education program in Ontario. Data sources were TCs’ responses (N=490) to a Pedagogical Content Knowledge for Language-Inclusive Teaching Test (PeCK-LIT) developed by the research team, and unit plans (N=9) and lesson plans (N=41) designed by the TCs during the course. A coding scheme was adapted based on Van Vliegen and Zappa-Hollman’s (2020) matrix on plurilingual pedagogies, and the categories included teacher- or student-initiated translanguaging, planned or spontaneous engagement with translanguaging, translanguaging as scaffold or resource, and supporting traditional or multimodal literacies. The findings demonstrate the use of various multimodal translanguaging strategies such as word walls, graphic organizers, and online translation tools. However, the analysis revealed constraints to TCs’ orientations towards translanguaging, such as allowing translanguaging in the writing process but not product, reducing translanguaging to a scaffold for English, and as accommodations rather than whole-class strategies. The paper recommends ways that teacher education programs can prepare TCs to center MLs in mainstream classrooms through language-inclusive teaching.
Dr. Shakina Rajendram is an Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream and the Coordinator of the Language Teaching field in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at OISE, University of Toronto. She is also the Course and Curriculum Development Lead for Supporting English Language Learners in the Master of Teaching program at OISE. Shakina’s teaching and research focus on teacher education, translanguaging and multiliteracies pedagogies, and supporting multilingual learners in K-12 and higher education contexts internationally.

Jennifer Burton is a PhD Candidate in the Language and Literacies Education Program at OISE, University of Toronto. She has over 13 years of language teaching experience in Canada and abroad. Her research and teaching interests center on creative and critical pedagogies in higher education. Jennifer’s dissertation examines student and teacher experiences with spoken word poetry in an English for Academic Purposes Course.

Wales Wong is a PhD Candidate in the Language and Literacies Education Program at OISE, University of Toronto. She specializes in English as a Second Language (ESL) education at the secondary level and has taught adolescents and adults for the past 15 years. Her current research focuses on the development and implementation of translanguaging pedagogies to support plurilingual adult learners in continuing education programs.

Dr. Jeff Bale is an Associate Professor of Language and Literacies Education at OISE, University of Toronto. His research applies political, economic, antiracist, and critical perspectives on language policies in education and teacher education. Dr. Bale currently leads three research projects: More Than Just Good Teaching: Mainstream Teacher Education for Supporting English Learners; Critical Perspectives on Teacher Education and Linguistic Diversity in Migration Societies; and Language, Race, and the Regulation of Difference: The Heritage Languages Program in Ontario, 1977–1987.