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Knowledge Building through Collaborative, Translation and Translanguaging Practices

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ABSTRACT

Implementing translanguaging in language education requires a rich understanding of learners' complex meaning-making practices. Enactments of translanguaging simply as an acknowledgement of learners' home languages and translation practices reflects a confusion between the concept of translanguaging and translation and a lack of understanding of the complexities involved within these two practices for language learning. This study explores how a university lecturer and a graduate student enact translation and translanguaging in a collaborative dialogue to solve a linguistic problem. Based on a thematic analysis of their text-message interaction and evidence from stimulated recalls, we demonstrate how practices of translation and translanguaging are different and yet intertwined as affordances for learning. We also consider the diverse linguistic, emotional, social, and historical resources that both interlocutors leverage to facilitate a collaborative learning space. We conclude by highlighting the importance of a multilingual pedagogical design that goes beyond visibility and audibility of multiple languages.

Recent decades have seen an increasing promotion of translanguaging in language education. Translanguaging views language not as a discrete system but as a resource and a social practice. A translanguaging perspective recognizes multilinguals' entire repertoire for meaning making and aims to facilitate their expansion of meaning-making practices in various social contexts (García & Li, 2014). Translanguaging embodies a transformative potential for multilinguals' development of cognition, identity and social relations and provides a promising perspective in language education (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Li, 2018).

Despite such increasing recognition, the enactment of translanguaging in language classrooms is often limited and manifested simply as an acknowledgement of learners' home languages and translation practices in class. For instance, teachers may offer students singular translation prompts such as "how do you say . . . in your home language?" as a "multilingual signage" (Daniel et al., 2019) or simply grant students access to bilingual dictionaries as a way of practicing translanguaging. While these pedagogical practices make students' home languages visible and facilitative for their language learning, they frame learners' use of home languages and translation largely in a pragmatic context (Hartmann & Hélot, 2020), focusing merely on "the effortless transmission of skills from one language to another" (García & Li, 2014, p. 69). In other words, these practices associate the appearance of home languages or translation directly as translanguaging, without fully recognizing or understanding the intricacies involved within learners' practices of translation and translanguaging for meaning making and language learning. Translation and translanguaging, according to Baynham and Lee (2019), are two closely related but different concepts, and they need to be carefully differentiated and examined so as to better understand learners' multilingual practices. We explain these concepts in the next section of the paper.

From a sociocultural perspective, teachers need to understand learners' language and cognitive levels so that they can move them along their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978). In order to expand learners' meaning-making practices through translingual pedagogies, it is therefore important to first understand how learners engage in complex practices for meaning making and language learning. Collaborative dialogue, which embraces learners' use of multilingual resources, has been widely acknowledged as a source for second language learning (Swain & Watanabe, 2019). Given the complexities involved in multilinguals' practices of translation and translanguaging and the common confusion between these two practices, this study explores the use of translation and translanguaging of using English and Chinese by two multilingual speakers in the context of a collaborative dialogue. Our specific research interests focus on how translation and translanguaging practices in contexts of language learning operate and how these practices help expand students' knowledge repertoires, an area we believe is under-researched but can offer important insights to developing transformative translanguaging pedagogies.

The dialogue we present here between the two multilingual speakers reflects the complexities involved in this area of study. This small-scale study allows us to conduct a close analysis of the diverse knowledges and skills educators need if they are to co-create meaningful and transformative translanguaging practices in contexts of language learning. We also regard the everyday text messaging context where the dialogue takes place, a useful platform for investigating multilingual studies not only because mobile phones and other handheld digital devices are easily accessible and full of useful resources that enable learners to communicate meaning, but because they show us learners' natural use of language and ways of creating and negotiating meaning. Many educational contexts today, regardless of whether they are in countries regarded as highly homogenous or heterogeneous, are constituted by student cohorts with diverse languages, dialects and cultural practices. Many classrooms bring together local and international students with unequal socio-economic backgrounds, educational histories, language and literacy levels (both in English and their mother tongue languages) and learning. Monolingual and/or multilingual teachers may have received some or no language and literacy training, nor training to teach in such complex classroom contexts. If translanguaging is to stretch, expand or extend students' knowledge particularly within such diverse educational contexts, educators and learners need to be sensitive to the histories, knowledges, expectations, hopes, policies and practices that shape the space in which speakers perform. Knowledge and a willingness to engage and understand each other are crucial in helping teachers and learners, coming from many socio-cultural and political life worlds, to feel comfortable and safe in bringing their non-English linguistic resources which are usually expected to be left outside monolingually constructed classroom walls.

We now turn to the perspectives and concepts that frame our study which include translanguaging in language education, the relationship between translation and translanguaging, and collaborative dialogue for language learning.

Conceptual framework

The transformative potential of translanguaging in language education

There is a growing body of work in language education studies promoting the concept of translanguaging and its transformative potential for cognition, identity and power relations. Moving away from viewing language as a discrete system to a resource and a dynamic social practice, translanguaging perceives language learning not as "adding" separate linguistic systems, but as integrating new acts of knowing, doing and being into learners' unitary repertoire for meaning making in various social contexts (Canagarajah, 2011b; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García & Li, 2014). Translanguaging in language education, therefore, recognizes and leverages learners' entire repertoire for learning and helps them expand their meaning-making practices by facilitating a deeper understanding of language that goes beyond standardized linguistic systems. It helps

learners better understand the social dimension of diverse linguistic practices, or as Canagarajah (2011a) puts it, "a keen sensitivity to the rhetorical constraints and possibilities available to them in different communicative situations" (p. 415) so that learners can shuttle between styles, genres and discourses to construct their own meaning (Pennycook, 2012). As such, translanguaging has transformative potential for learners' cognition not only in the sense that it enhances learners' cognitive flexibility as they sort through linguistic resources (Bialystok et al., 2004). More importantly, it enables learners to contest compartmentalized monolingual mentalities and connect their cognitive development with the utilization of various media and modes across social contexts (García & Li, 2014). By these means, translanguaging destabilizes linguistic hierarchies and brings the practices valued in formal educational settings and in learners' everyday worlds together to engage learners holistically in learning. It thus has the potential to empower both learner and teacher in the learning process and transform their power relations (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; García, 2009).

Recent years have seen increasing empirical evidence which shows the realization of such potentials and advantages of translanguaging in classrooms. It has been found that opening up a translingual space where language learners are encouraged and guided to leverage their multilingual, multi-semiotic and multimodal resources helps them better access and comprehend the subject matter (e.g., Herrera, 2017; Preece, 2020), expand vocabularies and develop metalinguistic and meta-semantic awareness (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011a; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Ollerhead, 2019). Also, it helps enhance learners' interest, investment and engagement in learning (e.g., Ntelioglou et al., 2014; Wu & Lin, 2019) and affirm, expand and transform their identities as multilinguals and experts (e.g., Blair et al., 2018; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Ollerhead, 2019).

It is important to note that regardless of whether such space is promoted in institutions, many educated multilingual learners across various sectors are already activating their non-English languages in practices such as translation for language learning. However, to realize the transformative potentials of translanguaging in classroom teaching and learning contexts, a careful understanding of the relationship between translation and translanguaging is required.

Translation and translanguaging practices

Translation and translanguaging are two concepts which conventionally rest on different perspectives of language to describe multilinguals' meaning-making practices. Translation, often understood as an act of bridging different languages and cultures, maintains a clear boundary between named languages (García et al., 2020; Sato, 2017; Sato & Sharma, 2017). It tends to be conceptualized from a material and microtextual scale and refers to a linear and unidirectional transmission of textual materials from one language into another, encompassing modalities such as oral interpretation and written translation (Baker, 2016; Baynham & Lee, 2019). By comparison, translanguaging breaks the boundary between named languages. It perceives multilingual practice as a dynamic process, where multilinguals bring together their linguistic, semiotic, and multimodal resources along with "different dimensions of their personal history, experience, and environment; their attitude, belief, and ideology; their cognitive and physical capacity" (Li, 2011, p. 1223) in a unitary repertoire for meaning making.

Despite such conventional difference between translation and translanguaging, recent work on translanguaging encourages a reconceptualization of translation and suggests that translation and translanguaging can be closely intertwined in multilinguals' meaning-making practices. From a translanguaging lens, translation can be viewed as a dynamic practice of recreating, where multilinguals leverage their repertoire to select, alter, combine, or resist various semiotic resources to construct new meaning in a particular context. Translation, therefore, not only involves word-to-word or text-to-text transmission but goes beyond it as an emergence from the assemblage of dynamic resources that multilinguals bring together at a particular time and space. In this sense,

translation overlaps with translanguaging; it can be perceived as embedded within a translanguaging space and constituted of successive translanguaging moments (Baynham & Lee, 2019).

Multilinguals' language practices, as García (2009) suggests, "are multiple and ever adjusting to the multilingual multimodal terrain of the communicative act" (p. 144). Based on this perspective, multilingual learners' intertwined practice of translation and translanguaging can be seen as practices that are in constant adjustment and adaptation to the nature of various interactions, whether it is predominantly featured by standardized linguistic practices or characterizes the use of diverse meaning-making resources when needed (Møller, 2019; Salaberry, 2020). For instance, when multilingual learners need to respond to their teacher's translation prompt "how do you say *water* in your home language?," word-to-word or text-to-text translation may be enacted and highlighted more in their practice. By comparison, when learners need to negotiate as a group for translation and justify their choices for the reproduction, translanguaging may be enacted more and shown more saliently in their intertwined practice.

Given the importance of the interactional context on multilinguals' practice of translation and translanguaging, it is therefore important to consider the learning context when examining the ways that multilingual learners engage in translation and translanguaging for language learning. In this study, we adopt "collaborative dialogue" as a tool for our learning context as it embraces the use of diverse linguistic resources and facilitates knowledge building about language. Framing the study in this way helps us understand how practices of translation and translanguaging can be enacted and operated together for language learning.

Collaborative dialogue for language learning

Collaborative dialogue is a dialogue in which speakers engage in problem-solving and knowledge-building to develop a new or deeper understanding of a phenomenon (Swain & Watanabe, 2019). It has been found as a source for second language (L2) learning and development, with the use of language as a cognitive tool to mediate thinking (Swain, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 2002; Swain & Watanabe, 2019). As speaking is understood to produce utterances that can be confirmed, elaborated, or questioned by interlocutors, new linguistic knowledge can be co-constructed through the process of collaborative dialogue and then internalized and transformed into learners' own resources (Dobao, 2012). The use of various linguistic resources in collaborative dialogue, therefore, offers learners rich affordances for language learning. It not only assists in learners' private speech for reasoning (Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Centeno-Cortés & Jiménez Jiménez, 2004) but also assists in their negotiation for meaning (Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 2000) to help learners deepen their metalinguistic analysis and better appropriate new practices into their own meaning-making repertoire (Martin-Beltrán, 2010). Equally significant, it can also act as a social affordance (García & Li, 2014), helping learners affirm their multilingual identities and position themselves in relation to their interlocuters.

In collaborative dialogue, learners' ways of interaction have been found crucial for their discussion of language use and language development (Dobao, 2012; Storch, 2002; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). So far two types of interaction have been found to afford more opportunities for L2 learning: the "expert-novice" interaction and the "collaborative" interaction (Storch, 2001, 2002). In the former type of interaction, one interlocutor (the expert) encourages the other (the novice) to reach a resolution through guided questions and expressions of scaffolded support. The support may be mapped onto a Regulatory Scale (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994), moving from implicit to explicit assistance to gradually facilitate the novice's thinking in their Zone of Proximal Development. By comparison, the collaborative interaction is characterized by equal involvement, mutual assistance, and high levels of negotiation for decision-making from both interlocuters rather than unidirectional scaffolding. Both ways of interaction are conducive to L2 learning.

As mentioned earlier, it is important to understand how multilingual learners engage in diverse practices for language learning so as to help them expand their meaning-making repertoire. Thus, in the dialogue extracts of our study, we focus on the practices of translation and translanguaging and the complexities involved in these two practices situated within the frame of a collaborative dialogue in order to understand how they become resources for language learning. As we are the researchers and participants of the collaborative dialogue presented in this study, we will use our names wherever necessary to refer to our exchange.

Methodology

The written interaction in this study takes place through text messages on Choi and Liu's mobile phones over three hours in one evening in October 2020. Choi initiates the text seeking Liu's understanding of the use of the connective "Besides, ..." Choi is Liu's previous university lecturer in two subjects called *Multilingual Practices in Global Times* and *Second Language Teaching Methodology* in which Liu was enrolled in 2018. Their interest in issues related to multilingualism and language pedagogies has kept them periodically connected through various digital messaging platforms since Liu's completion of these subjects. The recent COVID-19 lockdown in Melbourne enabled them to spend more time together through long walks they took around the city where they often discussed minority language education issues (see Choi & Liu, 2020) and matters related to translanguaging pedagogy in particular.

Below we briefly summarize the linguistic histories and ideologies that are part of Choi and Liu's respective multilingual repertoire as a way of helping readers gain a sense of what shapes their multilingual language practices.

Choi's multilingual repertoire

Choi is a language teacher educator at a university in Melbourne, Australia. Her multilingual upbringing consists of varying degrees of literacies in Korean, Chinese, Japanese, and English. Although she has lived in various dynamic, multilingual, and multicultural places, such as in Korean-American communities in New York City, a prestigious International school community in Seoul, and multicultural expat communities in Beijing and Tokyo during her formative years, the prevailing language ideologies that undergirded the practices and people she interacted with in these places were far from dynamic and largely fit Grosjean's (1982) description of a "fractional view of bilingualism," where each language is treated as separate systems. In this view, significant importance is attached to bilinguals' abilities to keep their languages separate and to perform as a "balanced bilingual," someone who can demonstrate equal competence of each language, based on some idea of an ideal native speaker's proficiency. Mixing languages or language varieties reflects a less competent speaker who might then be characterized a "semilingual," a bilingual whose language behaviors are considered deviant and seen negatively as not speaking either language well or are limited in both languages (De Jong, 2011). While these sedimented ideologies continue to percolate in Choi's own multilingualism, she believes and promotes fluid, dynamic, and resourceful ways of thinking about multilingual practices in her subjects with the recognition of difference and diversity in multilingual trajectories as well as the need for critical self-reflective and reflexive understandings in language studies (Choi, 2010, 2016, 2019; Choi et al., 2018; Choi & Slaughter, 2020).

Liu's multilingual repertoire

Liu had completed her graduate studies in Applied Linguistics and was undertaking a Master of Teaching when the written interaction took place. Growing up in Shanghai, China, Liu completed her formal education in Mandarin, learning English as a foreign language subject, and Japanese

out of her personal interest. She experienced a half-year exchange student experience in the United States and traveled to Japan for a short period of time as a tourist. Liu's multilingual repertoire, therefore, involves Shanghai dialect, Mandarin, English and Japanese, which she is able to mobilize to various degrees for different communicative purposes. Despite her experience learning and utilizing multiple languages, Liu's repertoire is shaped by a monolingual ideology which idealizes native-speaker proficiency. For a long time, she struggled with her aspiration to think and perform tasks entirely in the target languages with the goal of speaking like a "native speaker." It was through the exploration of diverse linguistic ideologies in Choi's subjects that Liu became aware of the harmful consequences of such monolingual, native-speaker ideologies. She came to realize how a translanguaging perspective can open up more possibilities to understand multilinguals' complex linguistic practices. Although Liu's current multilingual repertoire may still have traces of the monolingual ideology, Liu now believes in a fluid and dynamic view of multilingual meaning-making practices and is learning to, as we show in the dialogue, to recognize and take pride in leveraging her entire multilingual repertoire for meaning making and language learning.

Following García and Lin (2017), both Choi and Liu understand their own meaning-making repertoires more along the lines of the "strong" version of translanguaging which "poses that bilingual people do not speak languages but rather, use their repertoire of linguistic features selectively" (p. 126), as will be demonstrated in the extracts that follow. However, reflecting on the different linguistic trajectories that both Choi and Liu experienced, we also understand the importance of recognizing the "weak version of translanguaging, the one that supports national and state language boundaries and yet calls for softening these boundaries" (p. 126) since "named national and state languages have had real and material consequences, and continue to have them" (p. 126) in people's lives.

Analytical procedures

Reflecting on the text message exchange, Choi contacted Liu two days after their interaction discussing the possibility of studying the exchange carefully to think about the complexity of translation and translanguaging practices in contexts of language teaching and learning. Excerpts related to practices of translation, translanguaging and language pedagogy were selected and then grouped into four extracts presented according to the chronology in which the dialogue originally unfolded. The extracts were then analyzed through the lens of the conceptual framework and thematized accordingly.

While text messaging may not be an ideal platform for engaging in complex negotiation for meaning work, the short bursts of texts enable for meaning to be articulated concisely (one idea at a time) and for individuals to respond to each of the questions or comments in their own time and space. In Extracts 3 and 4 for instance, both interlocutors take time to activate their own strategies for problem-solving in their own respective spaces. To elicit "a more fine-grained understanding of the mental processes" (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, p. 333) that occurred in those moments of long pauses, Choi and Liu each used "stimulated recall" (Gass & Mackey, 2000) writing down the steps and strategies they used to solve the problems they encountered during the dialogue.

Analysis and findings

In this section, we present our collaborative dialogue where translation and translanguaging practices feature as key to solving our linguistic problem, the meaning and use of "Besides, . . ." in Chinese background students' writings. Choi is asking Liu for her interpretation of the usage of "besides" in a paragraph one of her students wrote. She is hoping Liu can give her some insights into how Chinese-background students understand this word as a connective. The "collaborative dialogue" exchange is presented in four extracts organized according to the original sequence. Aspects of "expert-novice" interaction, "collaborative" interaction and "translation and translanguaging practices" are used to frame our analytical understandings.

Extract 1: Starting the collaborative dialogue with the expert-novice interaction
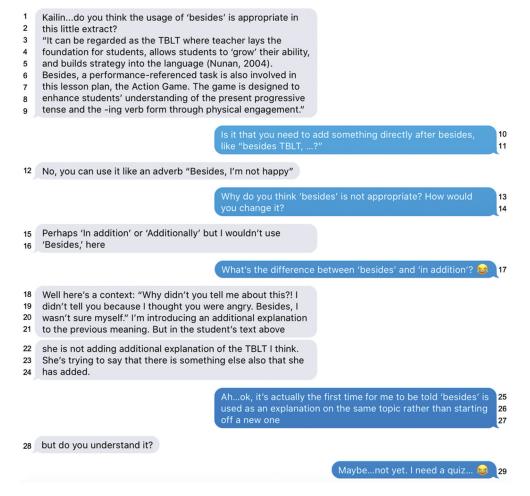

Figure 1. Starting the collaborative dialogue with the expert-novice interaction.

In Extract 1, Choi and Liu start to engage in a collaborative dialogue with a shared purpose: to solve a linguistic problem (i.e., understanding the meaning and usage of "besides") together (see Figure 1). The dialogue features an expert-novice interaction, characterized by unidirectional pedagogical scaffolding from Choi to Liu in order to elicit Liu's knowledge on the use of "besides." In Lines 1–9, Choi constructs a collaborative frame by engaging Liu as the dialogic partner and inviting her for a focused reading of the sentence which contains a curious use of the word "Besides, ..." In Lines 10–12, Liu puts forward her hypothesis, but it is rejected by Choi with an example of an acceptable usage. As Liu requests for reformulation and explanation in Lines 13–14 and 17, Choi responds by offering the so-far most explicit explanation in Lines 18–24, through the use of an example in context and an explanation on the use of "besides," which leads to Liu's realization on the use of "besides" to add explanation (Lines 25–27). This self-realization further sparks her interest in seeking further assistance from Choi (Line 29). The provision of scaffolding here resonates with Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) Regulatory Scale, which gradually moves assistance towards a more explicit level depending on the needs of the novice. The following extract illustrates how Choi and Liu further negotiate the meaning and use of "Besides, . . ." in context.

Extract 2: Adopting a collaborative orientation

Figure 2 shows Liu and Choi's engagement in a hypothesis-testing process on the use of "Besides, …" through the use of different contexts. Their interaction starts to move from the expert-novice interaction towards a collaborative orientation. In Lines 1–3, Choi sets up a conversational scene for a pedagogical task to promote Liu's creation of meaning using "Besides, …" in a particular context. From Lines 4–6, Liu tests her hypothesis of "Besides, …" by creating meaning and verbalizing her understanding of the connective within the given context. This process of creation, verbalization and Choi's affirmation (Line 7) helps Liu gain a clearer idea of her confusion (Lines 4–5) and enables her to work through the confusion by herself (Lines 8–9). In Lines 10–13, Liu continues to trial her hypothesis of "Besides, …" by using it to create meaning in a context of her own choice that is familiar to both interlocuters. While Choi rejects Liu's attempt, she builds upon and validates Liu's example by situating it within a dialogic context (Lines 14–16). The use of "Besides, …" in these different contexts serves as a basis for the modification of the existing hypothesis and drives not only Liu but also Choi to further explore its use (Lines 17–23). Choi's responses to these utterances (Line 7, 14, 18 and 23) pushes Liu's understanding forward and to ask a new question related to the use of the connective (Lines 21–22) requesting for more explanation. Choi adopts a collaborative orientation to solve this problem with Liu together (Line 23) since she is also realizing the complexities in the usage of this connective (Lines 19–20).
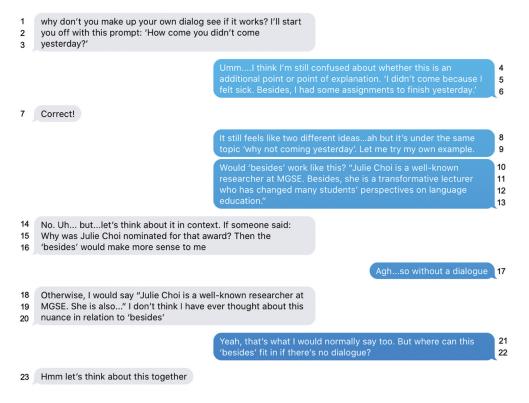
1 why don't you make up your own dialog see if it works? I'll start
2 you off with this prompt: 'How come you didn't come
3 yesterday?'

Umm....I think I'm still confused about whether this is an 4
additional point or point of explanation. 'I didn't come because I 5
felt sick. Besides, I had some assignments to finish yesterday.' 6

7 Correct!

It still feels like two different ideas...ah but it's under the same 8
topic 'why not coming yesterday'. Let me try my own example. 9

Would 'besides' work like this? "Julie Choi is a well-known 10
researcher at MGSE. Besides, she is a transformative lecturer 11
who has changed many students' perspectives on language 12
education." 13

14 No. Uh... but...let's think about it in context. If someone said:
15 Why was Julie Choi nominated for that award? Then the
16 'besides' would make more sense to me

Agh...so without a dialogue 17

18 Otherwise, I would say "Julie Choi is a well-known researcher at
19 MGSE. She is also..." I don't think I have ever thought about this
20 nuance in relation to 'besides'

Yeah, that's what I would normally say too. But where can this 21
'besides' fit in if there's no dialogue? 22

23 Hmm let's think about this together

Figure 2. Adopting a collaborative orientation.

Extract 3: Engaging in translation and translanguaging practices

Figure 3. Engaging in translation and translanguaging practices.

Tracing Liu's steps

Step 1. I read the example (Lines 1–3) and the meaning was not clear based on my translation and hypothesis of "besides." For me the meaning of "besides" had been translated the same as "in addition," that is, 另外 [lìng wài] or 此外 [cǐ wài] to indicate an additional point. Yet here in the last sentence, the meaning that we love money, contrasted with the second sentence in meaning and did not seem to be an additional point that is in line with the second sentence to support the first sentence.

Step 2. To explore the meaning of "Besides, . . . ," I closely translated the example.

Original: We save where we can and probably do so more than other people.

My sentence:　　　我们　　尽可能　　　　存钱　　并且可能　　比其他人　要存得多。

Literal translation: we wherever possible save money and probably than others save more

Original: But we are not obsessed with money. Besides, who doesn't love money?

My sentence:　　　但是 我们 不 obsessed about 钱。 _____, 谁　不　爱　　钱?

Literal translation: but we not   money   who not love money

Step 3. I altered the closely translated text into a Chinese expression that captured its main idea and imagined the speaker and the communicative context. Building on my experience of witnessing family members quarrelling over money, I created a context where an interlocuter was criticizing the speaker's thriftiness and the speaker talked back using this expression. I rehearsed the expression with more emotions.

My expression:　　我们是 存 存 存, 但 没 那么 执拗 于 钱! ____, 谁 不 爱 钱 ?!

Literal translation: we are save save save but not that obsessed with money   who not love money

Translation: We do save a lot, but we are not obsessed! ____, who doesn't love money?!

Step 4. The Chinese connective 再说 [zài shuō] came to my mind. It fit perfectly in this expression while 另外 [lìng wài] and 此外 [cǐ wài] meaning "in addition" did not. I discovered that "besides" could mean 再说 [zài shuō].

In this extract, Choi takes an inductive approach by offering Liu two sentence examples for her to explore the meaning and use of "Besides, . . ." (Figure 3, Lines 1–5). As Liu wrestles with the meaning of the first example, she starts to move away from her conventional translation of "besides" and to engage in translation and translanguaging practices with all her resources to explore the meaning of "Besides, . . ." as shown in the section "Tracing Liu's Steps."

Liu begins by delving into a close oral translation of the sentence to understand the meaning as precisely as possible (Steps 1–2). This translation process, while involving many literal translation practices from one element to another on a microtextual scale (e.g., we = 我们 [wǒ men], money = 钱 [qián]), is not entirely a mechanical transmission from English to Chinese. Liu recalls that she intentionally left "obsessed" untranslated as the word can have specific social connotations in Chinese according to its contexts of use. Liu's resistance to a simple translation of "obsessed" highlights a translanguaging moment where she integrates her social experiences with the Chinese and English codes to discover a certain degree of "untranslatability" in the given context. Keeping "obsessed" in English was also perhaps easier for Liu to do considering the similar syntactical structure between Chinese and English. In sum, Liu brings together her linguistic (e.g., Chinese and English vocabulary, syntax), multimodal (e.g., written, spoken) and social experiences in her intertwined practice of translation and translanguaging in Step 2 to mediate the meaning of the given example, which helps Liu consolidate her understanding of the meaning in the example.

Building on the closely translated text produced in Step 2, Liu then tries to mediate its meaning through her everyday oral Chinese resources (Step 3). This practice reflects what Baynham and Lee (2019) describe as the "intralingual translanguaging" process, where speakers draw on their register resources to construct meaning. Together with these register resources, Liu brings together her history, experiences, knowledge, and emotions that were attached to these resources to the construction of meaning, which enables her to imagine a particular social context where the meaning of the example could possibly emerge. While this translanguaging process involves a translation practice where "obsessed" is translated to 执拗 [zhí niù], it is important to note this translation practice is not merely a unidirectional crossing from English to Chinese. Instead, it is a resource that emerges from the particular assemblage Liu brings together at that moment for the imagined social context. Situating herself in this richer social context with more familiar meaning-making resources, Liu becomes aware of the word 再说 [zài shuō] as an appropriate connective under the situation and understands the meaning of the example (Step 4). With the newly-acquired understanding that "Besides, . . ." might mean 再说 [zài shuō], Liu then applies this knowledge by using "Besides, . . ." to create a new sentence in English (Lines 8–10). Throughout Extract 3, Liu leverages all her meaning-making resources, including linguistic and register resources, history, experiences, and emotions to mediate her private speech for a deeper understanding of the connective "Besides, ..." Her understanding goes beyond literal translation and involves a heightened awareness of the social elements associated with this connective. As we show here, translation and translanguaging practices are intimately intertwined in meaning making processes. They are more than the effortless transmission of knowledge and skills between languages but involve leveraging of learners' entire meaning-making repertoire to construct new meaning and to develop a deeper understanding about language.

The final extract shows how Choi responds to Liu's example based on her new understanding of "Besides, . . ." as 再说 [zài shuō] and how this understanding is then shared and consolidated through their interaction.

Extract 4: Achieving shared understanding through mutual assistance

In this final extract, Choi and Liu activate their multilingual resources to test the new hypothesis and co-construct their understandings of the word "Besides, . . ." (see Figure 4). Both Choi and Liu's multilingual identities are highlighted in this interaction, which characterizes a collaborative
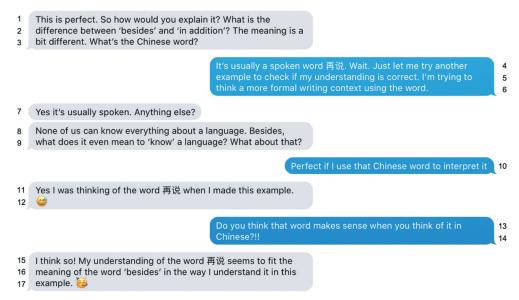
Figure 4. Achieving shared understanding through mutual assistance.

orientation featuring mutual assistance and equal involvement. In Lines 1–3, Choi affirms Liu's creation of her sentence. Also, knowing Liu now sees the difference between "besides" and "in addition," Choi reverses the role of knowledge holder by asking Liu how they are different. This question requires Liu to stretch her thinking as she needs to compare, analyze and evaluate "besides" and "in addition." Simultaneously, we also see the emergence of Choi's knowledge in Chinese. She does not need any explanation of 再说 [zài shuō] when the word is supplied by Liu in Line 4 (and she activates the word 除了 [chú le] meaning "apart from" from her own knowledge in Step 3 below). As Liu is thinking of another example, Choi, now equipped with the word 再说 [zài shuō], is able to try out a sentence for herself to ensure the meaning of the word is interchangeable in English and Chinese.

Tracing Choi's steps

Step 1. Inspired by Liu's example sentences related to her real-life experience, I thought about a context we would both be familiar with and made the sentence in English.

Step 2. I substituted "besides" with 再说 [zài shuō] (None of us can know everything about a language. 再说 [zài shuō], what does it even mean to "know" a language?) And it made perfect sense to me.

Step 3. I tried 另外 [lìng wài] and 除了 [chú le] and neither sounded right to me.

Liu confirms the meaning also works in Chinese in the example given by Choi (Line 10), but she does not respond in a way that shows she is the main knowledge holder in relation to Chinese. Upon learning that Choi has activated her knowledge in Chinese, she asks whether the word makes sense to her (Lines 13–14). For both of them, this last layer of experimentation confirms their finding of the word 再说 [zài shuō], the solution to the problem. As Choi's smiley face with cold sweat emoji (Line 12) party emoticon (Line 17) and Liu's use of exclamation marks suggests (Line 14), there is a sense of relief and excitement at this final finding.

Liu does not explicitly answer Choi's questions about the difference in Chinese between the meaning "besides" and "in addition" in their dialogue (Lines 1–2) but she continued to think about her response. In an email the next day, she articulates the differences with relevant examples and hypothesizes similar usage in English. Their exchange on the topic ended soon after this email.

Liu: I'm not sure about the feelings involved in "in addition" and "besides," but I think in Chinese 另外 [lìng wài] and 再说 [zài shuō] involve different emotions. For example, in this Chinese sentence, both 另外 [lìng wài] and 再说 [zài shuō] can be used. Yet when I use 再说 [zài shuō], there is a stronger emotion involved in adding reasons to justify my action or to persuade the potential reader/interlocutor why I am not choosing this flight. And when I use 另外 [lìng wài], it could just be about describing the condition of this flight and not having that feeling to justify something. Is it the same in English?

这个航班经常晚点, 另外, 他们的飞机餐也很难吃
This flight is frequently delayed. In addition, their in-flight food is terrible.
这个航班经常晚点, 再说, 他们的飞机餐也很难吃
This flight is frequently delayed. Besides, their in-flight food is terrible.

Discussion

In this section, we reflect on our findings to discuss how translation and translanguaging practices in contexts of language learning operate, how these practices help expand students' knowledge repertoires, and what we believe to be necessary for dialogic approaches to become possible.

As shown in the collaborative dialogue above, the speakers bring in abundant resources to enact particular linguistic strategies for learning, understanding, and knowledge building about language. Particularly in Liu's problem-solving process, it can be seen that she brings together a range of resources and knowledge in her intertwined practice of translation and translanguaging to support her language learning. Liu's Chinese language resources are far richer than Choi's, so she is able to deploy a variety of learning strategies involving Chinese to engage in a closer linguistic analysis which allows her to solve complicated problems (e.g., creating, testing and modifying hypothesis, tapping into contextual knowledge, manipulating scenarios, comparing the nuances between words, bringing together linguistic, multimodal, register, and sensorial resources into her sentence creations). These strategies are also intertwined with Liu's knowledge in English, which enables her to engage in on-the-spot word-to-word translation practices. However, word-to-word translation practices only take us so far in understanding Liu's language learning process. Liu's solving of the linguistic equation (e.g., finding the equivalence of "obsessed" and "besides" in Chinese) goes beyond such text-to-text transmission and is enabled by a translanguaging process, where Liu's knowledge of words in their social contexts triggers an opportunity for her to recreate a scenario that makes more sense to her and enables her to find the equivalent words that emerge from these contexts. Liu's recreation of social contexts is also fueled by her learning skills (e.g., her technique of grasping the main idea and altering the scenario, imagining a communicative context, rehearsing expressions with emotion, leaving certain spaces blank). Such skills index what is in Liu's history that is, the rich formal education she received in China where word-to-word translation practices were abundant but also her complex language learning experiences learning multiple languages overseas often in real-time communicative contexts. It can be seen that it is through Liu's leveraging of all these linguistic, historical, emotional, social and multimodal knowledges and experiences that she becomes able to develop a deeper analysis and understanding of the connective "besides" in relation to its use in social contexts and integrate this new linguistic resource into her own practices. Liu's experience highlights that multilingual learners' expansion of meaning-making repertoire involves far more than simple transmission of ideas and skills from one linguistic code to another and is facilitated by learners' strategic mobilization of entire meaning-making repertoires through translanguaging practices.

Multilingual learners' mobilization of translation and translanguaging practices for language learning also does not come in isolation. As seen from the dialogue, Liu's enactment of these practices is inseparable from her interaction with Choi, who leverages diverse linguistic resources and knowledge in her translanguaging practices to guide and facilitate Liu's complex problem-solving processes. For instance, it is Choi's understanding of a discrepancy between the meaning of the word "besides" in English and Chinese that starts this inquiry. It is also her own translanguaging practice of substituting the

Chinese word 再说 [zài shuō] that confirms Liu's finding and consolidates her understanding in the end. While Choi's Chinese language resources are less visible than Liu's, what is important here is not how much or how many words of Chinese (and English) that are visible/audible in Choi's translanguaging strategies. Choi's meaning making resources are intertwined with her professional knowledge as a teacher and the critical stance she takes on matters of equity and social justice in language education for minority students. For instance, Choi's position as Liu's previous university lecturer and her awareness of language ideologies that positions non-native speakers of English as less knowledgeable or illegitimate speakers, means exchanges can easily fall into an authoritarian, instructional, or top-down orientation. Yet in looking closely at Choi's linguistic moves which is shaped by her knowledge and identity as a dialogic teacher, she shuttles between the roles of the "expert" (e.g., "No, you can use it like an adverb," "Well, here's a context," "Correct!," "Why don't you make up your own dialog, I'll start you off with this prompt?"), "dialogic partner" (e.g., "Uh . . . but . . . let's think about it in context," "Hmm let's think about this together," "Anything else?"), and "learner" (e.g., "So how would you explain it? What's the difference . . . . What's the Chinese word?"). These strategic moves enable Choi to deflect a dominant, authoritarian position throughout the conversation and create spaces for Liu to take on the role of the expert and to enact all her resources to solve and explain the linguistic problem. Other semiotic and sensorial resources such as emojis (grinning face with sweat, party face, and face with tears of joy) used by Choi and Liu also aid their interaction to progress in friendly, light-hearted ways.

Based on Choi and Liu's language practices that we have unpacked thus far, it becomes clearer that a rich exploration of how translation and translanguaging operate in the context of language learning and teaching requires looking beyond the mere visibility/audibility of different languages. Multilinguals do not simply mix or switch linguistic codes or have sole control of translingual strategies for learning; instead, their linguistic repertoires are enacted together with diverse socio-cultural, historical, relational, and spatial repertoires on the spot and become resources for knowledge building through translingual, trans-semiotic and trans-modal processes (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2018). These processes, as many translingual studies suggest, can be manifested in diverse ways that are dynamic and contingent. For instance, multilinguals' leveraging of linguistic resources and machine translation as affordances to enhance the content and accuracy of writing is not simply realized through a mechanical process of text-to-text transmission but a strategic process which involves "tinkering" and "evaluating" practices (e.g., Vogel et al., 2018). Also, multilinguals' active integration of linguistic resources with diverse semiotic, technological, material and spatial repertoires as affordances to expand literacies and knowledges in a rich and embodied manner can be closely intertwined not only with the organizational structure and collaborative design that teacher provides (e.g., Blair et al., 2018; French & Armitage, 2020; Ollerhead, 2019), but also with the incidental semiotic resources that emerge through multilingual interactions (e.g., Leung & Jenkins, 2020; Ollerhead, 2019; Preece, 2020). As Leung and Jenkins (2020) point out, there is

> agentive richness in multilingual communication that can dynamically open up semantic spaces and generate fluid discourse interactions. . . . [M]ultilingual communication is by its very nature fluid, flexible and contingent. . . . Multilingual communication goes way beyond transmission of information, and involves on the spot co-construction, accommodation, intercultural openness and a host of similar phenomena. (pp. 26–37)

Recognizing such dynamicity and contingency in multilingual learning practices, Otsuji and Pennycook (2018) contend we cannot predict whether the dynamic effects of multiple semiotic resources that come together at any given moment will produce "learning affordances." But if we are "at least to make their emergence possible" (p. 86), we need to move away from thinking about students' meaning-making resources simply as things they bring to class, or that some space we create for learning that allows them to deploy their resources is necessarily going to be productive for learning. If knowledge building is to happen through translation and translanguaging practices as we have illustrated here, a multiplicity of factors related to "participant perceptions, values and practices in respect of discourse sensibilities, multilingualism and communication effectiveness" (Leung & Jenkins, 2020, p. 40) needs to be carefully

understood by both teachers and learners. Such understanding is critical for the creation of collaborative dialogues where learning affordances can be co-constructed by teachers and learners and taken up by learners to enhance their meaning-making repertoires.

Implications

As discussed above, a deep understanding of the dynamic nature of multilingual communication as well as participants' knowledges, practices, values, and attitudes towards multilingual communication are crucial in realizing the transformative potential of translation and translanguaging through collaborative dialogues. Such understandings, however, require serious engagements in thinking about how to shift the existing asymmetrical relations of power that exist between teachers and learners where teachers are often positioned as "knowers" and learners in more passive roles. Both teachers and learners need educational opportunities and an openness to introspection, interrogation, critique, experimentation, contestation, and transformation for the knowledges they seek to acquire. As shown in our own dialogue, such opportunities or spaces for joint explorations and knowledge building are not special spaces that have been provided to us but spaces we create through our everyday ways of interacting dialogically. Thus, with a keen awareness of how "collaborative and coercive power" relations operate (Cummins, 2000), teachers can gradually create a dialogic relationship in the classrooms.

As two multilingual educators who have been learning about and engaging with translanguaging literature and practices for some time now, we reflect on what we have learned from this process of studying our own translingual practices together. We now have a far greater appreciation for what multilinguals can do or have the capacity to do when they bring all their knowledge resources to the fore, a realization we would not have experienced as we don't often reflect on what we know or how we make meaning. In raising our own metalinguistic awareness of how multilinguals build knowledge, we are able to closely analyze the specific translation and translanguaging practices that enable knowledge expansion, which we find particularly helpful as we work with multilingual writers in high-stakes academic teaching and learning settings, who like us, don't often think twice about what they can already do and have the capacity to do with their increasing multimodal semiotic resources. Teachers and learners can both benefit from such raised metalinguistic awareness. If teachers have a deep understanding of how translingual practices work, they could model examples of diverse translanguaging strategies in their classrooms which would become an entry point for students to gain an understanding of how multilingual learning works. Students may then become more cognizant of their own translingual practices when they are enacted and be able to delineate the practices that enhance their learning processes from those that don't (not all students' translingual practices may necessarily be beneficial for their learning but may be habits they have acquired from their educational histories). For learners, the development of such metalinguistic awareness can help them develop a more critical understanding of how language and language learning operates for multilinguals. They may begin to question the language ideologies they have grown up with, the discourses that suppress their creative and critical ways of thinking, knowing and becoming, and in the process muster enough confidence to venture into new ways of experimenting with and experiencing the multivocal selves they are capable of becoming.

Disclosure statement

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