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Currents

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Equity and Excellence for Multilingual Learners

Vol. 46, No. 1 Spring/Summer 2023



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MATSOL Keynote

Asset-Based Assessment Practices

ON THE COVER

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Equity and Excellence for Multilingual Learners

Vol. 46, No.1 Spring/Summer 2023

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President's Message

DEAR MATSOL COMMUNITY,

I hope this finds you well and that you've been able to find moments to relax and enjoy the warmer weather as we have transitioned into the warm summer months. I also want to say what a joy it was to have our first hybrid conference – and to see so many educators and advocates for multilingual learners attending, engaging, and learning together in person and virtually! I hope those of you who were able to attend had an enjoyable and fruitful experience; those of you who couldn't join us this year - I hope to see you next year.



For many, the 22/23 academic year was challenging - we are facing a teacher shortage (especially among licensed esl teachers) like we've never experienced, with fewer teachers entering the teaching profession and the rate of teachers leaving the field higher than in years past. This is coupled with rapid growth in numbers of multilingual learners in our schools, especially with high school newcomers. So the need for licensed ESL teachers is high and I know many of us in our field feel this. The [not-so-robust pathway](#) (where licensed teachers can add an ESL initial license by passing the ESL/ELL MTEL and completing a 150-hour "practicum equivalent / internship") can help address issues around compliance such that classified English learners have contact with licensed ESL teachers.

However, unless the teachers who go this route engage in professional learning opportunities around working with multilingual learners, this does not address the issue: classified English learners are legally entitled to specific ESL/ELD instruction. *How can someone who hasn't experienced specialized training for working with multilingual learners (beyond the SEI Endorsement) and ESL/ELD pedagogy possibly deliver the quality instruction classified English learners, especially our growing newcomer and SLIFE population, are entitled to receive?* Yes, we have a shortage of licensed ESL teachers, but the pathway to add an ESL initial license without any coursework is leading to a deprofessionalization of our field and, what is more concerning, does not actually meet the needs of our multilingual learners.

It doesn't have to be this way. Beyond pursuing a degree in TESOL, bilingual

education, ESL, or applied linguistics (and if you or someone you know is considering a degree, be sure to look into [Teach Grants](#)) there are various ways teachers can access professional learning opportunities before and after adding an ESL initial license. Here are some recommendations you can make the next time you hear someone talk about adding an ESL initial license (or looking for professional learning opportunities). There are, of course, [MATSOL course offerings](#) and [the MATSOL annual conference](#), which is a great space for in-person learning opportunities directly from teachers of multilingual learners. Many colleges and universities in Massachusetts offer coursework on working with multilingual learners (beyond the SEI endorsement) and taking a course as a non-matriculating student can also be a great way to meet like-minded folks in the field.

[The add-on ESL license] does not address the issue: classified English learners are legally entitled to specific ESL/ELD instruction. How can someone who hasn't experienced specialized training for working with multilingual learners (beyond the SEI Endorsement) and ESL/ELD pedagogy possibly deliver the quality instruction classified English learners, especially our growing newcomer and SLIFE population, are entitled to receive?

Another pro-tip: a number of universities provide a course voucher as a stipend for hosting a student teacher – a great way to support an emerging educator *and* boost your own professional learning. Some districts also have specific teacher-of-record apprenticeship programs that include structured mentoring for the ESL “practicum-equivalent.” If your district has one, encourage your peers to look into this – and if you’re a district or school leader and you don’t have such a program in place then I encourage you to consider it! Also, DESE offers a range of no-cost [professional learning courses](#) and the [International Consortium for Multilingual Education and Equity](#) offers a variety of low-cost eWorkshops that can be taken individually or as a cohort.

However, it's not all on teachers. Yes, we want to encourage those who are adding or have an ESL license without taking coursework to engage in professional learning, but we also need better systems and policies around the whole process, to begin with. Perhaps the state can consider adding some coursework

requirements to the process for adding an ESL initial licensure – preferably no-cost course offerings. Districts and schools in need of more licensed ESL teachers should consider putting in structured professional learning and mentoring opportunities for the teachers who are adding an ESL initial license, and compensate those who volunteer to mentor.

Finally, in addition to teachers adding an ESL initial license with little or no specialized training, there is also the opposite end of the spectrum: qualified, bilingual teachers and paraprofessionals who would be excellent licensed ESL teachers, but for whom passing the ESL/ELL MTEL can be a barrier. Beyond MTEL fee waivers, no/low-cost MTEL prep courses, and the MTEL Flex option, what else might the state and districts consider to better support our pool of educators and advocates who are an MTEL away from their ESL initial license? What are other ways we can imagine more equitable pathways toward licensure?

This summer's issue of the *MATSOL Currents* features many ideas for increasing equitable education for multilingual learners. Be sure to check out Sole Yu's keynote address as well as highlights from the conference, and Mark McCarthy and Sara Scribner's excellent article on asset-based assessments for multilingual learners. This issue also contains reviews of the Microsoft Translator tool and a book on translanguaging by García, Johnson, and Seltzer.

I'll close with this quote by Paolo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: “To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity.” To the MATSOL community, thank you for all you do in support of multilingual learners, families, and communities. **C**

In pursuit of equity and justice,

Chris Montecillo Leider

cmleider@matsol.org

The 2023 MATSOL Conference

Johanna Tigert

THE MATSOL CONFERENCE RETURNED THIS YEAR as a two-day in-person event in Framingham, MA on June 1-2, followed by two virtual conference days via the Whova conference platform on June 7-8. Returning participants were excited to be back, especially in person, and first-time attendees found the conference both enriching and engaging. Linsey Giles, middle school ELE teacher from Lawrence described the resources shared at sessions: “they’ve been really informational, and for a lot of sessions we’ve been given action plans and steps that we can take right when we get back to the classroom, which I think is really helpful.” Lian Lam, elementary ELE teacher from Walpole praised the virtual platform, and said it was nice to be able to access resources and presenter slides after the sessions. Rachael Levine, elementary ESE teacher from Watertown mentioned the collegiality of the space, and noted “it has been really nice getting to know people who are in the same boat as me.” Approximately 850 attendees were present at the in-person conference and a further 470 at the virtual conference. Of special note were the excellent keynote



Sole Yu delivers her keynote at the 2023 MATSOL conference

RICH RESOURCES AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES





countries:

- Covert employment and housing policies in Japan (Aruđo, 2021)
- Essentialized media portrayal of Black African population in China (Cheng, 2011, p. 594).
- Perpetuation of "native-speakerism" raciolinguistic ideology (Matsuda, 2003)
- Strong preference to work with and learn from White English teachers and make friends exclusively with people of their own ethnicity and/or White Americans (Fujita, 2004; Kobayashi, 2010; Liu & Tannacco, 2013).

Forms A, B, C (Tier 2 & 3)

presentations: *Books for mi comunidad* by children's author and illustrator Raul the Third, keynote by Sole Yu (see this issue), and *Professional (Un)learning: Developing a Critical Translanguaging Stance toward Multilingual Learners* by Kate Seltzer. Virtual presentations will remain available on the [Whova](#) platform for registered conference goers; some presentations can also be viewed on YouTube as noted below. Here are some highlights from selected sessions.

CULTURE OBJECTIVES IN LESSON PLANNING FOR ELS

In this session, Emily Spitzman and Alexandra Balconi from Bridgewater State University shared teacher candidates' experiences integrating culture objectives into SEI and ESL lesson plans. The presenters had previously identified challenges related to supporting TCs in formulating language objectives. Research in this area had proven that explicit modeling and support had a big impact on TCs' ability to write language objectives. Thus, the presenters applied the same process to culture objectives. Spitzman and Balconi grounded their work in the idea of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, and hoped to move TCs beyond performative equity work by having TCs address specific [culture targets](#) in their lessons: amplifying the voices of marginalized communities, connecting to the student and/or to the world beyond the classroom, strengthening metalinguistic awareness through cross-linguistic connections, and sustaining/expanding

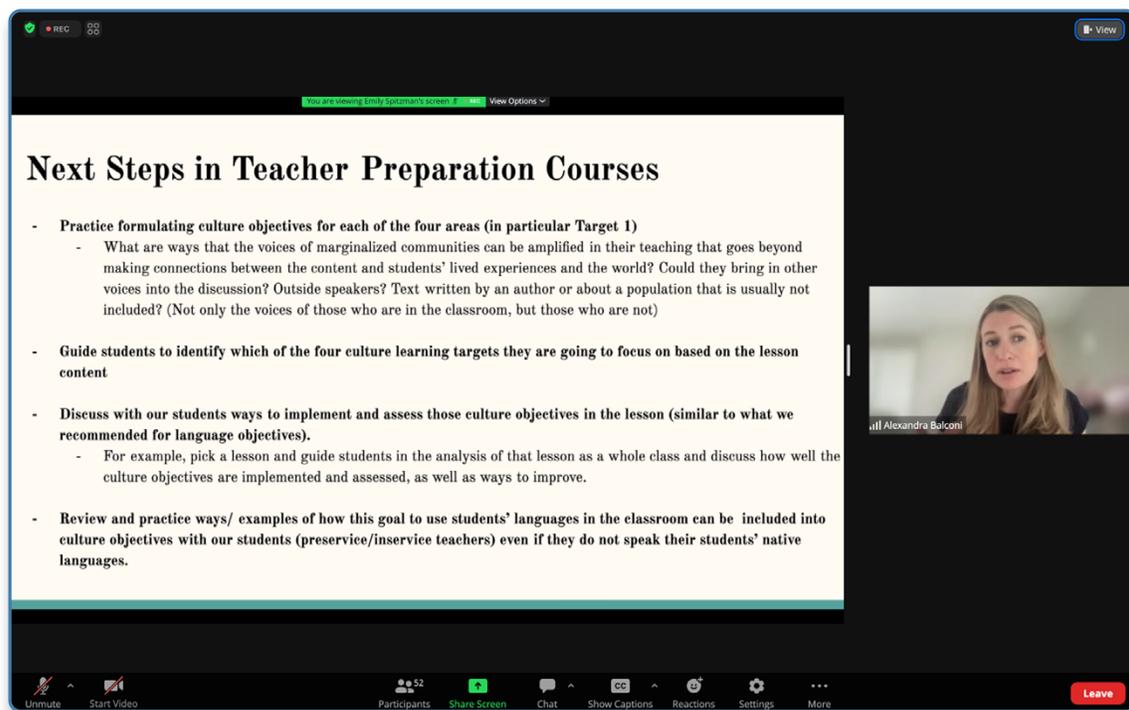


Image 1. Alexandra Balconi reviews next steps in implementing culture objectives.

students' linguistic repertoires. The presenters noted that while TCs felt the work was meaningful, they needed further support in building more specificity to their culture objectives so that they could be assessed, and to integrate students' home languages into lessons (see Image 1).

MAKING IT MEANINGFUL: AMPLIFIED TEXT DESIGN FOR NEWCOMERS

In this presentation, ESL Teacher Erin Gaffey from Somerville High School shared how to amplify text for newcomers using a chapter from *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis. Gaffey used the following guiding question to design her lessons: How can I create multiple opportunities for students to interact with the layers of the text within a low anxiety environment? In response, she made sure to frontload vocabulary, introduce purpose questions before reading, give students a model for annotating text, and have students read the text multiple times with partners, chorally, and independently. An example of a worksheet that walks students through these steps can be found [here](#). Lessons also involved social-emotional check-ins and Gaffey had made sure to implement background surveys and other means to get to know her students.

CHATGPT: YOUR PERSONAL WRITING TUTOR

Terri Easter tackled a highly current technology in this presentation, which detailed ways the ChatGPT artificial intelligence chatbot can be used to improve student writing in the areas of vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, and style. ChatGPT works by entering requests or questions such as "Create sentence completion exercises with a word bank" or "What is the definition and an example sentence for the word 'abysmal'?" Easter also showed how ChatGPT can be prompted for further assistance by asking follow-up questions such as, "I don't understand the example sentence. Could you explain it to me?" Student writing samples can also be entered into ChatGPT, where the user can ask the chatbot to provide feedback on the grammar, formatting, mechanics, and content of the piece. For example, ChatGPT can pinpoint when a student has not provided a strong argument in their writing. The complete presentation can be viewed on [YouTube](#).

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Kennia Reddrick from Northeastern University shared some of the work she had done on parental engagement for her dissertation. This virtual session began with a clarification between the terms "parental involvement" and "parental engagement." The former, Reddrick argued, takes place as parents take part in school-determined activities, while the latter means parents become part of the decision making process for the kinds of activities they want to make happen. All school stakeholders, from paraprofessionals to principals, ultimately need to think

about engaging parents as partners rather than clients. Reddrick shared examples from different school districts with successful parental engagement strategies. For example, Memphis City schools engage parents through monthly phone calls or emails between parents and teachers/counselors. In Panama City, Florida, parents can take part in 30-minute workshops ranging from baking to math to signing up for GED or ESOL classes. Mexico City organized 3-hour family game and dance nights with refreshments. Reddrick's presentation can be viewed on [YouTube](#).

STATE OF THE STATE: UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

In this informational session, Allison Balter, Director of the Office of Language Acquisition, highlighted trends in the multilingual student population growth in Massachusetts. She noted that 50% of classified ELs in high school are newcomers, many of them SLIFE. Brazil is now the most common birth country of ELs in the state, behind the U.S., but the state also continues to receive newcomers from the Northern Triangle (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras). The five top languages spoken by classified ELs have remained the same: Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Kreyòl, Cape Verdean Kriolu, and Chinese. Allison had spent this last year visiting classrooms across Massachusetts to learn more about the great work teachers, schools, and districts are doing to support multilingual learners and highlighted some of this work in her address. However, she also noted the challenges associated with providing students high-quality instructional materials, qualified ESL teachers, and access to dual language programs. The state of the state is available on [YouTube](#). 

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Reports from MATSOL's Special Interest Groups

MATSOL OFFERS A VARIETY OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

which, except for the Massachusetts English Learner Leadership Council, are open to all members free of charge. For more information on the SIGs and to sign up, please visit the [SIGs website](#). Here are reports on recent and upcoming activities from the following SIGs:

- MELLC
- Advocacy
- Community College ESL Faculty
- Educators of Color
- Emerging Scholars Circle
- ESL Unit Developers
- Family-School Partnerships
- Instructional Coaches
- Teacher Educators

MELLC

MA English Learner Leadership Council (MELLC) is a group for Directors and Coordinators of English Language Education Programs in Massachusetts. The goal of the group is to create a professional community to support and guide EL educators in the administration of ELE programs at the district level through collaboration and advocacy. Our meetings feature presentations by guest speakers, DESE staff, and MELLC members, and always include time for networking, collaboration, and discussion between MELLC members.

The second half of the school year featured three MELLC meetings. Each meeting focused on a different topic, but there were always opportunities for networking and sharing among members.

At the virtual meeting on Feb 10, at the conclusion of the ACCESS testing period, the group used a consultation protocol to share around a choice of topics including an ACCESS debrief; Funding for ELs or professional development planning. We then had a large group share of some of the challenges and succeeding of the ACCESS assessment process this year.

MELLC met in-person on April 28 at a new location at Fitchburg State University.

The meeting began with a welcome from Lisa Moison, Ed.D., Associate Dean of the School of Graduate, Online, and Continuing Education and other FSU staff. Lisa Moison shared a fascinating overview of the [history of FSU](#), which was established in 1894 as a two-year teacher-training program for women.



MELLC meeting at the Fitchburg State University.

The focus of the April meeting was a panel discussion on “Supporting Teacher Diversity and Retention in ELE Programs” with Phala Chea, Ed.D, Coordinator of English Learners Education PreK-12 at Lexington Public Schools with Wendy Anderson, Director of English Learner Education and Ana Pimentel, Coordinator of Instruction in Languages Other Than English (LOTE), at Hudson Public Schools. The panelist shared information from their districts about efforts they have made in the hiring and interview process to recruit diverse staff, strategies to support and retain staff from a variety of backgrounds, and ways to expand the mindsets of existing staff to reduce microaggressions and other biases. Some of the ideas discussed collaborating with district leaders and administrators in planning and implementation, adjusting the hiring process with equity and culturally responsive principles in mind, doing ongoing anti-bias professional development with all staff, and creating affinity groups to support teachers. After the panel, the group discussed initiatives in their own districts and had the opportunity to review parts of the DESE document [Promising Recruitment](#),

Retention, and Selection Strategies.

At the final virtual meeting of the year on June 9, Boni-esther Enquist led an interactive agenda of reflection on the closing school year and looking forward to the next year. The group shared their professional plans for summer initiatives, including student learning programs, staff preparation, and their own responsibilities and goals. Then we had a fun sharing activity about our personal plans for the summer.

Next year, Fitchburg State University is sponsoring the MELLC meetings, including in-person meeting space. We thank FSU for their sponsorship and are proud to partner with them to support this important MATSOL member group.

Steering Committee: **Laurie Hartwick, Kerri Lamprey, Wendy Anderson**

ADVOCACY

This year, MATSOL's Advocacy Special Interest Group participated in a book study on Diane Staehr Fenner's book, *Advocating for English Learners: A Guide for Educators*. We also wrote a position statement on ACCESS testing that requests DESE to enforce school districts to consider multiple measures of English language proficiency in addition to ACCESS test scores when determining students' reclassification, as well as for DESE to institute a system for retesting or contesting a score in any of the four domains. We will be revising the position statement over the summer and presenting it to MATSOL's Board of Directors in the fall. We hope you will join us for our first meeting in the fall if you are interested in any of the words in the acrostic poem below! For more information, please visit the MATSOL website.

Advocate
Defend
Voices
Opportunities
Causes
Actions
Championing
Yes!

Steering committee: **Katie Peterson, Kelly Mowers, Barbara Page**

COMMUNITY COLLEGE ESL FACULTY

In this Spring semester the Community College ESL Faculty SIG held two successful meetings, including a lunch hour special in the MATSOL Virtual Conference! It was well attended and we saw many K-12 educators from around the state who were interested in what our SIG is doing. At the start

of the spring semester, we sent out a Community College ESL Survey to 15 colleges, and all but one responded! This survey was started by MECCA (Massachusetts ESL Community College Association) in the 1980's and we've been sending it out for the past 8 years. The data collected from the survey help us see important trends in our community. We also had Larry Dean from the Department of Higher Education MassTransfer join us at one of our meetings - we look forward to the opportunities this may bring in the future!

Steering Committee: **Juanita Brunelle, Teresa Cheung, Eileen Kelley, Bruce Riley, Anne Shull.**

EDUCATORS OF COLOR (EOC)

The Educators of Color SIG is a collaborative network of educators of color. We meet monthly on Friday afternoons. We provide a space for our members to support one another, talk through the difficult issues that affect BIPOC students and educators, as well as share resources and strategies that work well in our various communities of learning.

This school year, we discussed ways to increase the number of participants who attend our monthly meetings, and how to more effectively engage and empower the BIPOC educators. The members asked us to discuss specific topics at each meeting as another way of meeting the diverse needs of our members in different levels of educational settings. Therefore, in the fall, we started the new initiative and facilitated conversations around ELL Parent Information Night / Back to School Night. In the spring, we discussed how to facilitate parent conferences in engaging and organized ways. The exchanges of those information and resources were quite meaningful.

At the MATSOL Conference 2023, we provided an opportunity for EOC and white allies to connect and share best practices to support each other and for the purpose of retention of EOCs. Dr. Hannah Tolla, Director of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability, and Dr. Jorge Allen, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Wellesley Public Schools, joined us as guest speakers and spoke on improving EOC recruitment through Better Retention Strategies.

Going forward, we would like to continue to collaborate with the SIG members to discuss high interest topics and to support each other. We also continue to encourage our members to assume leadership roles in MATSOL and within their communities. For more information, please visit our MATSOL website.

Steering Committee: **Yuiko Shimazu, Lonamae Shand**

THE EMERGING SCHOLARS CIRCLE

The Emerging Scholars Circle SIG is open to undergraduate and graduate students from around the world who are interested in social justice-related research focused on equity, diversity, inclusion, and empowerment. The Emerging Scholars Circle SIG is a bridging space for these students who are engaged in scholarly research and undergraduate/graduate school coursework. The ESC SIG meets online once a month, on the first Friday of each month.

We had five online meetings this spring semester. According to the needs analysis that we conducted during our December meeting, we hosted emerging scholars who specialize in decolonizing practices of ethnography (January), Global/World English (February), emphasizing the significance of emotions and poetic ethnography (March), exploring language policies in Massachusetts post-Look Act (April), and analyzing refugee background ESL learners' needs (May). Our SIG also gave a presentation at the MATSOL conference.

It is our intention to organize more interactive activities to engage our SIG members and MATSOL members at large in active participation. For more information, please visit our MATSOL website.

Steering committee: **Nasiba Norova, Iuliia Fakhrutdinova, Vanessa Quintana Sarria**

ESL UNIT DEVELOPERS SIG

The ESL Unit Developers held 10 SIG meetings in SY23-24, including an in-person meeting at the MATSOL Conference in Framingham! This SIG has worked diligently and collaboratively on three incredible units for Newcomers this year. Those units are centered on Math, "Doing School," and Massachusetts (Geography). The SIG would split into 3 groups and do the work in each of the meetings, from brainstorming to drafting to writing. It was all a collaborative success. The SIG planned to extend the work into the summer months in smaller groups. Eventually, when the units are finished, the SIG will share these units with all MATSOL members! If you're interested, join us in the Fall and see for yourself. You do not have to be an experienced curriculum writer; all beginners are welcome!

Steering committee: **Jessica Pulzetti, Kerry DeJesus, Liana Parsons, Susannah DiMauro, Allison Audet**

FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

The Family-School Partnership Special Interest Group brings together educators working with linguistically and culturally diverse families. The aim of this group has been to share information and resources, collaborate, and work together to address emerging issues affecting parents and guardians in our schools.

Our SIG has had another exciting year exploring what family-school partnerships look like in various educational contexts. Claudia Rinaldi at Lasell University, Rachel Kramer at Brandeis University, and Yasko Kanno at Boston University shared how their teacher preparation programs informed young teachers about family engagement in schools.

Members of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Donna Traynham, Early Learning Team Lead; David Valade, Language Acquisition Support Lead; and Sibel Hughes, Assistant Director of Language Acquisition Office provided us with valuable insights and resources available on their website. For more information on the SIG, please visit our MATSOL website.

Steering committee: **Mary Jo Rendón, Craig Consigli**

INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES

The Instructional Coaches SIG is a forum for PreK-12 instructional coaches, teacher leaders, and coordinators. The goal of the Instructional Coaches SIG is to facilitate collaboration of instructional coaches across Massachusetts in order to improve coaching systems and strategies that support General Education and ESL teachers in meeting the needs of multilingual learners.

The Problem of Practice Protocol is a staple at every meeting. The protocol encourages coaches to think more expansively about a specific and concrete dilemma. Using the protocol helps coaches to develop a capacity to see and describe issues and encourages participants to understand and collaborate on possible solutions. Each month's Problem of Practice discussion focuses on a particular topic such as the roles and responsibilities of being a coach, the support of newcomers and teachers who work with newcomers, co-teaching and the (mis)use of translating in the classroom.

For more information about the Instructional Coaches SIG, go to the MATSOL website to get up to date information for next year and sign up for the Instructional Coaches "Special Interest Group" emails.

Steering committee: **Mary Kennedy, Moira Greenson, Ivone Spencer** 

MATSOL 2023 Conference Keynote

Shengxiao Sole Yu

<https://www.lifeaffirmingnectar.com>

*in my native language
i am the great great great great granddaughter of my
ancestors
i am the embodiment of the stories of my lineage
i am the descendant of empresses of beauty and power
i am made from the earthy nectar of the yellow river
i carry with me the spirit of the west lake water lilies that
bloom in the month of june*



*in my native language
i am the early morning glow, the first rays of light at the crack of dawn
in my native language
i am everything*

*in my native language
“departure terminal” carries memories
it means the point of no return
it means the fundamental transformation of my relationship with my homeland
it means the irrevocable remaking of my connection to my ancestors
in my native language
“departure terminal” means nostalgia, severance, desire, longing, heartache,
grief, sorrow
a thirst that can never be quenched*

*in english, the colonizer tongue
“departure terminal” is descriptive
it is a noun
defined as “a passenger station that is central, often serves as a junction”
in english
“departure terminal” is a matter of fact
in english
“departure terminal” is without memories*

*yet english is now the only language in which i could've written this poem
yet english is the only language in which i can give this keynote speech*

english is the only language in which i could discuss the power of language and

critique the language of power

*english is the only language in which words drip from my tongue like honey
english is the only language in which i could express the depths of my inner
oceans*

*so i look into the ancestral realms
and ask my people
to please understand me
please see me
me, your descendant
speaking to you
in this colonizer tongue*

*please, recognize me
as one of your own
because i come from you
because i belong to you*

**there are no capital letters in this poem to honor my native language, in which
capitalization does not exist*

Thank you everyone. It is an honor for me to stand before you and share my story. Thank you to Chris for the kind introduction and invitation to be here. Thank you to the many people on the MATSOL conference planning committee to make this happen. And thank you to all of you for being here.

My birth name is Shengxiao, in Mandarin Chinese, and my nickname is Sole, in Spanish. I was born in China, a child of my ancestors, my lineage. I inherited cultural practices, traditions, and wisdom from them. My family immigrated to this country when I was in the 6th grade, and I have since made a home out of this strange land. When I was in high school, I took Spanish classes and fell in love with the language and culture. I went on to study Latin American history in my senior year in high school and learned about the revolutionary history of Mexico, the *guerras sucias* in Argentina and Chile, and U.S. military interventions in so many Latin American countries that fundamentally altered the outcomes of history.

I was surprised that I was learning about all of this for the first time in an elective, advanced Spanish class in my senior year. We were all required to take "world studies" classes since freshman year. But we didn't learn about any of these histories from an entire continent. I started to realize that "world studies" in my high school just meant the study of and glorification of European societies, with

erasure of colonialism, imperialism, and other forms of empire violence.

My interests in Latin American history and the privilege I had to access job opportunities took me to many places. I got to live and work with grassroots community leaders in Peru and Costa Rica. I worked at foundations and NGOs that taught me how money and power operate in our world. I got to travel to Mexico, La República Dominicana, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and beyond - learning from community leaders about the history of U.S. military imperialism in their so-called "civil wars." I also learned about resistance, resilience, and power-building in grassroots communities. Latin America was where I became politicized - where I learned that our existence is inherently political, where I learned that the personal is political, and the political is personal, where, as *Calle 13* says, es "*un pueblo sin piernas, pero que camina.*"

Latin America led me to identify my personal power and create my role in providing political education to our communities, as my contribution to our larger social change ecosystem. I now proudly call myself a speaker, facilitator, and social justice educator.

I do not work at a school. I am not, and have never been, a classroom teacher. But my life has been transformed by some of my teachers. I have mad respect for what you do. Taking stock of this moment in our collective history, I want to name and explicitly acknowledge that when you decided to become a teacher, or when you decided to take on a role in the school system, in our educational system, I know you didn't sign up to be frontline workers during a global pandemic. I know you didn't sign up to put your lives on the line because some people with power in this government care more about campaign donations than about protecting your lives and our kids' lives. Yet, you are still here. Persisting. Doing what you believe is right by our kids, what is right for our future generations. So I want to say thank you. I want to say I see you and I truly have mad respect for you.

I am not a K-12 classroom teacher, but I come before you as a fellow educator. I provide political education for our community. I teach in order to deepen our individual and collective political consciousness, in service of our kids, in service of our communities, in service of our humanity.

We are all gathered here because your work matters for students who are speakers of languages other than English. Because you want to, as MATSOL's mission states, "promote equity and excellence in the education of multilingual learners."

To explore what this means, I want to invite us to step back and zoom out. Step way back and ask the question "why is English even spoken here on this land?"

So let's travel back in time, to Europe in the 14-1600's. This time period is commonly known as the "Age of Discovery" - but of course, that is from an European perspective. It is known as the "Age of Genocide" from an indigenous perspective. During this time, European powers competed for navigational achievements and went around the world in search of wealth and resources for their royal families.

They forcefully captured African labor, brought them to the Americas, violently displaced indigenous peoples living here, brought in Asian labor for exploitation, and prohibited everyone from speaking in their own languages and practicing their own traditions. In 1789, the first U.S. Congress met to draft the Constitution - one of the founding documents, written in English, of this settler colonial nation. In the following centuries, European settlers and their descendants set up laws and institutions to govern who can and cannot enter this country, who can and cannot become naturalized citizens, who can and cannot have access to power. In the following centuries, European settlers and their descendants occupied more lands and brought in more labor for the purpose of exploitation, in order to benefit this colonial empire. They feared the people who brought in their own languages and cultures, so they created systems and structures to make sure that English would become the dominant language on this land, the language of power.

So why is English spoken here, on these occupied indigenous lands commonly known as the United States? Because of this history of violent, colonial dominance.

We cannot talk about this history without talking about power. And when I say power, I mean the power to control the entire process of the construct of our society. Let's use an architectural process as an analogy. In order to build a building, you have to set up the perimeter and the foundation. In order to construct a society, those with power have to set up laws and policies that define the perimeter and make up the foundation. In order to build a building, you invite in architects and designers to draw up the blueprints. In order to construct a society, you invite people to sit at decision-making tables where the outcomes affect all of our lives. Once your building is finished, you have photographers and videographers to capture footage of the building and to tell its story. To maintain a society, you have broadcasters and content creators on media platforms telling the story, painting the self-image of the society.

In all stages of this process, those with historical access to power get to decide who can inherit power. And those whose lives are most impacted by decisions, are often systematically excluded from the decision-making table. They are also often systematically excluded from storytelling spaces and their experiences are

not seen or validated.

When those in power administer standardized tests in English and falsely have our children believe that those tests are a measure of their skills and capacity as human beings, our children suffer. When those in power only showcase, in books and on screens, the beauty, the stories, and the multidimensional lives of people who do not look like our children, our children suffer. When those in power see the ability to speak multiple languages and to have multiple cultures as barriers to acquiring English, our children suffer. When those in power demand that our children assimilate, our children suffer.

Because assimilatory politics is a politics of violence - it asks us to give up our connections to our authentic cultures and languages, it asks us to erase the parts of ourselves that connect us to our histories and our lineages in order to exchange for the false promise of safety and protection in this country - safety and protection that this settler colonial nation has never intended on giving to people it calls "foreign, alien, not worthy."

The colonial history of North America has created and maintained the present reality we have today. The reality in which English has power, not only in North America, but globally. Of course I want to honor and uplift our native languages, honor and uplift native lineages, but I also have to hold the complexity that we would be doing a disservice to our children if we didn't teach them English. I have to hold the complexity that English is both an instrument of assimilation and a pathway to possibilities. As the Black Panthers have taught us, we must focus on "survival pending revolution." We must teach our kids the language skills they need to not only survive, but thrive in our present reality. We must equip our kids with the skills they need while protecting them from the violence of assimilation.

And this is your job. Many of you teach kids every single day. You do assessments and evaluations every single day. And I want to name that the bigger picture of what you are doing is helping our kid survive, pending revolution. What you do is meant to bring more dance, more music, more expression, more joy into our children's lives now, as we collectively move towards an even more joyous future.

I am painting the bigger picture here because we must contextualize what you do, day in and day out, in the classroom, in a broader context. Most of the kids you work with have experienced trauma, because migration is trauma; disconnection from your homeland is trauma; having your heart and soul in the diaspora is trauma.

Anti-racist educator and somatic healer Resmaa Menakem talks about trauma in his book *My Grandmother's Hands*. He says:

Trauma, decontextualized in an individual, looks like personality. Trauma, decontextualized in a family, looks like family traits. Trauma, decontextualized in a community, looks like culture.

I immigrated to this country at age 11 and a half. Migration and its associated losses, especially for an 11-year-old, is an experience of trauma. Living in this country, carrying the historical trauma of the colonization of my homeland, carrying the intergenerational trauma of my grandparents escaping war zones, carrying the persistent and pervasive racialized trauma of seeing my Asian community repeatedly excluded from spaces in Hollywood and seats in Congress, that is compounded trauma. Yet, the way that I was seen by my teachers and peers in school was decontextualized from this trauma.

I will always remember the fear and anxiety with which I walked into my first day of class in this country. It was the first day of the sixth grade. I walked in there knowing 3 things in English: the words "hello" "goodbye" and the happy birthday song. I did not speak any English, but my teachers did not know that. In fact, it took many days for my teachers to realize that. I didn't speak with other kids during recess or lunch; I didn't participate in class. I was basically silent. There were around 20 kids in my sixth grade class, and I had one teacher and one teacher's aide. Two adults and 20 kids in the classroom and no one approached me to check in on me, to help me integrate into the new school, to help facilitate my transition, to help me make new friends. For days, they let me sit there, in silence. They failed to identify that I did not speak English. They did not refer me to my school's ESL program until much, much later. They let me sit there, in silence, because the image of a shy Asian girl perfectly fit within their preconceived notion of how Asian femmes are.

Their preconceived notion, decontextualized from the trauma of my life, made staying quiet look like my personality. Their preconceived notion, decontextualized from the trauma of my community, made staying quiet look like our culture.

But this isn't our authentic culture. The notion that Asian Americans are quiet comes from a set of characteristics intentionally placed upon my community, intentionally ascribed to us, by those with historical access to power in this country.

In her book *The Color of Success*, professor Ellen Wu describes this set of characteristics by exploring the history of the model minority myth. The model minority myth is a myth that labels Asian Americans as people who are quiet, docile, keep our heads down, do not make waves, people who are hard-working, rule-following, law-abiding: a set of characteristics that benefit the

existing social hierarchy, that protect the existing social order.

Dr. Wu takes us through the history of the Yellow Peril, a set of stereotypes that marked Asian people as completely foreign, as alien, as rat-eating bearers of diseases. She covers a number of laws and policies that restricted Asian people from entering this country or becoming naturalized citizens. She states that for the majority of the U.S. American history, Asians were seen as “definitely not white.” Then, in the 1960’s, things shifted. Domestically, Black Americans were rising up to demand access to civil rights and to correct historical injustices. Internationally, the U.S. was on an imperialistic crusade in the Cold War that bombed the shit out of many Asian Americans’ ancestral lands. But how can the U.S. march onto the world stage under the banner of freedom and democracy when there was no equality at home? That was when the model minority myth was invented - invented by people we call “major opinion-makers” - the journalists and politicians who had access to media platforms to push out their opinions.

They invented a myth that said to Black Americans, *hey, look at Asian Americans - they are all quiet and hard working and because of that, they have achieved success, so why can't you do the same? Why don't you put down your protest signs and go home? If you worked hard like the Asians, you too, will achieve success.* This period marked a turning point where Asians came to be seen as “definitely not Black. And still not white.”

My 11-year-old self didn't know any of this at the time, but when I left my ancestral land to be part of the diaspora, when I showed up on my first day of the sixth grade, I was slotted, like a puzzle piece, into this existing framework, this existing narrative in the white American imagination - a narrative that ascribed these characteristics to me, a narrative that predated me, that was bigger than me.

A year after I immigrated to the U.S., I was in the 7th grade. I was sitting in my social studies classroom when my teacher, a cis white man, told us about the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington DC. He described the black granite wall etched with the names of military service members. He talked about how the granite was reflective and as you read the names, you could easily catch a glimpse of yourself. *The design reminded us that we could, at any moment, trade places with the people whose names are on the wall,* my teacher explained. *They gave up their lives to protect our freedom and democracy, but it could have just as easily been us who gave up our lives.*

Even at age 12, I knew that when my teacher said “us” and “our,” he did not include me. He did not equate me with the heroes of his imagination. In fact, had we both lived in that era, he would have considered me a wartime enemy. But my presence was invisible to him. So it was possible for him to use the words

“us” and “our” generously without hesitation.

Our class on the Vietnam War didn't offer us any stories about what the Vietnamese people experienced during what they called the “American war.” We didn't learn about the anti-war political organizing that was happening at the time. We certainly did not learn about the then-budding Asian American political movement.

The term Asian American was literally created by my movement ancestors in the 1960's as a political organizing tool. In 1968, the Asian American Political Alliance was formed in Berkeley by community organizers to take a political stance against this racist, imperialist nation. My movement ancestors were loud and proud, and demanded to be seen and heard. They demanded reparations for historical injustices for all non-white communities. They demanded the right to self-determination in support of liberation movements for all non-white communities.

But I did not learn about any of this in school. My story, my self-understanding, was decontextualized from the history of the racialization of Asian Americans. I was robbed of the opportunity to know my movement ancestors. The ones I come from. The ones I belong to.

When I think about Asian American kids sitting in our classrooms today, I recognize that this is a very different era compared to my time. Many things have changed. But many things still stay the same. Like the model minority myth that reinforces our erasure - it is a framework that predates them, that is bigger than them, and that will outlast them - unless we speak truth to power and collectively dismantle it.

Much of what I now know about Asian American history and racialization, I did not learn in school. I learned these things on my own, much much later, well into my adult years. This knowledge has transformed me. But imagine what if all of our kids knew this about their stories, their lineage, and their history? What if all of our kids were given the gift of knowing who they come from and who they

What if all of our kids were given the gift of knowing who they come from and who they belong to? What if all of our kids were given the gift of being deeply rooted in a lineage that holds them with love, recognition, and tenderness? What if all of us adults too, were given this precious gift, to know our history?

belong to? What if all of our kids were given the gift of being deeply rooted in a lineage that holds them with love, recognition, and tenderness? What if all of us adults too, were given this precious gift, to know our history so we can contextualize our experiences in a lineage that holds us with love, recognition, and tenderness?

I share some of my school stories because I want to share with you my perspectives and lived experiences as a generation 1.5 Asian American person, as a child growing up in an ESL program in a predominantly English-speaking community. And I invite you to ask what stories do your students have to share? What is needed to understand and contextualize their stories? What stories are still left untold but demand to be told?

As I stand before you, I am speaking here today for many, many reasons. I am thinking about the students growing up in our classrooms today. I am thinking about younger me - Little Sole - who grew up in this foreign land feeling so untethered and disconnected, who felt like she didn't belong, who felt like she didn't have power. I am speaking here so that the students growing up in our classrooms today do not have to experience what Little Sole went through. I am speaking here today to let Little Sole know that she deserves to feel seen, to feel important, to feel valid, to belong - the things all of our immigrant children of the diaspora deserve to feel in their classrooms, on their playgrounds, in their communities, and beyond. The things that all of us, collectively, in this room, have the power to make a reality for them.

To me, that's what it means to "promote equity and excellence in the education of multilingual learners."

There is a concept in East Asian cultures, often used in Japanese tea ceremonies, called *ichi-go ichi-e*. It directly translates to "one time, one meeting." It means "we meet this way only once." It describes the unrepeatable nature of a moment, of a meeting, of a human interaction. We meet this way only once, because all of us are constantly changing, so even if we meet again, we will have become different people, so we can only ever meet this way, once. A particular meeting of people can never be replicated.

Ichi-go ichi-e, we meet this way only once. Every interaction is sacred. Every time we show up to each other is sacred. Every conversation with a child in the classroom is sacred. Our co-presence with each other here today is sacred.

You may not feel this way every single day. In fact, it is pretty difficult to feel this way every single day. I absolutely do not feel this way every single day. In fact, I know what happens in the classroom on a daily basis can be absolutely chaotic and outside of your control and the last word you may want to use to describe it is "sacred."

But I offer this concept, as a grounding point, as a common thread of truth that connects our humanity. Even when we don't feel it, our interactions with each other are still sacred. And we always have the invitation to show up in a way that honors the sacredness of our time together.

The personal is political. The political is personal. Emergent strategist and transformative justice educator Adrienne Maree Brown teaches us that the small is a reflection of the large, and the large is made up of the small. We live our lives in fractals. When we look at fractals, what we see is a set of replicating patterns that are self-similar across different scales. The way veins spread out from a central line on each tree leaf resembles the way our blood vessels and nerve endings spread out from a central channel. The swirling patterns on your fingertips resemble the swirling patterns of the galaxy.

The small is a reflection of the large because all of us were raised under a system of power so we learned from it. We tend to replicate, in smaller spaces, the toxic patterns of power we see in our larger society. Systems of oppression are internalized within us because we have been shown, over and over again, how oppressive relationships of power function.

Much of the history of settler colonialism and of racialization that I shared earlier are part of structures that predate us, that are much bigger than us. When we think about these structures, it can feel daunting and we can feel powerless. But because the small is a reflection of the large, what we do at the small scale matters.

Our usage of language is actually a perfect example of this. The English language is a Germanic language brought to the British Isles by Anglo-Saxon migrants in the 5th century AD. The basic structures of the language have been around for a long time and they have not fundamentally changed. They remain unchanged because individual people, throughout the centuries, have followed the basic rules of English and used the language in the same ways their predecessors did. Each time a person uses the language in the same way, they are casting an affirmative vote for how the language should be used. Yet I would bet most of us in this room today would not be able to understand the English spoken in the 5th century AD - what is known as proto-English, or Old English. And that is because enough of the grammar and vocabulary have changed that it is no longer mutually intelligible with modern English. That is because individual people, throughout the centuries, have created new words, used existing words in different ways, formed sentences with new structures, that they have cast enough votes to make major changes to the language. These changes don't even need centuries to occur - there are vocabulary differences

between millennials and Gen Z's.

As I speak to you now, I am using words and sentence structures in English that we have all agreed upon. I am casting votes to continue using the language in this way. But if I start to use the language differently, if I call America “the settler colonial empire commonly known as the United States,” it is a signal to prompt us to think differently. If enough people called this country by this name, it will get adopted into our common language.

When we grasp the power of language, we can actually command and subvert the language of power. Each one of us has that power because the small is a reflection of the large, and the large is made up of the small.

What we do matters. What YOU do matters. When you show up to an interaction with a student in the classroom, when you show up to a colleague at school, when you show up in a way that is politically grounded, spiritually connected, filled with genuine care for the relationship with the other human being - all of that matters.

I want to close with a few lines of poetry from our visionary fiction writer, poet, and movement ancestor, Octavia Butler. She wrote:

*All that you touch
You change
All that you change
Changes you*

We walk away from this lunch changed. All of us. We are changed by this interaction. I honor the sacredness of this space that we shared. *Ichi-go ichi-e*, we meet this way only once. Thank you for showing up here, for bringing your humanity, for listening, and for your role in co-creating with me, this sacred space that we shared together. Thank you. 🍀

When you show up to an interaction with a student in the classroom, when you show up to a colleague at school, when you show up in a way that is politically grounded, spiritually connected, filled with genuine care for the relationship with the other human being - all of that matters.

Reframing K-12 students through asset-based collaboration around assessment practices with prospective teachers

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OFTENTIMES, pre-service teachers engage in separate coursework specific to supporting students with disabilities and English language learners. During spring semester 2023, we merged two traditionally siloed courses on these topics, intentionally synthesizing course content to support best practices for diverse learners in the classroom. We delivered instruction through co-teaching, and our assignments aimed to have students apply learning at the intersections of language, ability, and bias. One major assignment was an assessment portfolio¹ which we explore here as an exercise in assessment literacy with prospective teachers (PTs) of English language learners (ELLs).



Here, we reflect on our practice by drawing upon exemplar assessment data gathered by PTs and debriefing conversations during the semester. We highlight our learning about and through our process with PTs moving from standardized assessments to more subjective, nuanced glimpses into K-12 student capacity. We argue that while PT assessment results will vary, guided discussions around assessment that lead to intentional data gathering will help PTs expand their thinking about the function and purpose of assessment.

THEORY AND METHOD

Our work is rooted in self-study of teacher education practices (S-STEP), emerging from an inclination toward teacher inquiry as practice (Loughran, 2005). Ergas and Ritter (2021) asked, “What do self-study scholars mean when their research entails a focus on ‘self’?” (p. 4). Hamilton and Pinnegar (1998) suggest that it is the study of “one’s self, one’s actions, one’s ideas” (p. 236); researchers are “not only the selves doing the research, they are the selves being studied” (LaBoskey, 2004, p. 842). Lighthall (2004) and later Diacopoulos and colleagues (2022) identified collaboration as a fundamental feature of S-STEP, allowing practitioners to encounter the unseen nuances of teaching practice (Buchanon & Mooney, 2022). Critical friends, then, serve as a “sounding board” because of “the difficulty of assessing one’s own practice and reframing it” (Schuck & Russell, 2005, p. 107). Our critical friendship and co-teaching certainly leave blind spots, as critical friends infrequently inhabit the same teaching space, but our hope for both our instruction and reflection on this data is to find insights that can further improve our practice.

Our data and analysis both occur as part of our teaching and through collaboration. In that sense, our spring course may be described as an intrinsic case study (Stake, 1995) and us as participant-observers. We gathered data through course assignment submissions and classroom dialogues, though these pieces are not the entirety of what influenced our thinking. Further, much of the “data” were defined and gathered in the field by PTs. Our analysis was inductive in that we didn’t set out with *a priori* theoretical constructs to define what we encountered in our teaching. Analysis included dialogic encounters with assessment data as a collective, and representations of PT learning through informal and formal evaluations.

CONTEXTS

In our educator preparation program, students enrolled in these courses as third-year PTs. PTs have the option to be on an elementary education, special education, or dual licensure track. About 70% of our students in this cohort are dual licensure students, with the remainder seeking elementary licensure. Their third year is the most intense year in terms of preparation courses.

The field placement was a local charter school in Western Massachusetts where the PTs were placed in both fall and spring for fifty field hours. Students were placed in classrooms that included students identified as ELLs.

SUBJECTIVITY

The lenses we bring to this collaboration and specifically our data analysis are multivalent, amorphous, and challenging to articulate fully. In common, we communicate well and each of us is firmly committed to critical perspectives in and on education in our areas of specialization: literacy and special education.

Mark: I'm a literacy teacher educator and draw upon 7 years of international TEFL experience in teaching Sheltered English Immersion. In earlier self-study work (McCarthy, 2018), I note that I am "a White, anglophone, middle class, cis hetero male from the USA" (p. 176), and go on to present complications I feel toward the "colonial project" that education, and specifically English language education, can be. Those identities and themes accompany me into this project as well.

Sara: I'm an educator in the area of inclusive (special) education and draw upon my experiences serving as an inclusive co-teacher across a variety of age levels, as well as work I do in schools to create more inclusive learning opportunities for students identified as having disabilities. I carry the White, anglophone, middle class privilege of being viewed through a normed lens when I enter spaces, and aim to support my students in resisting notions of "norm" in schools to move towards dismantling systems that segregate students and see them only as a collective list of deficits or "abnormalities."

FINDINGS

The assessment portfolio began with a standardized assessment project that encouraged learning about, trying, and critiquing common tests. One of the examined standardized tests served as the first assessment in a series of three, completed individually by PTs with their focal student, each of which was followed by in-class dialogue in both small group and whole class settings. Sharing results for collective engagement was intended to assist PTs in designing the ensuing assessment. To illustrate the process our students engaged in and our instructional learnings, we share the assessment results of one PT in our course.

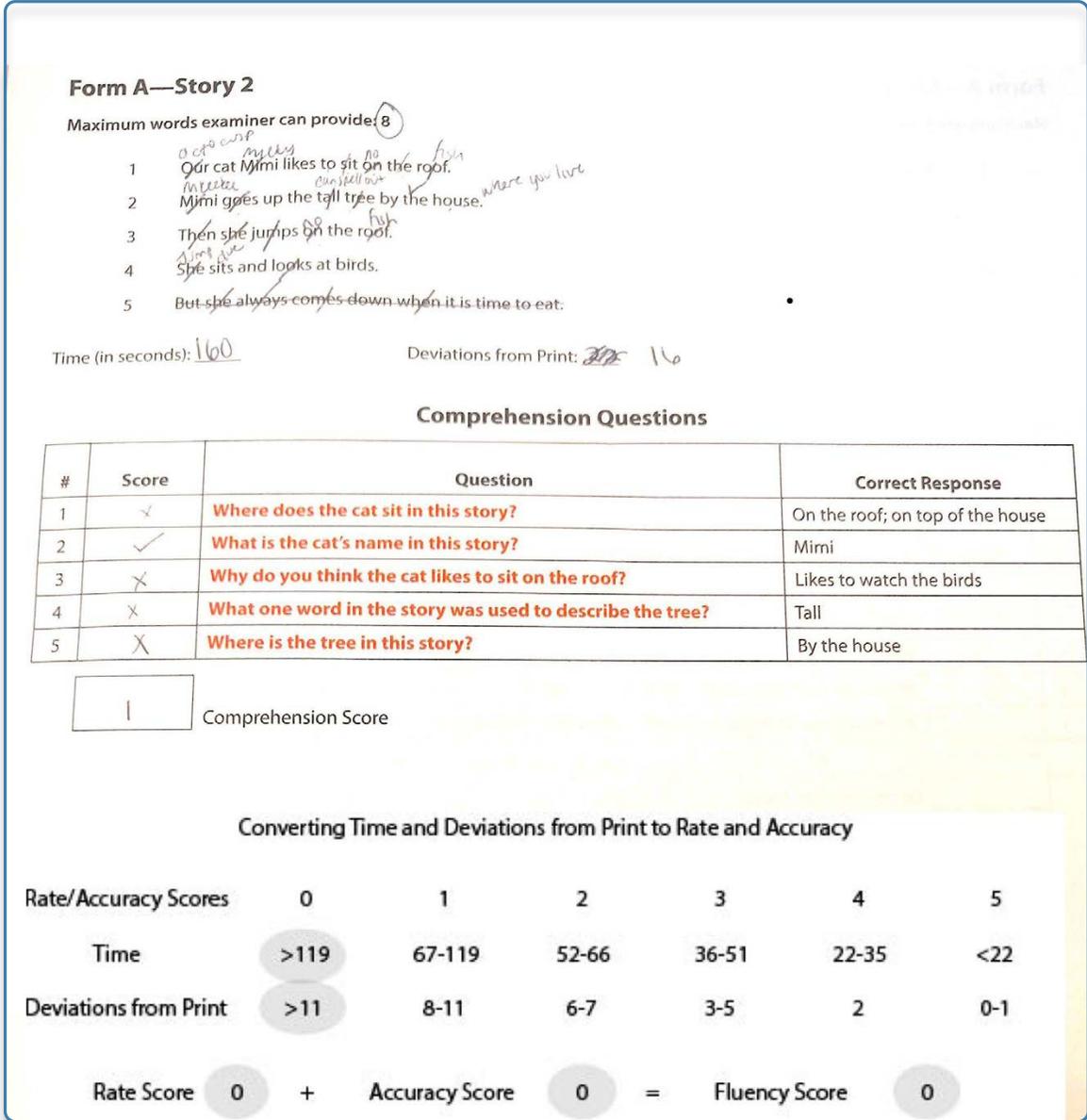


Figure 1. GORT-5 results

Jane began the assessment portfolio process by administering the Gray Oral Reading Test 5th Edition (GORT-5) to her ELL student (see Figure 1), hoping to learn more about his reading fluency and comprehension. The Kindergarten student Jane worked with spoke Spanish as a home language. She described him as very social and noted that he was very strong in math, preferring it over phonics. Jane completed two reading passages with her student and, for each, the student received an overall score of 0. She brought these results into our college classroom for us all to debrief together. Looking at the overall results and the fact that the student did not score on the assessment, Jane decided

to move forward with assessing a variety of foundational reading skills, including letter names, letter sounds, blending sounds, and reading words (see Figure 2). Jane again brought her results into our classroom to debrief with her peers and us. In the debriefing of her second assessment, Jane recognized that this student had many strong foundational skills and left the debrief conversation with one question: does he read in Spanish? Based on the answer to this question, she then planned to either assess blending in Spanish for her third assessment or multimodal blending in English if the answer was no. For her third assessment, she then assessed the student's blending skills in Spanish after gathering information from the student (see Figure 3).

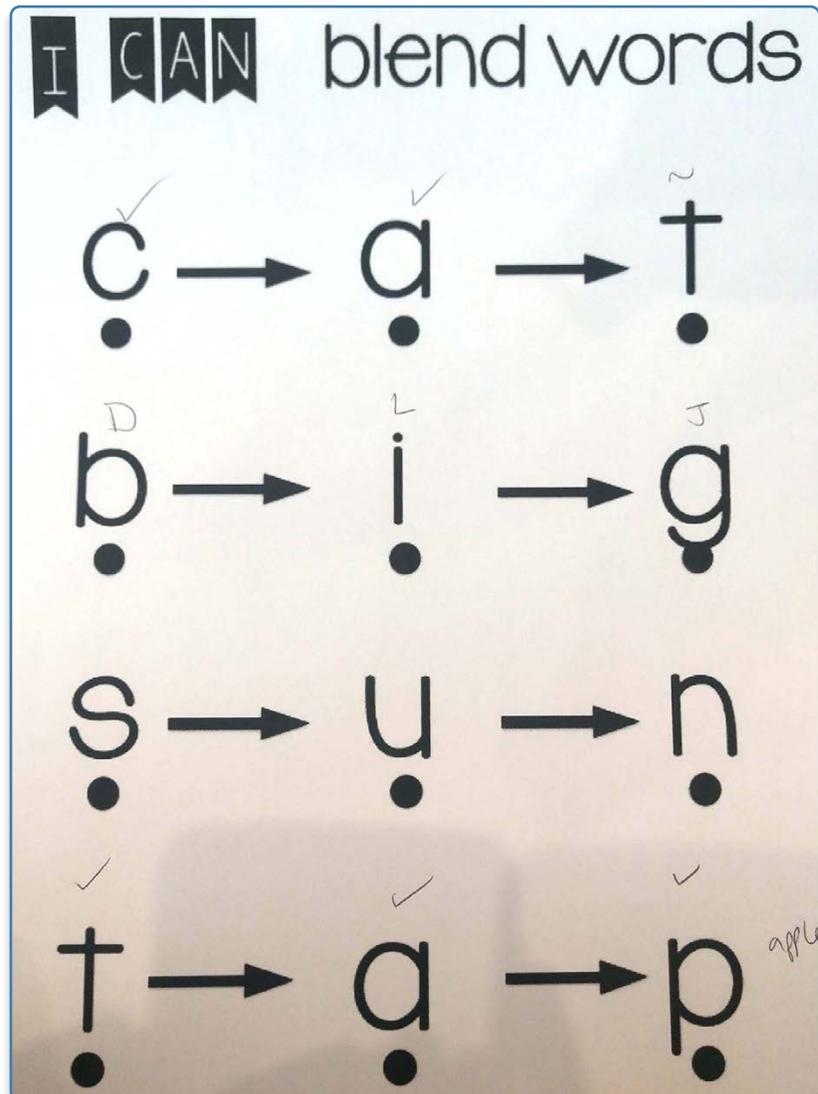


Figure 2. Blending assessment in English.

In terms of our larger procedural learning and findings from engaging in these processes with our PTs, there were many. First, we found that many PTs did not have a clear next step derived from standardized assessment results. PTs found that their students scored very low, so seemed to not have many skills, or scored pretty average and were perceived to be doing “fine.” Both of these results can be problematic for ELLs: the former can lead to overrepresentation of ELLs in special education, and the latter can conceal the need for linguistic supports.

Part of our debrief discussions centered around critical engagements with the standardized assessments themselves, looking at what they actually asked of students, and helping PTs consider what else they might want to know about their student beyond the scope of the standardized assessment: what questions did the results leave them with to explore further? These debriefing conversations were vital to the process, providing a space for PTs to talk about their student and their results, their own initial thoughts, and room for collective questions and ideas for next steps.

This process also provided a space in which our PTs could see what their ELL student could do, once we transitioned away from standardized assessments.

As they continued through the assessment process and used assessments of their own design, they were able to collect evidence of skills that were hidden through the standardized processes and many found that their student was far above their, and often their host teacher's, expectations. For example, another PT accidentally used a text for reading level O, which she thought was the number 0, or lowest level. After a successful guided reading and oral discussion of comprehension questions, this PT realized her mistake when her supervising practitioner suggested the student would never be able to read that level text. Ironically, he was engaged and answered 83% of the comprehension questions correctly, followed by a second, deeper analysis of literary comprehension wherein he answered 75% correctly. While serendipitous, the results indicated that students might surprise us.

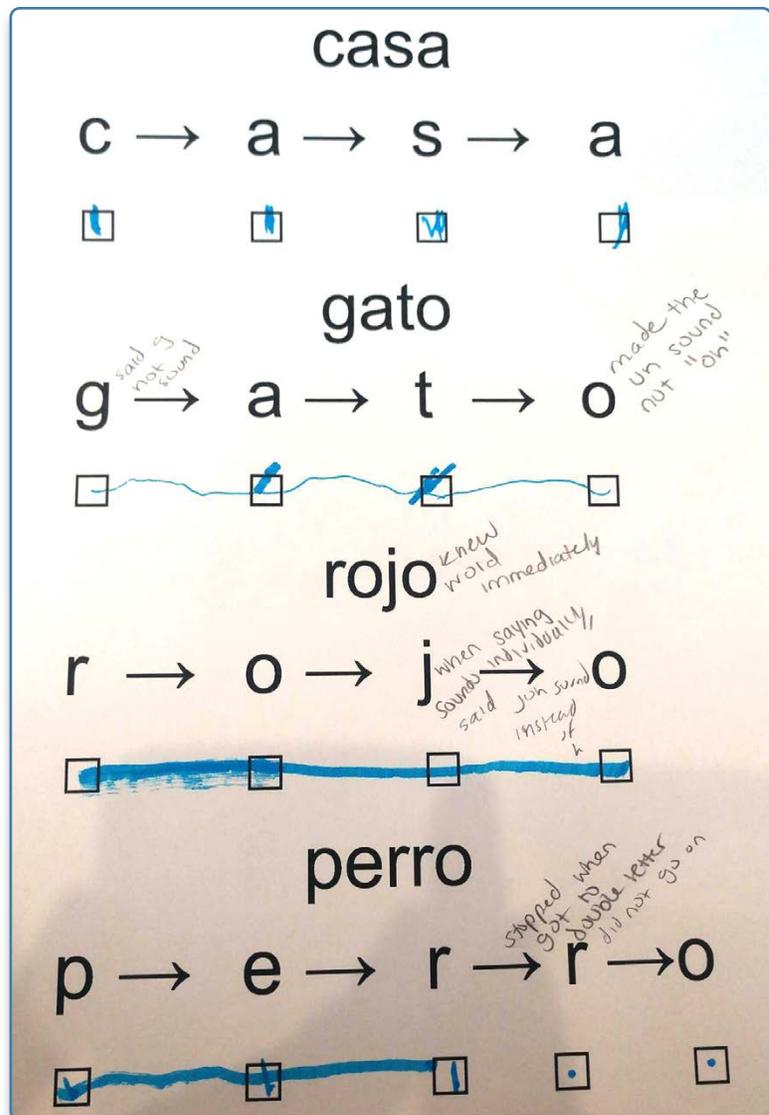


Figure 3. Blending assessment in Spanish.

DISCUSSION

Our collaboration has driven this project toward our shared instructional and programmatic goals to prepare equity-minded, competent, and confident teachers. Here, we represent what positive outcomes can look like, but these outcomes were not shared by all of their peers. We are curious about how we might extend our reach to larger percentages of our students in the future, and that remains a driving question in our collaborative inquiry.

One of the salient themes for the two PTs mentioned is that both *serendipity* and *intention* led to thoughtful teaching practices and reframing narratives of students. Unfortunately, as teacher educators, we likely will not be able to recreate or plan for serendipity, but one might observe that the PT was seeking out resources through an asset-based approach, which can be promoted through our teacher education practices. In both instances, we explicitly tied assessment to instructional goals so that teaching was grounded in data, and data were designed to be relevant for improved instruction. More importantly, we effectively used group discussions in our higher education setting to collaboratively consider assessment options moving forward. In parallel to the de-siloing of our courses, we also made the experience of teaching one that can be undertaken as a collective. Collaboration is often limited to planning instruction, and making sense of assessment data tends to be, like assessment itself, a solitary undertaking. We found powerful shifts toward deeper engagement with data and thoughtfulness in planning next steps as a result of these collective conversations. 

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¹ An early version of this was shared with Dr. McCarthy by Lisa Domke at Georgia State University.

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The translanguaging classroom: Leveraging student bilingualism for learning

by Ofelia García, Susana Ibarra Johnson, and Kate Seltzer. 2017.
[196 pages] ISBN: 1934000191.

Reviewed by Marica Viglietta

AS TEACHERS, we are aware of the plethora of linguistic and cultural resources our multilingual students bring to the classroom; however, we don't always know how to best capitalize on such assets for learning. In the book, "The translanguaging classroom: leveraging student bilingualism for learning", García et al. (2017) provide a comprehensive representation of the translanguaging pedagogy, a strategic approach that allows teachers to value and leverage multilingual students' complex linguistic repertoires to strengthen their learning. Prior to reading this book, I felt confident thinking I knew all there was to know about translanguaging. However, a few pages in and I was immediately proven wrong, as this book added critical depth to my understanding of this multifaceted pedagogy.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part focuses on framing the translanguaging *corriente* as the never static and always purposeful natural flow of languages existing in every multilingual classroom. Teachers who implement translanguaging pedagogy allow multilingual students to draw on their complex linguistic resources to enhance content learning, language development, and to empower the students' multilingual and multicultural identities. In addition, the authors introduce two dimensions of the translanguaging framework: students' translanguaging performances and teachers' translanguaging pedagogy. The former considers multilingual students' general and language-specific performances, as well as their dynamic translanguaging progression. The latter considers teachers' translanguaging stance. This consists of viewing students' complex linguistic repertoires as a resource rather than a deficit; translanguaging design, or the purposeful and strategic planning, instruction, and assessment of translanguaging units and lessons; and translanguaging shifts, or teachers' constant adjustments in response to students' needs to work with the linguistic flow, rather than against it.

In the second part of the book, the three strands of the translanguaging pedagogy (stance, design, and shifts) are brought to life, as they are authentically portrayed in vignettes from three different educational spaces. These educational contexts are a 4th grade dual-language bilingual program with a bilingual educator (Spanish-English), an 11th grade English-medium content-area classroom with multilingual students (Spanish-English) with a monolingual teacher, and a 7th grade bilingual ESL teacher in a multilingual and multiethnic English-medium classroom. The representation of the translanguaging approach through the three vignettes contributed greatly to a further understanding of this multifaceted pedagogy. Each vignette effectively portrays how each component of this pedagogical approach is implemented and varies according to the needs of each specific educational space. This allows the teacher-reader to envision the adaptability and flexibility of this approach, and to consider challenges that might arise and ways to overcome them. Thus, each case, explored through the vignettes, allows the teacher-reader to reflect on this pedagogy, and progressively learn how to develop the tools to navigate the translanguaging *corriente* of their specific context.

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Despite always being aware of the critical importance of leveraging students' complex linguistic resources, as an ELL teacher who does not share knowledge of her multilingual students' linguistic repertoires I always felt discouraged from actively implementing this approach. The main reason was that I was lacking the practical tools and resources to incorporate this approach with my multilingual students. However, the rich variety of relatable and authentic real classroom cases portrayed in this book inspired and helped me to find ways to adapt the translanguaging pedagogy in my specific instructional context. Furthermore, the authors provide an action-oriented exploration of translanguaging units and lesson planning, illustrating the stages of the translanguaging instructional design cycle and offering explicit strategies across each stage. In addition, this cycle is exemplified through several samples, which allows the teacher-reader to further witness translanguaging instructional units' alignment with state standards, and their links to content, language, and translanguaging objectives.

Thus, by offering this step-by-step implementation, teachers can easily adapt and recreate this pedagogy encompassing instruction and assessment in their classrooms.

Lastly, in the third part the authors focus on reflecting on the overall advantages yielded by the implementation of this pedagogical approach. These include enhancing students' learning and language development, legitimizing multilingual students' complex and dynamic bilingualism, and developing their sense of critical consciousness to advance social justice. In addition, this publication is supplemented with a wide range of useful resources, such as templates to document and assess bilingual students' performances, as well as templates for students' self and peer assessment (in Spanish, but these can be easily translated in other languages) and prompts for teachers to reflect and develop their translanguaging pedagogy stance, design, and shifts.

All in all, this book constitutes an incredible resource, as it guides the teacher-reader to develop their translanguaging approach based on the needs of their specific educational space, by providing them with the necessary tools to implement the key components of this pedagogy. Therefore, considering the rich diversity existing in every classroom, I am confident to say that this book represents an essential addition to the bookcase of ANY educator. In particular, I want to recommend this book to:

- Multilingual student educators looking for purposeful strategies to leverage students' linguistic and cultural assets to enhance their learning performances and develop their bilingualism practices.
- Bilingual educators, who do not share knowledge of students' linguistic repertoires, but are looking for meaningful and strategic techniques to implement translanguaging pedagogy in the classroom.
- Educators (both monolingual and bilingual) who want to foster and value multilingual students' socioemotional identities and empower their voices. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marica Viglietta is a driven and creative teacher, with experience in teaching English as a second language and Italian as a foreign language in the grades K-12, who has recently earned her second master's degree in Applied Linguistics from the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Microsoft Translator

[application].

Reviewed by Ralph Saint-Louis

IN TODAY'S DIVERSE CLASSROOMS, promoting accessibility and inclusivity is of utmost importance. One versatile and powerful tool that has proven transformative is [Microsoft Translator](#). In my classroom, I have found Microsoft Translator to be an incredibly versatile and useful tool that promotes accessibility and inclusivity. It is a web-based and phone application tool that has a transformative impact on my classroom. It helps bridge the language gap between English Learner students and their peers. Microsoft Translator is a user-friendly language translation and communication tool developed by Microsoft. It provides real-time translation services, live captioning, and multilingual conversation capabilities, empowering students to communicate and access content in their preferred language.

At the high school level, students engage in a tremendous amount of academic discourse as the expectation is students are “[reading to learn](#)”. In response to this [challenge](#), the live captioning feature can be used to enable real-time captions for students who are just learning English, allowing them to fully participate in class discussions and engage with the material. In my classroom I utilize a blend of language-based grouping for peer support, translation of documents, and the Microsoft Translator to increase access to content so students can feel supported. To build the routine I start each class with the code posted on the board and students join the application as needed. I urge students who I know require the accommodation to join, and often others join without being prompted.

One of the remarkable advantages of Microsoft Translator is its ability to

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foster student engagement. For instance, language-based grouping can be utilized to encourage peer support and facilitate document translation. By translating materials into students' preferred languages, the translator helps increase access to content, promoting active participation and understanding. Students feel more connected and comfortable, leading to greater involvement in class discussions and academic discourse. In particular I found that for some students, recognizing that the teacher is willing to slow down and make use of such a tool to reach them in their native language was the difference between skipping, coming to class, or even arriving on time to receive the scaffolded instructions live. (See Image 1 for an example of a multilingual exchange using the phone application.)

English Learner students often face significant challenges when trying to communicate and integrate with their peers, leading them to remain within their language-based peer groups. Microsoft Translator plays a vital role in bridging these language gaps. By enabling multilingual conversations, all students can engage in classroom dialogue using their preferred languages. This inclusive environment fosters a sense of community and enhances student integration. As a result, EL students are more likely to participate, contribute ideas, and form connections with their classmates.

Microsoft Translator goes beyond language translation to support a range of accessibility needs. Some of the key accessibility features include:

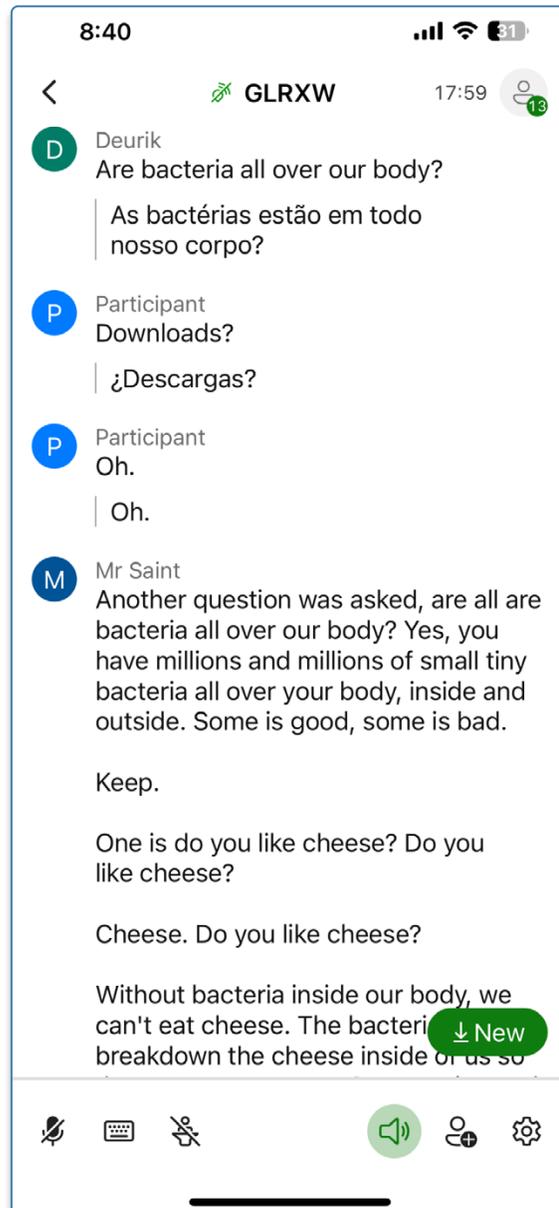


Image 1. Microsoft Translator phone application.

- **Live Captioning:** This feature provides real-time captions during lectures, discussions, or class instructions. It enables students to follow along with the content effectively as long as the pacing allows for students to utilize the tool. Students can hear and read the conversations as it's happening in class. This can also be used as a note-taking tool for students who are absent, who have dyslexia, deaf or hard of hearing, or struggling with note taking. (See Image 2 for an example.)
- **Split-Screen Translation:** The split-screen translation feature enables users to view two translations side by side. This functionality is particularly beneficial for students who may need to compare translations or refer to multiple languages simultaneously. By providing a clear visual representation of different languages, split-screen translation supports comprehension and facilitates cross-language understanding. Often, I ask students to translate key vocabulary into their native language to ensure ample processing time for language acquisition.

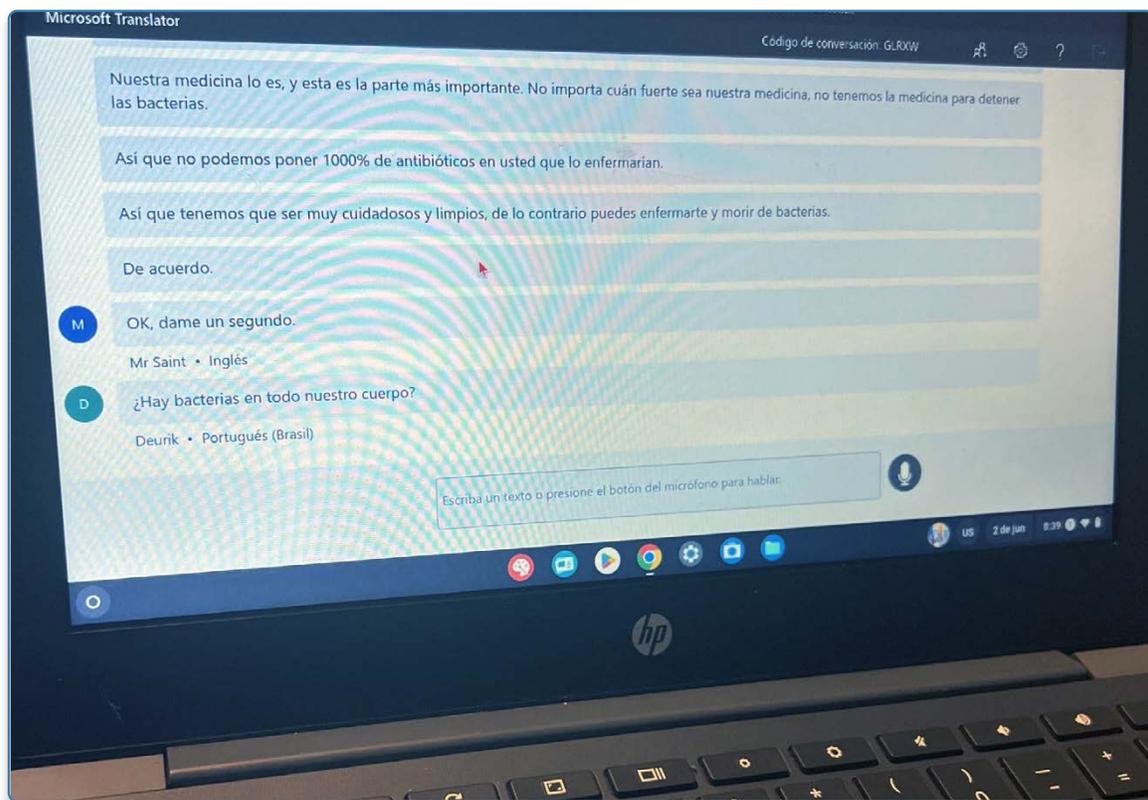


Image 2. Live captioning on Microsoft Translator.

- **One-on-One Conversations:** Students can engage in one-on-one conversations, speaking two languages into a single microphone. The tool can distinguish between the two languages and provide real-time translations for both participants. This feature encourages

direct communication and collaboration between students, breaking down language barriers and promoting meaningful interactions. In addition, this can be utilized as an aid for communication with parents when translation services are not readily available.

- **Translation of Text in Photos:** Using the app's built-in camera viewer, students can capture images of text, such as signs, worksheets, or written instructions. The tool then automatically detects and translates the text, making it accessible to students who may struggle with reading or comprehension in a particular language. Additionally, users can upload saved photos from their gallery for translation, expanding the accessibility of printed or digital materials.

Microsoft Translator has proven to be an invaluable tool for promoting accessibility, inclusivity, and engagement in the classroom. By breaking down language barriers, facilitating communication, and providing accessibility features, it empowers students to participate fully and access content effectively.

Microsoft Translator has proven to be an invaluable tool for promoting accessibility, inclusivity, and engagement in the classroom. By breaking down language barriers, facilitating communication, and providing accessibility features, it empowers students to participate fully and access content effectively. Incorporating Microsoft Translator into daily routines can have a significant impact on student achievement and overall classroom dynamics, creating a more equitable and enriching educational experience for all. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ralph Saint-Louis is a STEM teacher at Lowell High School dedicated to providing students with high-quality STEM education and social-emotional learning experiences anchored by Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining practices. He is an award-winning STEM Educator and 2022 TIME Magazine Innovative Educator.

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