Family Language Policy of Transnational Returnees: The Case of Arab Families Re-Adapting to Mainstream Arab Society

Alamri, Alaa

Abstract

A significant body of research has delved into the dynamics of family language policy (FLP) within the context of transnational families. While much attention has been directed towards understanding the experiences of these families within the borders of their host countries, this study takes a unique perspective by investigating the construction and reconstruction of FLP as transnational families relocate within their home country. The aim of this dissertation is to examine the FLP of transnational families as they return to their homeland and endeavor to reintegrate into mainstream society (i.e., culturally, socially, and academically). The study employed a qualitative multiple case study design, the study included three Arab transnational families, and each participated in two interviews and provided weekly audio diaries, along with weekly naturally occurring recordings. Using the dynamic model of FLP as a conceptual framework, the analysis revealed the significance of three internal factors—mothers' guilt, child resistance to using Arabic, and parental vision—alongside three external factors—extended family dynamics, schooling in the home country, and challenges related to speech delay and therapist recommendations—in shaping and reshaping the FLPs. Through this comprehensive exploration, the study sheds light on the intricate interplay between individual, familial, and societal influences on FLP within transnational family settings. The overall contribution of this research is that internal and external factors are integrated and directly play a role on the mothers' decisions and practices.

Exploring the role of religious beliefs and practices on Family Language Policy: The case of non-Arab families in Saudi Arabia

Alamri, Saad

Abstract

Earlier Family Language Policy (FLP) research has focused on ethnic identities, mobility, and transnationality, as well as, to a lesser extent, gender and familial kinship; few studies have focused primarily on religion as a factor in FLP processes. Religion is particularly important in the FLP of Muslim families who speak Arabic as a first or additional language, as many of the daily Islamic practices necessitate the use of Arabic. Therefore, this study sets out to investigate the impact of religious beliefs and practices on the FLP of non-Arab Muslim families in in Saudi Arabia. I particularly focused on Pakistani expatriate/immigrant families raising their children bi-/multilingually in Saudi Arabia to see how they navigate and construct their family language strategies while following and practicing a 'linguistically foreign,' i.e., not native to Pakistan, religion. I explain in this study how this context was/is quite interesting because it involves families whose heritage language is Urdu while simultaneously adhering to a religion with a restricted language policy that necessitates the use of Arabic almost daily.

Developing an Evaluation Checklist for Identity in ESOL Textbooks

Almartard, Abdulmajeed

Abstract

Language Textbooks often play a major role in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classrooms, not only to provide information but also to help students construct their identities. Several studies showed that identity and language learning are inseparable, due to the simple fact that every learner has his/her own identity aspects like race, gender, social class, and speaker status (i.e., native speaker vs. non-native speaker of the target language). These aspects should be acknowledged because providing the students with limited identity options might cause the students to resist learning the language or be less invested in this practice (Norton & Toohey, 2011).However, there is limited support for teachers who wish to examine identity in ESOL textbooks. Several scholars attempted to evaluate the range of identity options offered in ESOL textbooks, but they all used either Critical Discourse Analysis or Content Analysis which can be effective; however, these procedures require training and can take a long time, so they may not be practical for teachers. This suggests that there is a need for a less complicated evaluation tool that can be easily used by teachers. The purpose of this study is to develop a teacher-friendly identity-focused checklist for ESOL textbooks. The purpose of this study was achieved by developing a qualitative checklist that covers, race, gender, social class, and speaker status, and demonstrating how to use it on a collection of five adult ESOL textbooks. The checklist revealed similarities and differences between the textbooks, including important shortcomings, and that kind of information can be useful for the teacher to make decisions about the textbook he/she uses.

Keywords: Identity, ESOL, Textbook, Evaluation

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Investigating ESL Saudi learners' performance in the light of the attribution theory

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Alsheri, Abdulwahab

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the performance of ESL Saudi learners in the light of the attribution theory. The attribution theory, which focuses on the pattern of people's explaining the causes of their own success and failure, can be categorized into four different sets: ability, effort, perceived difficulty of a task and luck.

In this study, I recruited 15 graduate students to evaluate their success/ failure according to these different categories. The data collected were in form of a survey that included specific questions such as what the participants' performance is and how their performance could affect their self-efficacy.

The importance of conducting this study lies in the valuable educational insights that these factors shape ESL learners' experience. By understanding these factors, educators and policymakers in Saudi Arabia and neighboring regions can develop new effective strategies that meet ESL learners' needs, which could potentially lead new learners to more effective learning experiences.

Translanguaging as a Sociolinguistic Phenomenon in Muslim Communities: Investigating the Purposes behind the Interplay between Arabic and Other Languages

Alzubaidi, Hussain

Abstract

The critical role of Arabic as the liturgical language of Islam positions it uniquely at the cross linguistics and religious identity among Muslims worldwide. This study seeks to interrogate the sociolinguistic motivations and purposes underpinning translanguaging between Arabic and other languages within both Arab and non-Arab Muslim demographics. The central research question guiding this inquiry is: What motivates and informs the translanguaging practices between Arabic and other languages among Muslims, and how does this reflect broader socio-religious identities? To answer this query, the study will explore several sub-questions: How does the religious significance of Arabic shape its adoption and adaptation in multilingual discourse? What communicative and social functions does translanguaging serve within different contexts of Muslim daily life? How does translanguaging between Arabic and other languages facilitate the expression of religious identity and solidarity? Furthermore, the investigation will consider how variables such as age, education, bilingual proficiency, and the level of religious commitment influence the propensity to translanguage. The methodology to be employed encompasses a qualitative approach, with data collected through observation and interviews conducted within a diverse Muslim community. This study aims to contribute a profound perspective to sociolinguistics by providing a language use uniquely shaped by religious identities and by elucidating the complex motivations behind translanguaging practices. The implications of this research extend beyond linguistic interests, potentially affecting approaches to language education, integration policies, and interfaith dialogue initiatives. By dissecting the complex motivations that underlie the translanguaging phenomenon among Muslims, the study seeks to illuminate the profound interconnections between language, religion, and identity in the contemporary world.

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Language and Identity: Examining the use of dialects in African Literature

Awopetu, Ifeoluwa

Abstract

Language mirrors and shapes our perceptions of identity and the world. In the context of African literature, African writers sometimes use dialects in their stories, poems, and works. Some scholars note that the use of these dialects add some uniqueness and beauty to Modern African literary works, and often makes readers curious about the meanings of these words and expressions, as well as why they are merged within the standard language (Hamel and Hadjoui, 2020). But language does more than that - it shapes our identity, carrying the beliefs, values, and traditions of communities. Identities are constructed through language, which serves as a primary medium for expressing the beliefs, values, thoughts, and oral literature of nations. How a group perceives the world, and what they value are also reflected in its language through literature (Sayedayn, 2021) In addition, the use of dialects in literary works not only reflects the cultural identity of a society but may also contribute to its formation and evolution over time. By analyzing selected literary works, this study explores how African writers employ dialects to represent cultural identities, societal dynamics, and linguistic diversity. Dialects not only serve as linguistic markers but also as windows into the reality and experiences of diverse communities, their traditions, values, and ways of life. By incorporating dialects into their narratives, African writers navigate the complexities of identity, linguistic diversity, and cultural heritage.

Screencast Corrective Feedback in L2 English Academic Writing
Cheng, Ming

Abstract

While research indicates that written corrective feedback can promote learning of language and writing skills (Ferris, 2004; Bitchener, 2008) both students and teachers report limitations to the effectiveness of written feedback. Students indicate that it is difficult to understand, and teachers that it is time-consuming to write. An alternative to written corrective feedback, screencast corrective feedback, and leverages screen recording technology to offer detailed audiovisual cues and explanations that elucidates errors and fosters the instructor-learner rapport (Harper et al., 2012). However, research on SCF has focused on students' experiences, rather than language learning or improvement in language ability (Cheng & Li, 2020).

For this study, to determine whether SCF promotes revision and greater writing quality, 40 high intermediate level intensive English students at an US public university wrote two in-class essays. They received SCF on one essay and WCF on the other, following a counterbalanced design. They were then asked to review the feedback and revise their essays. Participants also completed a short survey on their experience using WCF and SCF in the study.

Formality and Political Alignment: A sentiment Analysis of Turkish Newspapers

Curuk, Egemen

Abstract

Freedom of press has been an important topic in the politics of Turkey. Research in Turkish political sentiment has been an important topic as populist discourse is on the rise even among the politicians that are known for their formal discourse (Elçi, 2019). This study investigates the relationship between formality in Turkish political newspaper columns with the newspaper's political alignment. The Turkish Newspapers Column Corpus which is a part of the TS Corpus project (Sezer, 2017) was used as a database. This specialized corpus includes 9982 columns from newspaper websites with different political stances. Through Natural Language Processing (NLP) methods in sentiment analysis such as the linguistic inquiry word count (LIWC), newspaper columns were processed through a novel Turkish dictionary that includes 57 unique part-of-speech categories and consists of 144,291 tokens. The formality tag in the dictionary was developed through several sources that describes the academic levels of morphological formality in Turkish (Akaslan, 2011; Göksel & Kerslake, 2004; Morali et al., 2018). The secondary aim of this research is to determine the K-12 reading level of newspaper columns as a higher degree of formality in language would indicate a need for higher reading comprehension skills. The preliminary findings of this research have shown a diverse range of formality in different political stances of newspapers over the years. Furthermore, the reading levels of the columns did not represent high levels of complexity for audiences.

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A research community in crisis: How to resolve discrepancies between theory and reality

Dutt, Scott

Abstract

This presentation will address a typical situation in which the diversity of language, as it provides a malleable vessel of concepts, is an indispensable part of the scientific process. My focus will be a persistent set of problems that poses fundamental concerns for any projects that choose highly interactive text-based communications (e.g. text messaging and online chat) as their subject matter. The problems at hand are anomalies that appear when a theoretical framework—originally designed to make sense of one context—is later imported to make sense of a new context. If the new context is significantly different, then anomalies between theory and reality arise. As a demonstration, I will examine the theoretical framework Conversation Analysis, and I will show how its conceptual apparatus fails to accurately describe what is observed in text-based online communication.

In order to broaden the scope of this presentation, I will discuss how the problem outlined above is symptomatic of a research community in crisis. This is a perfectly normal phase that recurrently appears as an important part of the cycle of scientific progress. It commonly culminates in a new understanding of things that have been present all along. For those who are facing similar problems, in any academic discipline, I will offer generalizable examples of the empirical methods I found most effective in resolving anomalies between theory and reality and in working through the crisis.

Creating Translanguaging Spaces for Linguistic Inclusion: A Conversational Analysis of Moments

Madaki, Iratishe

Abstract

Translanguaging space (Li, 2011) is a space created by multilingual speakers or the space created by the languages they speak. The translanguaging space is identified by two markers – creativity, and criticality. Creativity is the multilingual speaker's ability to follow or flout the rules of language while criticality is the multilingual speaker's ability to question received knowledge through cultural, social, and linguistic means and to freely express themselves (Li, 2011). Some scholars have studied translanguaging spaces as physical spaces where languages converge and interact with each other (Hua, Wei & Lyons, 2017; Tai, 2021), while others have studied the verbalized spaces created by the abundance of linguistic resources available to the multilingual speakers (Li, 2011). However, not much is studied on the transformative nature of verbalized spaces for inclusion or exclusion of other multilingual participants. This study is focused on two things: One is the way multilingual speakers of minority languages in a minority language context create linguistically transformative spaces to include and exclude other multilingual speakers, and secondly to investigate the interaction of these languages with each other whether the idea of translanguaging poses any threat to the "smaller" languages used in these interactions. This study explored the translanguaging practices of 3 Kuteb students at a University in Nigeria. All the students were multilingual speakers of at least 3 languages including English. Their conversations were recorded at home and in other places with friends and family for a total period of 8 weeks. Using Conversational Analysis and Moment Analysis by (Li, 2011), I observed the moments that created translanguaging spaces and analyzed the strategies for including or excluding participants. This study showed the following: that translanguaging spaces are unique and transformative spaces that could be used in educational settings to improve co-learning and two, that minority languages are indeed being developed through translanguaging.

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Attitudes towards Language and Social Identity: An Examination of Multilingualism and the Role of English in the Port City of Bangladesh

Uddin, Jubair

Abstract

This research examines the relationship between language attitudes and social identity in Chattogram, a multilingual port city in Bangladesh. The study makes use of surveys and interviews to throw light on the attitudes of the residents towards Bengali, Chittagonian, English, Arabic, and other minority languages in various social circumstances. It also navigates the relationship between language selection and identity development within the context of the community by focusing on how linguistic abilities and language use establish a sense of belonging, group membership, and cultural affiliation. The study also investigates the perception of the English language as a means of possibilities, dignity, or cultural dominance and its impact on local languages and cultural identities in the linguistic landscape of the port city as it comes out as a global language in education, trade, and commerce. The findings are expected to provide a greater level of understanding of the complicated relationship between language, identity, and social interactions in diverse settings for policymakers and educators to develop more comprehensive language policies and approaches that would enhance linguistic variety and intercultural harmony in the port city of Bangladesh.

Keywords: Language attitudes, social identity, multilingualism, English language, port city, Bangladesh

ChatGPT-Assisted Teaching & Learning on Interrogative Subject-Verb Inversion in Spanish Second Language Acquisition

Woodall III, Allen R.

Abstract

This study aims to explore the efficacy of ChatGPT in enhancing the language-teaching process for adult learners of Spanish as a Second Language (SSLA), bridging the gap in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) methodologies. Recognizing the diverse proficiency levels among undergraduates in elementary and intermediate Spanish courses, the research categorizes participants into two groups. Group A engages in traditional communicative lessons focused on interrogative syntax and subject-verb inversion, facilitated by instructor feedback. In contrast, Group B participates in conversational sessions with ChatGPT, absent of direct instructor intervention. Central to this investigation is a structured survey, administered at both the commencement and conclusion of a 15-week semester, designed to measure linguistic progress. This survey challenges students to construct sentences and questions using a predetermined vocabulary set, thus enabling a comparative analysis of linguistic competencies developed across both instructional approaches. The survey comprises 32 items, organized into eight blocks of sentence and question composition exercises, addressing the critical role of animacy in Spanish syntax through a variety of subject-object configurations. Importantly, this research adopts an exploratory stance, refraining from hypothesizing expected outcomes, thereby allowing for an unbiased evaluation of the data collected. The design meticulously categorizes word sets based on the animacy of subjects and objects, further subdivided into nuanced classifications reflecting combinations of proper and common nouns. This granular approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of how different instructional methodologies impact the acquisition of syntactical structures in SSLA, particularly in relation to animacy considerations pivotal to Spanish grammar. Through this study, I aim to contribute valuable insights into the potential of AI-driven tools in language education, offering implications for future pedagogical strategies in SLA.

The Use of Metaphors in Indonesian Scholars' Talk about Migration and Mobility

Yusup, Heri

Abstract

This study investigates the use of metaphors among Indonesian scholars abroad (in the US, UK, and Australia) and Indonesian returnees when talking about their migration and mobility experiences. By analyzing the Indonesian linguistic expressions and metaphorical patterns used by these scholars, this research attempts to identify the recurring metaphors used to articulate migration and mobility experiences in a particular academic and societal context. Drawing on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics, the study aims to uncover the underlying conceptual mappings that shape the way Indonesian scholars talk about migration and mobility. This study employs a corpus-assisted discourse analysis method to examine a specific corpus from interview transcripts in Indonesian collected from a sample of 30 Indonesian scholars. Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) will be applied to this specific corpus to identify metaphorically used words and collocations by participants. The findings are then compared to the metaphorically used words and collocations found in a general corpus of the Indonesian language (Indonesian Web 2020). The results will enhance our understanding of how Indonesian scholars employ metaphors to describe their migration and mobility experiences and indicate whether the metaphors found in a specific discourse are different from or similar to those found in general discourse. Furthermore, by examining the social, cultural, and cognitive frameworks of these metaphors, the study sheds light on the ways in which language reflects individuals' perceptions and emotions regarding issues associated with migration. This study not only provides insights into the use of metaphors among Indonesians but also offers implications for language teaching, especially the BIPA program (Indonesian for Speakers of Foreign Languages), cross-cultural communication, and the broader discourse on migration and mobility in academic and societal contexts.