Cenoz, Jasone (University of the Basque Country, UPV/EHU)

**Translanguaging and minority languages: A threat or an opportunity?**

Traditionally, schools have maintained languages in the curriculum separate from each other without recognising learners’ resources as emergent multilinguals. This policy is aimed at avoiding cross-linguistic influence and code-switching. The isolation of languages in the curriculum has also been regarded as positive for the survival of minority languages so that they do not get ‘contaminated’ by majority languages. These ideas have been challenged in the last years as the result of many factors. Some of these factors are related to the characteristics of society in the 21st century and include globalisation, digital communication and the spread of English. Within the field of multilingual education, there is a strong trend to replace the idea of isolated linguistic systems by approaches that take multilingual speakers and the way they use their linguistic repertoire as a reference.

This presentation will focus on translanguaging, a concept that was developed in Welsh bilingual schools where English, the majority language, and Welsh, the minority language, are used as languages of instruction. Translanguaging will be analysed from the perspective of the use of minority languages in education. Translanguaging refers both to spontaneous language practices that use linguistic resources from the multilingual speaker’s repertoire and to pedagogically oriented strategies developed to foster multilingual competences. In this presentation, the strengths and weaknesses of spontaneous and pedagogical translanguaging will be analysed as related to the development of minority languages. Examples from Basque multilingual education and other contexts involving minority languages will be shown so as to see how translanguaging can be considered simultaneously as a threat to the survival of minority languages, or as an opportunity for their development. Implications for language teaching will also be discussed.
Hunkin, Galumalemana Alfred

The struggle of pacific languages in Aotearoa New Zealand for a place in the sun

Since Pacific migrants started arriving in New Zealand in the late 1950s and early 1960s, our communities have been concerned with, and have worked hard to find, ways to find a place in the sun for our languages and cultures so they can be maintained and flourish down the generations. We have, however, been significantly discriminated against by the historical monolingual colonial legacy left in our Pacific Island nations by New Zealand, Australia and England. These countries banned our family languages from use in education above Year Four, provided few if any resources and beat our families and communities into a state of hegemony where English came to equal education and education could only be done in English. Consequently many of our own people have historically doubted the ability and usefulness of our first languages outside the home and church.

Our communities have taken the initiative and established immersion- and dual-medium ECE Centres and over 30 unofficial bilingual schooling units in New Zealand primary schools. In spite of our communities’ best efforts to rejuvenate our languages there has been little real support from Māori New Zealanders our direct cousins in ancestry language and culture, neither for that matter from educators, linguists, Human Rights advocates, political parties, or our own original home nations in the Pacific. In these circumstances researchers are only now, it seems, able to contribute to ‘documenting and smoothing the pillow’ of a dying taonga (treasure) and along with it our wish and ability to contribute to a vibrant, multicultural, multilingual New Zealand.
Kubota, Ryuko (University of British Columbia)

Neoliberal ideology of English and language choices in transnational workplaces in Asia

This presentation challenges the neoliberal language ideology related to global English by examining language choices among Japanese transnational workers in Asia. It also addresses contradictions related to the workers’ views, neoliberal language education policies, the multi/plural turn in applied linguistics, and global capitalism.

In many countries, English language teaching is promoted in schools and universities based on two assumptions: English is the most useful international language and English skills bring individual and national economic benefits. Constituting a language ideology, these assumptions drive many governments to implement monoglossic language education policies, such as offering English-medium/only instruction, hiring native speakers of English, and using standardised tests. This ideology is closely linked to a neoliberal promotion of human capital. In Japan, the business sector has indeed lobbied for enhancing English language teaching. This neoliberal language ideology can be scrutinised by investigating business communication in non-English-dominant countries.

Through qualitative interviews with Japanese company employees who have worked in China, Korea, and Thailand, this exploratory study investigated what languages they used in workplaces and what factors they regarded as important in transnational communication. As this presentation will show, the language choices and entrepreneurial dispositions counter the ideology of English as a universal language. Yet, the differences in the three countries indicate that colonial relations of power need to be taken into account in understanding language choices. The results also contradict neoliberal English language education policies lobbied by the corporate sector. Although the interviewees’ accounts seem to correspond to the current scholarly emphasis on multiple, hybrid, and translingual practices, they also raise questions about whether the multi/plural turn in applied linguistics might actually resonate with neoliberalism. Although the interviewees’ accounts challenge the language ideology, their affiliation is firmly embedded in capitalism. Ultimately, both workers’ entrepreneurial dispositions and monoglossic language education policies are entangled in capitalist interests.
Pennycook, Alastair (University of Technology Sydney)

Rhubarb, rhubarb, rhubarb: Language, education and misunderstanding

Much of linguistic thought has been premised on a model of mutual understanding, of passing encoded messages back and forth from one head to another, and doing so within a speech community with agreed norms for language use and comprehension. There are good grounds, however, to question this utopian model of language and communication, not only because of increased diversity in many contemporary contexts of interaction, but also because of the need to rethink what is at stake in acts of communication. Rather than assuming that we understand each other, we need to explore the commonality of mutual misunderstanding. Drawing on various metrolinguistic data, this paper questions common assumptions about language and understanding, particularly the view that a principal function of language is communication. The new sociolinguistics, with its focus on repertoires, resources and mobilities, in combination with ideas from non-representational theory and posthumanist performativity, brings other considerations to the table, questioning the divide between people and place, language and society, structure and agency, things and non-things, and opening up alternate ways of thinking about language, people, meaning and place. This has major implications for language education, where it has often been assumed that communication is both a means and a goal for language learning. Using examples of metrolinguistic practices, this paper will explore an alternative vision for language and education.
Shohamy, Elana (Tel Aviv University, Israel)

Linguistic landscape: Interpreting and critiquing societies and transforming language learning

Linguistic Landscape (LL) refers to languages displayed in public spaces on signs, advertisements, instructions, buildings, streets and billboards. ‘Language’ within LL is broadly defined, beyond ‘written words’, to include multiple semiotic sources such as images, graffiti, movements, sounds (‘sound-scapes’), smells and even people. ‘Landscapes’ refer to territories – virtual and/or real – as cities, neighbourhoods, streets, markets, work places, schools, war zones, and even bodies. While LL has been mostly overlooked in Applied and Social Linguistics, the past decade has witnessed a dynamic emergence of LL in theory, research and practices, anchored in a number of disciplines such as politics, geography, education, language learning. ‘Who owns the public space?’ and ‘Who has the right to write in public spaces?’, reflect some of the battles that take place in public spaces and are manifested through LL involving stakeholders, policy makers, entrepreneurs and walkers who use LL to promote ideologies, increase marketing scope, and demand participation and equality.

Some refer to LL as a textbook (Ben Rafael, 2006) where one can read inter-relationships among groups, status, power, domination, marginalisation as well as demand for equality participation and rights. It is in this context that LL serves as an instrumental and effective set of tools through which various societal issues can be observed, documented and interpreted. After a short survey of the emergence of the field of LL and its main findings mostly in its educational goal, the paper will address various ways for using LL as an educational tool: from the use of LL to develop awareness, critical views and development of multilingual awareness and actual language learning outcomes. These will be associated with a list of principles and models for school LLO engagements such as the connections between local societies LL and the schools so that the disconnect can be bridged.
Thorne, Steven L. (Portland State University and University of Groningen, The Netherlands)

Rewilding language education and catalysing futurisms

We live in a complex and changing world in which academic, professional, and everyday life activities increasingly illustrate the need for sophisticated communicative and analytic abilities in intercultural and plurilingual contexts. These late modern ‘superdiverse’ conditions (Blommaert, 2015) articulate closely with what I see as a primary goal of world languages education – to gain the capacity to contribute to dynamic processes of meaning making with attunement to divergent cultural practices, values, and ideologies as they emerge. Applying principles expressed in cultural–historical and ecological approaches to development (Bateson, 1972; Engeström & Sannino, 2010; Kramsch, 2006; van Lier, 2004), extended and embodied cognition (Atkinson, 2010; Clark, 2008), and usage-based linguistics (Tomasello, 2003; Yuldashev, Fernandez, & Thorne, 2013), this talk presents a design approach to creating environments for language learning. Following a discussion of recent research describing plurilingual communication in the digital wilds of virtual linguistic landscapes (Thorne & Ivković, 2015), a number of ‘rewilding’-inspired formative interventions are described. The first involves a corpus-informed, usage-based approach to tracking the development of multi-word expressions among learners of Spanish in largely outside-of-class digital engagements. A second suite of projects includes plurilingual augmented reality mobile games, the primary objective of which is to semiotically remediate (e.g., Prior, 2010) local places and to embed language usage events and resources in phenomenologically rich and embodied experience in the world (Thorne, 2013; Thorne, Hellermann, & Jones, forthcoming). Together, these projects address foreign, second, and indigenous language contexts. In conclusion, I suggest that language development is usefully understood as adaptive semiotic bricolage motivated by social relationships of consequence, with the extension that educational processes and contexts should be designed accordingly.