



e-Expert Seminar Series!

Diversifying Modern Foreign Language and Translation Education

Translation and Language Teaching



DIVERSIFYING MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION

Edited by

Marga Navarrete

(University College London, UK)

Soledad Díaz Alarcón

(University of Córdoba, Spain)

e-Expert Seminar Series: Translation and Language Teaching

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Between Words and Worlds: Language, Race and Silence

Marga Navarrete

(University College London, UK)

BIODATA

Marga Navarrete is an Associate Professor (Teaching) of Translation Studies and a Language Coordinator at University College London. She teaches language and translation at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Her publications focus on two main areas (1) the impact of audiovisual translation (AVT) and accessibility practice on language learners' competence; and (2) teacher training, focusing on the integration of equality, diversity and inclusion in the language curriculum whilst fostering students' wellbeing. She works on editorial boards for *Hikma* and *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E. journals*. She has taken part in many AVT research studies on language learning, where she has designed AVT resources and disseminated lessons learnt.

ABSTRACT

In today's evolving academic landscape —where cultural and linguistic boundaries increasingly converge and new pedagogical models continue to take shape— these seminars reconsider the place of translation and language education in enriching and diversifying higher education. Bringing together experienced scholars and professional translators, they examine emerging approaches, introduce new perspectives, and encourage critical dialogue on how best to prepare future specialists in Modern Foreign Languages and Translation Studies for the demands of a globalised world. This edited Video Book presents a broad range of voices reflecting on the interplay between language, culture, and pedagogy in contemporary higher education.



Overcoming Cultural Clashes through an Intersectional Lens

Victoria Showunmi
(University College London, UK)

BIODATA

Victoria Showunmi is a Professor at the Institute of Education (IoE), UCL's Faculty of Education and Society. Her interests are gender, identity, and race through the lens of intersectionality, focusing on leadership and the lived experience of Black women and girls. She develops fresh conceptual frameworks focusing on equity and social justice, especially the interplay between people and the sophistication of behaviours which lead to disengagement with the promotion of equality. Her work shows how culture and cultural background have the potential to disrupt power structures and lead to transformational change. She has an international profile based on the dissemination of her research through publication and teaching and was the recipient of BERA's inaugural Academic Citizen of the Year award in 2023. She is a member of the Gender and Education Executive, Past Chair of the British Educational Leadership Management and Administration Society, Chair of the International Studies Special Interest Group (SIG) of the American Educational Research Association and co-convenor of the Gender Network of the European Educational Research Association.

ABSTRACT

Culture clashes often arise from differences in language and communication styles. While a shared language can facilitate understanding and interaction, language barriers can lead to misunderstandings, miscommunication, and conflict. Language is a significant factor in defining and understanding cultural norms and values. Unspoken cultural norms can create the sense that colleagues come from a different planet. The hypervisibility that comes with being "the only one" can lead to White employees constantly interrogating the instincts and motivations of Black people, especially Black women. This questioning attitude can lead to Black communities suffering in silence and can exert a negative impact on their well-being (Showunmi, 2013). The communication style of Black communities is often stereotyped as blunt, which is consistent with a Eurocentric view of masculine communication as direct and controlling (Olasunkanmi-Alimi et al., 2022).



Heritage Languages in London Secondary Schools: Two Outreach Projects that Raise Awareness of Five Languages

Ramona Gonczol
(University College London, UK)

BIODATA

Ramona Gonczol is Associate Professor in Romanian language studies at SSEES, University College London. She convenes the PROLang group and is an academic coordinator for the Language Short Courses programme at SSEES. She is the (co)author of *Romanian and Essential Grammar* (2nd edition, 2020) and *Colloquial Romanian* (4th edition, 2014). Her research interests lie in the area of language acquisition, heritage speakers, cultural identities, language policy, multilingualism and ethnographic pedagogy. Ramona is a fellow of the Higher Education Academy and the recipient of the Order for Cultural Merits in Promoting Romanian Culture and Language Abroad (2018).

ABSTRACT

The presentation will describe two grass-root outreach projects, run by UCL and a few secondary schools. It will address questions on multilingualism, heritage and community languages, linguistics citizenship and new immigrant communities and access to university. PEEL (Proficiency in Eastern European Languages) was an outreach project that ran for three years, covering Romanian, Bulgarian and Ukrainian. It involved over 100 heritage speaker secondary school students and offered plug-the-gap sessions and tests comparable to GCSE exams. RAP (Raising Awareness in Heritage Speakers) is an ongoing outreach project covering Romanian, Bulgarian, Albanian heritage speakers together with two more guest languages, Spanish and Portuguese. It collaborates with a secondary school in London, offering three triple sessions at UCL and a symposium, raising awareness of heritage languages and their importance in the UK, involving over 50 students.



Languages of Race across Europe

Hélène Neveu-Kringelbach, Jeff Bowersox
(University College London, UK)

BIODATA

Hélène Neveu-Kringelbach is an Associate Professor in African Anthropology at University College London. She teaches in both SELCS and the Anthropology department. In 2019-22, she served as Vice-Dean EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) for the Arts & Humanities Faculty. She has previously done research on dance, social mobility, gender and notions of self in Dakar, Senegal. The monograph coming out of this research, *Dance Circles: Movement, Morality and Self-Fashioning in Urban Senegal* (Berghahn Books, 2013) was awarded the 2013 Amaury Talbot Prize in African Anthropology by the Royal Anthropological Institute. She is currently working on a book project on binational marriage and transnational family relationships between Senegal and France. The book looks at how interracial, multicultural relationships continue to be shaped by colonial histories as well as racialised immigration and citizenship policies in contemporary Europe. She is one of the academic leads of the [Black Europe] workstream at UCL's European Institute.

Jeff Bowersox is a German historian at University College London, where he researches the historical presence and experiences of Black people across Europe, how the toy industry deals with diversity, and European colonial culture. He has numerous academic publications, most notably *Raising Germans in the Age of Empire*, but he also aims to introduce a broader public to new directions in historical research, especially on people who have been marginalised in European history. The best examples of this are his work as the managing editor of blackcentraleurope.com, the YouTube series *Glimpses of German History*, and various performance projects.

ABSTRACT

It has become a cliché to say that race is a social construct, but we spend less time thinking about race as a linguistic construct. Words we associate with race have different meanings in different languages, and these meanings are drawn from different histories, contexts, and uses. Concepts do not always translate easily, and some things are just harder to talk about in one or another language. The implications of this fact for education and research, not to mention for political discourse and action, are profound and not easily seen from within a single linguistic or political context.

Hélène Neveu-Kringelbach and Jeff Bowersox will tease out some of these implications as they discuss the variable meanings and experiences of race and racialised concepts across Europe. They will draw on their respective research programmes as well as on their experiences organising events through the [Black Europe] project sponsored by UCL's European Institute. The present moment is one of considerable ferment and presents us with a unique and urgent opportunity to explore the meanings and uses of race across political, linguistic, conceptual, and temporal boundaries.



Empowering students: Addressing the Ethnic Minority Awarding Gap through Reverse Mentoring

Mazal Oaknín, Marga Navarrete, Alejandro Bolaños
(University College London, UK)

BIODATA

Mazal Oaknín is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She teaches Spanish language and literature at University College London, where she is also a Language Coordinator. She has also taught Spanish in Malaga, New York, Paris and Birmingham. She is the co-editor of *Literatura política y política literaria en España: Del Desastre del 98 a Felipe VI* (Peter Lang, 2015) and her work has appeared in journals such as *Espéculo*, *Fahrenheit 452*, *Alba Magazine*, *Transletters* and *Argus*. Her research focuses on four main areas: contemporary Spanish literature, gender and identity, teaching Spanish as a foreign language, and representations of minorities. Her book *Writing, Feminism and the Media in Spain* appeared in 2019 (Peter Lang).

Alejandro Bolaños is Associate Professor in Audiovisual Translation and Programme Director at University College London, UK, where he teaches (audiovisual) translation and Spanish language and culture at the School of European Languages, Culture and Society (SELCS-CMII). He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA) as well as a Member (MCIL) and Chartered Linguist (CL) of the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CioL). He is currently Editor-in-Chief of *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* (Taylor & Francis).

ABSTRACT

In this contribution, we will discuss a three-year project led by (SELCS/CMII) educators on the BAME-BIPOC Awarding Gap (2022–2025), with special emphasis on the second-year phase of the project that focused on reverse mentoring. Our project aims to foster equality, diversity and inclusion values in Higher Education practices with a particular focus on teacher training. Advance HE has previously warned UK universities about the awarding gap experienced by ethnic minority students. Scholars like Tate and Page (2018) claim that teachers ought to acknowledge and tackle white supremacy in the university. Against this backdrop, our studies set out to dispel racist myths and raise awareness of the BIPOC awarding gap that affects our students.

We will present how both our collaborative projects are contending such awarding gap from four main angles: 1) student-teacher collaboration based on a reverse mentoring programme; 2) teacher training; 3) redevelopment and decolonisation of practical translation syllabi; and 4) the establishment of a support network aimed at sharing challenges, lessons learnt and examples of best practices. We will focus on the methodological framework of our reverse mentoring study, discussing stages, data collection tools, selection of participants and the main findings we obtained.



Roundtable on Reverse Mentoring

Mazal Oaknín, Marga Navarrete, Alejandro Bolaños, Isabel Pérez Lamigueiro,
Victoria Solomonidis-Hunter, Aryan Kushwaha
(University College London, UK)

BIODATA

Isabel Pérez Lamigueiro (PhD), currently an Honorary Lecturer at University College London, has worked in the field of teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language since the late 1980s. She has been a member of the teaching staff at various centres of the Instituto Cervantes, as well as at different universities in Spain, Germany, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. Throughout her professional career, as a teacher trainer and as a teacher, she became interested in cognitive processes of language acquisition, language as a vehicle of culture, sociopragmatics, and interculturality—the research areas of her doctoral thesis. This research fostered a deep interest in the human development processes of all stakeholders, their understanding and awareness of their identity, and the adaptability required in a multicultural world.

Victoria Solomonidis-Hunter is a Lecturer (Teaching) at the Centre of Translation Studies, University College London (UCL), with a thirty-five-year career in international cultural relations. Active in the field of translation studies since 2008, she first taught at Imperial College, moving to UCL in 2013 where her work addresses the history of translation and the role of translation in shaping cultural and intellectual exchange, with a particular focus on the cultural heritage sector. She combines teaching and research with wider engagement in initiatives that explore connections between translation, culture, and historical context. Victoria is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and King's College (London), a member of the Institute of Classical Studies Advisory Board, and an Associate Fellow of the Institute of Historical Research.

Aryan Kushwaha studied European Languages at UCL's School of European Languages, Culture and Society (SELCS), where he acted as a Student Rep for the "Tackling the BAME-BIPOC Awarding Gap" project. Aryan was also a Lead Mentor for the Reverse Mentoring SELCS project and a Co-producer for the "Mi Salud Mental" project.

ABSTRACT

In the roundtable, participants will discuss their own experiences (either as mentors or mentees) in the reverse mentoring project. This is a student-teacher collaboration based on a reverse mentoring programme, which aims to foster equality, diversity and inclusion values in Higher Education practices with a particular focus on teacher training.



Higher Education, Student Engagement & BAME Graduate outcomes: Two-way Impact of Intersectionalities in the University Environment

Madeline Young-Touré
(University of Exeter, UK)

BIODATA

Madeline R. Young-Touré is visiting Senior Lecturer at UCL and PhD candidate and lecturer at the University of Exeter. Her expertise is in social impact research on ethnicity, inequalities, decolonising interdisciplinary Humanities, and natural resources governance. With a strong academic and professional background, she contributes to advancing equitable, culturally responsive teaching, research practices, and curriculum development in higher education, influencing diversity and inclusion frameworks in UK and global institutions. She sits on the board of the EU High Level Group for African Development, UK Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) Multi-stakeholder Group, and Women in Mining (WiM) Africa.

ABSTRACT

The lecture “Decolonising higher education: intersectional, inclusive, and positionality-informed approaches in Modern Foreign Language” explores the urgent need to decolonise higher education through intersectional, inclusive methodologies, particularly within Modern Foreign Language curricula. It addresses systemic inequalities such as racism, Eurocentrism, and White supremacy unconsciously embedded in the Humanities, which affect student attainment, especially among ethnic minorities. The entrenched social construction of race and ethnicity in Eurocentric university environments necessitates advocacy for culturally safe and reflective pedagogy grounded in intersectionality. This lecture presents practical strategies for developing inclusive curricula that enhance student engagement, equity, and employability across UK universities and beyond.



Black Feminist Theory and Practice in the Translation Classroom

Corine Tachtiris

(University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA)

BIODATA

Corine Tachtiris is Assistant Professor of Translation Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her primary research is situated at the intersection of translation studies and critical race studies, and her monograph *Translation and Race* was published by Routledge in 2024. She is also a literary translator from French and Czech, primarily of contemporary women writers from Francophone Africa, Canada, and the Caribbean, as well as from the Czech Republic. Her translation of Frieda Ekotto's *Don't Whisper Too Much* and *Portrait of a Young Artiste* from Bona Mbella was published by Bucknell University Press in 2019. Tachtiris is Vice President of the American Literary Translators Association and Prose Translation Editor at *The Massachusetts Review*.

ABSTRACT

The problem of racial inequities in translation education is often addressed through the framework of diversity and inclusion, which calls for greater access to higher education institutions for people of color. Such a framework, however, largely leaves in place the racist structures and practices at the heart of institutions themselves. This talk will explore how the work of Black feminist intellectuals and activists can be leveraged instead for a more transformational approach to translation education. In particular, the talk returns to the Combahee River Collective's articulation in the 1970s of the concept of "identity politics," which has since undergone a series of distortions that have placed emphasis on identity over politics. Revisiting identity politics in its early sense in regard to translation theory and practice allows for a situated politics that reconsiders not only who translates but also what, why, how, and for whom. This talk will explore how these reconsiderations can be incorporated into translation pedagogy.



Don't Sleep: The Facade of Language for Language's Sake

Tasha Austin
(University of Buffalo, USA)

BIODATA

Tasha Austin, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Teacher Education, Language Education, and Multilingualism at SUNY Buffalo, Graduate School of Education. As a critical theorist, she engages Black feminist epistemologies to qualitatively examine language, identity and power through a raciolinguistic perspective, investigating the manifestations of antiBlackness in language education. Her dissertation and scholarly publications have been awarded by the American Educational Research Association, New York State Foreign Language Teachers, and Northeast Conference on Teaching Foreign Languages. As a double Spencer awardee, she leads two research teams investigating both the oral histories of Black world language teachers and manifestations of culturelessness in novice language teacher pedagogies. Her research can be found in the Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, Foreign Language Annals, and Applied Linguistics.

ABSTRACT

The study of language within a U.S. context has long been understood as a marker of privilege. Western European education models which came to be understood as the New England approach in the U.S. colonial era were characteristically focused on the liberal arts. As the study of the classics (Greek and Latin) anchored this approach, a key determinant in the funding and national support of formal education for the Africans who would begin a journey towards American citizenship after the Civil War, was whether their schools would offer access to the study of languages. It is from this context that present-day questions about Black participation in language study, inclusive of modern languages, is best understood. This talk will center on an overview of the evolution that naturalized the present narrative of Black absence in language study. While the beauty and artistry of Black languaging is undeniable, it is what language study has historically afforded to Black and minoritized groups that determined its being barred from white institutional support in U.S. formal schooling. Considerations for reframing the narrative on waning interest, a professional shortage and the economic impracticality of advanced language study will be discussed.



Causing a SPLAS: Why I'm Still Talking to White People about Race

Haydn Kirnon

(University College London, UK)

BIODATA

Haydn Kirnon is Lecturer (Teaching) in Spanish into English translation at University College London, UK, where he teaches in the Department of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies (SPLAS). He has been a professional translator and subtitler for over 30 years and also worked as a lexicographer on several dictionaries at Oxford University Press, including the Oxford Beginner's Spanish Dictionary, thereby developing a strong liking for the teaching of translation to linguists in training.

ABSTRACT

Following on from his involvement in the 'Tackling the BAME/BIPOC Awarding Gap' project conducted within the Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies programme at University College London, between 2023 and 2025, Haydn Kirnon offers reflections on his experience as a translator, lexicographer, and subtitler, through the lens of his identity as a cisgender man of African-Caribbean descent, in a career spanning three decades. Kirnon addresses questions of diversity and inclusivity in the translation classroom, how both trainers and trainees might be allies, and how he, in turn, seeks to integrate his own cultural and ethnic identity into his practice in an organic way.



Hacia una pedagogía crítica y pluriversal: lenguas, raza, identidad y justicia social en el aula contemporánea

Soledad Díaz Alarcón
(University of Córdoba, Spain)

BIODATA

Soledad Díaz-Alarcón is Associate Professor in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Córdoba (Spain). Her research focuses on literary translation (French–Spanish), particularly postcolonial Franco-Maghrebi literature, children’s and young adult literature, and French detective fiction. She is Co-Editor-in-Chief of *Hikma: Journal of Translation* and Co-Director of the series *Nuevos Horizontes Electrónicos*, both published by the University of Córdoba Press. She is a member of the research groups HUM-1145 COMMINT – Translation and Interpreting, Foreign Languages and Communication; TRADIT – Didactic Audiovisual Translation; and MIGRANTRAD – Translation of Migrant and Post-Migrant European Literature, based at the University of Alicante.

RESUMEN

El e-Expert Seminar Series (8ª edición) se erigió como un territorio de pensamiento vivo donde convergieron voces que interrogan los desafíos contemporáneos de la enseñanza de lenguas y la formación en traducción. Las intervenciones insistieron en reconfigurar los marcos pedagógicos para acoger las intersecciones entre lengua, raza, identidad y desigualdad estructural. Lejos de la imagen de un aula homogénea, se reconoció la pluralidad cultural y lingüística que define los espacios educativos y el modo en que las lenguas articulan la pertenencia, la exclusión y la participación del estudiantado.

Los choques culturales, la hipervisibilidad de las minorías racializadas y las brechas de rendimiento se revelaron como manifestaciones de estructuras institucionales sostenidas por epistemologías eurocéntricas y normatividades lingüísticas. Frente a ello, los proyectos presentados y las experiencias de mentoría inversa apostaron por reconocer las lenguas de herencia, redistribuir el poder pedagógico y crear espacios de escucha donde las voces BAME/BIPOC y las identidades híbridas sean constitutivas del currículo.

El seminario subrayó asimismo el potencial transgresor de la traducción literaria. Traducir es elegir una posición, decidir desde dónde se habla y para quién; cada elección puede perpetuar o subvertir la desigualdad, convirtiendo la traducción en una pedagogía emancipadora.

El 8º e-Expert Seminar Series nos dejó la convicción de que diversificar la enseñanza y repensar la educación traductológica implica transformar los cimientos epistemológicos, institucionales y ético-pedagógicos de nuestras disciplinas.

