

2016

"There's too much to explain": On being a bilingual pre-service teacher in a monolingual teacher education institution.

Jackie Coleman

Australian Catholic University, jacqueline.coleman@acu.edu.au

Recommended Citation

Coleman, J. (2016). "There's too much to explain": On being a bilingual pre-service teacher in a monolingual teacher education institution.. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(7).
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2016v41n7.8>

This Journal Article is posted at Research Online.
<http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol41/iss7/8>

“There’s Too Much to Explain”: On Being A Bilingual Pre-Service Teacher In A Monolingual Teacher Education Institution.

Jackie Coleman
Australian Catholic University

Abstract: This article is derived from a study which followed a group of bilingual and multilingual pre-service mainstream primary teachers over three years of their enrolment at an Australian university to investigate their perspectives and experiences related to their linguistic skills and the relationship of these to their English-medium course. By providing a platform for the voice of one study participant, Seo-yun (pseudonym), a bilingual Korean-Australian, to be heard in depth as her ‘story’ develops over three years, this article adds to the ‘stories’ of other linguistically diverse students in monolingual higher education contexts found elsewhere in the literature (For example, Martin, 2009; Safford & Kelly, 2010). Seo-yun’s experiences exemplify the alignment between wider ideological spaces and university implementational spaces (Hornberger, 2002) as to what count as valuable linguistic resources in monolingual public domains, such as higher education, and the multiple costs of marginalisation and exclusion of some students’ linguistic resources.

Introduction

According to prominent Australian language scholar, Joseph Lo Bianco (2013), due to its history of immigration, Australia has a “forbiddingly diverse communication ecology” constituting a “backstory like no other” (p. 6). Currently 19 % of Australia’s population are regular speakers of a language other than English in their homes (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Nonetheless, Marriott (2013) claims that despite its growing multilingual demography, “for numerous reasons—largely of a political and economic nature—language planning and policy have not progressed well in Australia in recent times” (p. 455). As a result, this quotidian multilingualism has not resulted in the opening up of ideological spaces (Hornberger, 2002) in Australia which support the meaningful use of any language other than English in public domains and public institutions (Rubino, 2010). At the same time, the common, yet not unproblematic liberal ‘resource’ orientation (Van der Walt, 2013) to diverse linguistic skills is found in a number of Australian school curriculum documents (See, for example, *EAL/D Overview and Advice*, Australian Curriculum and Research Authority, 2014). This resource orientation reflects some recognition of the research base indicating that pedagogies which consciously build upon diverse students’ existing knowledge and skills, including their linguistic skills, are fundamental to their academic success (Lingard, et al., 2001).

Planned pedagogical use of these skills and knowledge in the implementational spaces (Hornberger, 2002) of Australian educational institutions, however, is currently not the norm (Coleman, 2012; Adoniou, 2015), and similarly to other comparable English-speaking countries, the vast majority of teachers at all levels in Australia are of English-speaking

background. For example, in Australian primary schools in 2007, 86% of the teaching staff was born in Australia, and of those not born in Australia, the largest group was born in England (Australian Government. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2008). In contrast, student cohorts, including in universities, increasingly reflect the ethnic and linguistic diversity of Australia's population. Some 15% of all domestic students in Australian universities regularly speak a non-English language at home (Australian Government. Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, 2013). Consequently, Van der Walt's (2013) contention of the African context that all higher education is inherently multilingual, could also be applied to Australian higher education.

This article is founded in a study which grew out of concern for the perceived impact on bilingual and multilingual students of the apparent disjunction between Australia's diverse communication ecology and its prevailing aggressive[ly] monolingual (Clyne, 2005) educational practices, particularly with regard to the preparation of mainstream pre-service primary teachers. The study sought specifically to discover and probe the perspectives and experiences of bilingual and multilingual pre-service primary teachers in one Australian university in regard to their linguistic ability and their studies occurring within an increasingly prevalent 'cosmopolitan' (May, 2014) orientation to languages worldwide. Cosmopolitanism advocates "languages of wider communication, and particularly English as the current world language, as the means of global interchange and the basis of social mobility" (May, 2014, p. 216). That study is drawn from in this article in order to add to the bank of 'stories' of diverse higher education students in English-medium instructional contexts which are found in the literature (For example, Martin, 2009, Marshall, 2009, Preece, 2009; Rodriguez & Hye-Sun, 2011; Safford & Kelly, 2010). Those students' stories have shown convincingly how their linguistic diversity has contributed to "their exclusion and marginalisation in English-medium institutions" (Preece, 2009, p. 3).

The immense personal cost of this exclusion and marginalisation to these students themselves, and also, significantly, because the study participants were pre-service mainstream primary teachers, the cost to their monolingual pre-service teacher peers, and ultimately to their future students in multilingual Australian primary schools, are also considered in this article. To explicate and humanise these multiple costs, the story of one student, Seo-yun, and her struggles to find a way to engage within a monolingual English-medium university, and to build her individual, group and institutional identity (Marshall, 2009) as a pre-service mainstream primary teacher for English-medium schools, is presented. Beginning with a brief overview of the cognitive advantages of bilingualism and the nature of translanguaging (Creese & Blackledge, 2010) in educational institutions, the positioning of multilingual students within these institutions worldwide is considered before Seo-yun is introduced.

Advantages of Bilingualism and Translanguaging in Education

The cognitive advantages of bilingualism and multilingualism, such as problem solving ability, lexical retrieval speed, abstract thinking and cognitive flexibility are well established in the literature (Adesope, et al., 2010; Higby, Junga, & Obler et al., 2013). The process through which bilingual and multilingual students can draw on these advantages to maximise their learning while in monolingual educational spaces has increasingly been described as 'translanguaging' (Creese & Blackledge, 2010) or the process of "thinking through language" in which "learners bring all their languages, all their semiotic resources, to

the task of learning” (Lo Bianco, 2013, p. 3). Lo Bianco (2013) describes the process of translanguaging as follows:

As they [bilingual and multilingual students] accept the new norms [of dominant language monolingual instruction] and adapt to them they continue to mentally process information using both their original language and all its ‘ecology’ and their new language. So even when they might appear to be functioning solely in English, it is likely that many will be thinking through more than just English, deploying all their communication resources to make sense and meaning of education (p. 2).

Translanguaging contains the potential for students to achieve heightened comprehension of complex texts in the language of instruction (Flores & Schissel, 2014), and consequently to increase their academic outcomes.

Teacher education scholars (Cummins & Early, 2011; Lucas & Villegas, 2013) note that if school teachers are to harness their students’ translanguaging capacities so as to facilitate content learning and academic English development, their pre-service teacher education courses must equip them with deep knowledge of language and of pedagogical techniques to teach language through content-based instruction. Cummins and Early (2011) cite outstanding examples of the successful harnessing of translanguaging in Canadian schools resulting in the production and performance of bilingual texts of all types, and of subsequent improvement in diverse students’ academic English proficiency. The promotion of translanguaging in schools at the policy or ideological level, university preparation of teachers, and students’ willingness and ability to deploy this skill, are inextricably linked with prevailing language ideologies and power relationships in any site (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004), as is the positioning of multilingual students in pre-service teacher education. This issue is considered next.

Positioning of Multilingual Students in Teacher Education

In higher education in English-speaking countries multilingual students are forced toward compliance with an idealised monolingual norm due to the “linguistically narrow interests of monolingual, monocultural institutions and academics” (Phillipson, 2009, p. 75). Accordingly, in the United Kingdom (UK) Martin (2009) contends that “multilingual resources are given scant recognition in UK universities” and in South Africa, Van der Walt (2013) claims that “Societal or individual multilingualism is ignored officially in the majority of HEIs [Higher Education Institutions]” (p. 17). Hence, societal, or ideological, stances toward the national language, in the absence of university language and literacy policies aimed at catering for the needs of a diversity of students (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997) come to be reproduced in university classroom implementational spaces more through unconsciously exclusionary practices than conscious policy.

Some researchers (Nieto, 2000; Rodriguez & Hye-Sun, 2011) argue that deficit orientations toward multilingual higher education students themselves are particularly characteristic of initial teacher education programmes in English-speaking countries. In Australia a deficit orientation is arguably reflected in the National Program Standards for Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs (Education Services Australia, 2011). While these standards state that programs “take account of: contemporary school and system needs, current professional expert knowledge, authoritative educational research findings, and, community expectations” (p. 12), no reference is made to taking account of the linguistic skills of the diverse student cohort in pre-service teacher courses in Australian universities.

This is perhaps not surprising given that while Australian universities generally collect data about student self-identified linguistic diversity, this data is not readily available to teaching staff. Consequently, staff are often unaware of the degree and character of the language skills of their students, and also of how to promote their academic achievement by accessing their conceptual knowledge through translanguaging.

In a study of diverse students in pre-service teacher education programmes the UK, Safford and Kelly (2010) concluded that institutional practices in universities “position linguistic and minority ethnic student-trainees in ways which present particular barriers to their professional development and limit their opportunities to call upon” (p. 402) all their knowledge and skills. Given that their capacity to translanguage is a valuable constituent of multilingual students’ skills, current practice means that valuable ‘pedagogical potential’ (Wallace, 2005) existing within the pre-service teacher student body may not be engaged with by academics. In higher education, translanguaging processes may include the deployment of one’s own, and the exploitation of student peers’ communicative resources, in order, for example, to interpret the content of lectures, class exercises and assessment tasks (Van der Walt & Dornbrack, 2011). Importantly, in pre-service teacher programmes the visible use and showcasing of translanguaging processes can also increase the language awareness and language related pedagogical knowledge of monolingual pre-service teachers in university classrooms where it is practised (Hornberger, 2002). Following is a brief overview of the study on which this paper draws.

The Study

During enrolment in first year at the university where the wider study took place students may self-identify as bilingual or multilingual, where this is understood as use of two or more languages on a regular basis (Cenoz, 2013). Pre-service mainstream primary teachers who did so were invited by email to participate in a qualitative study employing a brief survey and semi-structured interviews over three years. The survey sought to identify demographic information such as languages spoken, domains of usage and self-assessment of proficiency. Survey respondents were invited to participate in initial interviews which probed their survey responses. They were then invited to continue in the study by participating in further interviews in the following two years. In these subsequent interviews, students’ narratives about their university experiences were elicited and this data was subsequently analysed using aspects of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995) and Narrative Analysis (Reissman, 2005). This hybrid methodology was employed because it allowed for the analysis and synthesis of both the narrative and non-narrative units which existed within the students’ telling of their stories.

During the three years of interviews and analysis, the developing stories of individual students and their struggles to exercise agency and engage within their university learning environment emerged. The most compelling, and perhaps instructive of these, was that of Seo-yun (pseudonym). In the next part of the article, after a brief introduction, Seo-yun tells her story as it unfolded over three years, in her own words with minimal author intrusion. It must be emphasised here that due to the nature of the study’s design, events in her self-reported story are unverified through observation. (However, many students in the wider study reported similar events, see Coleman, 2014, 2015). Brutus, Aguinis and Wassmer (2013, in Brisk, Homza & Smith, 2014) identify several possible aspects of bias in self-reported data including “incomplete or selective memory; inaccuracy in recalling time and order of events; inaccuracy in attributing positive and negative events to oneself and others; and exaggeration” (p. 187). These must be taken into account by the reader engaging with

Seo-yun's story. After Seo-yun's telling of her own story, in the Discussion some observations are made as to the implications and multiple costs of her story, and as to some measures that may be taken to improve the experiences and outcomes of multilingual students in monolingual pre-service teacher education courses.

Introducing Seo-yun

Seo-yun is a very bright, reflective young woman, literate in English and Korean, who had part of her school education in Korea and part in Australia and New Zealand. She considers her Korean vocabulary and speaking as stronger than her English vocabulary, but her English academic writing as stronger than her Korean. To support herself during her university studies she works as a teacher's aide at a bilingual after-school care centre for Korean-Australian children. Seo-yun responded immediately to the generic email sent to all first year education students who had self-identified as multilingual during enrolment, writing, "*I will happily participate in your study.*" During three interviews and a number of email exchanges over the course of the three year study, with increasing candour and confidence, she told her story of experiences with the pedagogical and institutional practices of the university. The developing story grew to be emblematic of the alignment of the implementational spaces of pre-service teacher education at this university, and potentially others, with wider societal ideological spaces in regard to what comprises valuable skills and knowledge for higher education. In allowing Seo-yun to tell her unfolding story, the aim is to humanise and personalise the multiple impacts of marginalising diverse students' languages and cultures in pre-service teacher education.

Seo-yun: On Being a Korean-Australian Pre-service Teacher

Explaining how she perceived that her bilingualism related to her studies, in first year Seo-yun said, "*I don't think there's any intellectual differences*" between multilingual and monolingual people. She appeared to play down her linguistic skills when she described being bilingual as, "*just a different way of being, but it doesn't mean you're more intelligent or you can do things much better.*" Nonetheless, she recognised that bilingualism was "*another tool you have, another window you have, or another pair of glasses that you have and you can see other things.*" While she believed that "*language and culture I think it's, you know, culture is embedded in the language*", any academic bonuses from her Korean-Australian identity, for Seo-yun, came more from deploying the biculturality embedded in her bilingualism, rather than through translanguaging in her classes. She explained:

I think it's [being bilingual] useful because, um, it's useful for a number of... like, there's so many reasons, but I guess the main one would be that, for example, if a textbook is written from the Western perspective, sometimes it doesn't really explain what it means. Sometimes it only explains the Western perspective and when it talks about, you know, "In Eastern cultures", or "In Asian cultures they do this", and it's like just one line and they don't really go into any more detail than that, and ... Whereas people who only know about the Western culture, they would, that's all the information they would receive, whereas I would be able look at that and think ... I can imagine how, I can imagine where they might be coming from

because I know that the two languages, the two ways of thinking, are so different, and not one's better than the others. It's just a different way of thinking.

Overall, Seo-yun appeared to place more value on her biculturality and the access it afforded to multiple perspectives perhaps not as readily accessible to a monolingual, monocultural person, than she did her oracy and literacy in two languages. She described without any censure a lack of visibility of her linguistic skills in her university classes, explaining that she had never consciously used her Korean language skills in any way in class, despite having identified her Korean vocabulary as stronger than her English. However, her comments during interviews indicated (without using the term) that she was aware of her capacity to translanguage in her everyday life. For example, she spoke about having used her knowledge of English grammar as a tool in learning Chinese at school in New Zealand:

The grammatical structure [of Chinese] I think sometimes it's quite similar to English, more so than Korean. ... but when I'm working on, you know, Chinese, and I'm trying to structure the sentence, it's easier to think of it in terms of English. Like 'I love you' is 'wo ai ni' or something like that.

Similarly, she spoke of consciously reflecting on the nature of language as a phenomenon:

Just knowing that, um, knowing that there's a language that is just a completely different way of thinking. ... I was talking with my Mum ... All of these things came to mind about how, how different, how different it was to know that there are two languages and there's actually something in between, there's a difference between languages, things like that. Whereas some people, like my parents, they don't really understand that there's two languages. They think there's Korean and then you translate into other languages, and you can translate Korean into English and you translate it into something else.

Given her obvious intellect and ability to self-identify her relative strengths in different modes of Korean and English usage, Seo-yun's lack of perception of the possibility of deploying translanguaging skills (consciously or otherwise), and her apparent playing down of their value in her learning at university, is striking. It may be reflective of the power of her school experience (and of those reported by other participants in the larger study) of having been told to speak only English in class. Education of any value may come to be seen as accessible and demonstrable only through the use of English (Van der Walt, 2013). In such a context, the possibility and value of deploying 'other' languages in education is obscured.

Seo-yun's self-reported attempts to make visible her Korean-Australian-ness in the classroom involved drawing on cultural insights, rather than her linguistic skills. Frustration and disillusionment were clear when she spoke about how these attempts to engage meaningfully with the course content were met by marginalisation and rejection. She reflected on the experiences as follows:

I thought it [sharing her diverse perspectives] was useful, but they [the other students] didn't... They weren't interested, so sometimes... By the end of the semester I didn't really feel like sharing anymore because a lot of the students either weren't interested, or they wouldn't... I don't know, I felt sort of discouraged to speak more about my personal life because, because they weren't taking it as... I don't know, as sensitively, as respectfully as I hoped that they would.

Like some of the issues that I ... wanted to share because it offered a new perspective or a completely new understanding of the topic that we were studying that day, but sometimes ... or most of the time I felt like the students either weren't interested or they couldn't really understand, or they weren't really open towards it. Like, they would see it as... They would try to argue against it or something like that. Whereas I, I'm not putting forward an argument, I'm just saying, you know, my experience.

With some reservations Seo-yun commented on staff responses to these attempts to 'put forward' her non-English native speaker perspectives. She spoke of having her contributions in class "fixed" in the first semesters of her enrolment by one staff member in particular:

She [the staff member] would fix my answer rather than saying, "Why did you think that was that?" ... And there were lots of things that I wanted to share that I couldn't because, firstly, she wouldn't understand it if I just said it in one short sentence, she wouldn't be able to understand it, and secondly, even though she wouldn't be able to understand it from that one sentence, she wouldn't realize that she, that there was more to it, so she would just say, "No".

Nevertheless, while she had had only one non-Anglo Australian lecturer in her first year, Seo-yun did not believe that the prevailing Anglo-ness and English monolingualism of her teachers would inevitably lead them to respond in this way to divergent perspectives. Rather, she believed that diverse students' willingness to make visible their 'other' languages and cultures, (and to open up the powerful pedagogical potential they contain for themselves and their monolingual peers), could be increased:

... if they [academic staff] would understand that their understanding is going to be limited. It would be good if they had an open, sort of, attitude towards what students have to say, and acknowledge it, and understand that there's probably more to it than that, or there's a reason why the child is saying that, or... there's definitely, there's a whole new perspective out there. There's many different perspectives out there.

Her experience of the unwillingness of her student peers and lecturers to negotiate and develop new co-constructed understandings lead Seo-yun to conclude that for diverse students, "there's too much to explain" during their pre-service teacher training. These students appear to be positioned as having sole responsibility for 'making' people acknowledge new perspectives and engage with them. Trying to force this pedagogical potential onto the classroom agenda became exhausting for Seo-yun and she began to self-censor. By the end of her first year of study, this bright potential primary teacher had effectively become silenced and apparently resigned to the suppression of all expressions of the Korean component of her identity in the classroom, saying, "So I felt like I shouldn't say anything, I should just listen to everything she's [university teacher] telling me."

Seo-yun: On abandoning teaching and becoming a Visual Arts student

During the first semester of her second year of enrolment in a pre-service teaching degree, I was saddened to receive an email from Seo-yun that read in part, "I am very sorry to tell you that I am not sure as to whether I will be continuing with this course (BEd) ... I am

thinking of transferring to a Visual Arts degree.” I told wrote back, *“I’m sorry to hear that you might not be continuing in the BEd-you’ll be a big loss for the teaching profession!”* Sometime later she confirmed that she had transferred out of teaching preparation, but was *“happy to continue participating in the research (if I remain eligible despite not being in the process of becoming a teacher).”* As a teacher educator I was dismayed by the loss of this potentially wonderful teacher to the Australian primary classroom and keenly wanted her to continue in the study so as to better understand her decision to abandon her pre-service teacher degree.

In her next interview in the second semester of her second year in university, Seo-yun cautiously articulated her reasons for transferring to a Visual Arts degree. She feared being seen as chauvinistic and unkind in her opinions, but when reassured of the confidentiality of our discussions, she connected her abandonment of teaching studies to the alignment between the subject positions of her monolingual student peers and the nature of the content of the course which left her feeling marginalised and out of place. She said of her monolingual student peers:

They were very the same. They had the same sort of attitude towards everything. They liked things going to a plan, things happening the way you expect! ... They have these beliefs, like racism is bad. They know it, but from an intellectual perspective, they don’t know it from experience or from heart, I guess. They don’t see how complicated it can be, they just know that it’s a bad thing.

As a result, rather than engage with divergent ideas and perspectives around such issues, the students tried to *“fight it back and get me to explain it until they get it... but they couldn’t ... I’d just give up half way.”* She further articulated her reasons for changing degrees, saying:

Maybe it [leaving her Education studies] wasn’t just about the group, maybe it was about what we were learning I think. I felt like the actual course was for these people, like the nature of this version of education itself that we were learning wasn’t going to change for a very long time, and I guess I felt like these people truly believe in it and while I do, I do question some of the factors that go with it.

While she did not explicitly mention academic staff as playing a part in her decision to leave teaching, their limited attempts (according to her self-reported, unverified account) to shape an open, interrogative learning environment, to interpret prescribed content from multiple perspectives and to implement genuinely inclusive and linguistically flexible practices, are implicated in her comments. Now, as a Visual Arts student, Seo-yun described, *“feel[ing] more accepted, like I’m allowed to be myself... without ... yeah... I don’t have to constantly give a reason for why something is this way.”* She exemplified the reasons for this positive *“feeling”* in the following account of a performance work she had done in Visual Arts which drew on and showcased her Korean language and cultural knowledge. Her enthusiasm was palpable when she recounted:

I did a performance work for my sculpture unit which was about how in my culture, in my Korean culture, we, um, we give rice, we give, like we share food and that has sort of a symbolic meaning in that it means, it means like you’re welcome in this household, you know, like, it’s a friendly gesture. Whereas, so when we don’t share it means, you know, it sort of, it has a different ... meaning [to] Australia...

In Visual Arts her Korean identity and language were not only visible, but valued for their pedagogical potential and actively engaged with by academic staff and other students,

not ‘fought back’ because they disrupted the neutrality of their subject positions. Reflecting on the reasons for this significant difference, Seo-yun suggested:

I think because when you’re making an art work it’s more about what you want to say. It’s about getting others to see what you see and sharing your ideas. That’s sort of the main reason for making an art work. So people are always interested in, in any ideas that are different.

In contrast, while an Education student, she believed that academic staff perceived her Korean-ness as “one of the things they had, it was one of the issues, like a problem that they had to address”, rather than a source of immense pedagogical potential for herself and her pre-service teacher peers. This claim is particularly concerning, given that, due to its demography, all Australian pre-service teachers will eventually teach in multilingual classrooms. In addition, studies have linked the high beginning teacher attrition rate in Australian schools to an insufficient cultural awareness component in their pre-service teacher courses (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015).

Seo-yun: On ‘Being Myself’ as a Visual Arts Student

Returning for an interview in her third year of university study and second year of Visual Arts study, I asked whether Seo-yun had any further reflections on her respective experiences as a pre-service teacher and as a Visual Arts student. Having had a year to ponder these two implementational spaces within the university she explained how she now viewed her contrasting experiences within them as reflective of the social roles or ideological spaces within which the work of the teacher and the artist occur. She said that as teachers, “play an important role in passing their sort of beliefs and values onto the other generation”, any divergent opinion from a pre-service teacher was potentially a threat to the neutrality of education and the subject positions of those who provide it. For this reason, hers and other divergent perspectives are ‘fought back’ or ignored. She tried to explain why she thought this occurs, saying:

It’s like fear that if this person comes up with some idea, or some opinion that is quite new or strange or unheard of I think the first response is “Well how is that going to work?” or “What do you mean?” It’s like this fear that this person is not entirely professional or something.

Again, in Seo-yun’s unverified account, while academic staff are not mentioned, they are negatively implicated.

On the other hand, her experience of being “allowed to be myself” within the Visual Arts degree, she felt, was probably related to, “the role that an artist plays in society, usually artists are more people who are allowed to go beyond the boundaries, they explore the boundaries...that’s their job to come up with new ideas, they’re meant to be different.” That is, the artist’s job is to question the neutrality of subject positions. Seo-yun believed that artists are able to fulfil this role because:

...they don’t carry that burden of responsibility ... like I wouldn’t say teaching is turning the other... a child into you, but, passing on your ideas... you [an artist] don’t have that same responsibility, so people, especially lecturers and staff, sort of allow you to be whatever you are and they help you to be as ‘you’ as possible.

As a result of not bearing this “burden of responsibility” Visual Arts education is:

a very different culture I think ... even the teaching staff they're very different ... it's just a different culture, where people are actually challenging the rules whereas in Education sometimes, well, a lot of the time, like, no-one knew the rules were actually there, they'd just think 'that's just the way it's meant to be' ... they'd have all these beliefs because they grew up with that ... they think that's what the world's meant to be like.

Seo-yun's self-reported story and abandonment of her teacher training powerfully suggest the multiple costs, including those to future students in Australian primary classrooms, where a set of opaque and uninterrogated monolingual, monocultural 'rules' prevails in pre-service teacher education courses.

Discussion

A student's first year at university is "one of multiple transitions" (Marshall, 2009, p. 42) during which he or she exercises various agencies such as language use and academic practices, and group, individual, and institutional identity formation processes (Marshall, 2009). During her first year at university Seo-yun grew to feel that she had no avenues for exercising her agencies within her pre-service teacher course, other than to resist the delegitimisation of her Korean cultural and linguistic skills and socialisation into the dominant monolingual, monocultural practices. Eventually, she claimed full agency by declining, rather than conforming to, what was on offer in her pre-service teacher course and abandoning it to take up the study of Visual Arts.

Although many of the issues Seo-yun identifies in relation to diversity in monolingual school and higher education are reported elsewhere in the literature (Marshall, 2009; Preece, 2009; Safford & Kelly, 2013; Van der Walt, 2013; Wallace, 2005), her story is powerful because rarely is the voice of a student so personally impacted by these issues heard in depth and over time. While it should be remembered that Seo-yun's 'story' is self-reported, it is both compelling and unsettling for those engaged in teacher education. Ultimately, it suggests that her inclusion in her pre-service teacher course, despite institutional rhetoric of inclusivity and support for diversity, required the suppression of her diverse cultural and linguistic identity (and of all the pedagogical potential that these represent) in order to conform to an idealised stereotype of an English monolingual Australian primary teacher who would subsequently play her role in perpetuating the "dominant cultural arbitrary" within schools (Bourdieu & Passerson, 1990, p. 23). According to Seo-yun's account, the pre-service teacher course at the university she attends is very effectively performing its "pedagogic work" of "producing individuals durably and systematically modified by a prolonged and systematically transformative action tending to endow them with the same durable, transposable training (habitus), i.e. with common schemes of thought, perception, appreciation and action" (Bourdieu & Passerson, 1990, p. 196). In the face of the strength of this "pedagogic work" which is a continuation of that of Australian schools (Coleman, 2015), during interviews Seo-yun posed the question, "*How is it possible for anyone in this environment [pre-service teacher education] to say... 'But I think this [a different perspective] is possible?'*" I had no easy answer for her.

The positioning of languages in higher education institutions is an expression of the intersections between complex historical and social issues in a specific site which inform the ideological space in which languages and cultures operate in that site. Van der Walt (2013) points out that higher education institutions are "primarily seen as bound to national states and, therefore, not only to (a) national language (s) but, as academic institutions, to the

particular standard of such (a) language (s)” (p. 19). This social, or ideological, positioning indicates the difficulty of promoting institution-wide development of, or changes in, language policies and practices in higher education. However, even within monoglossic universities operating in multilingual environments, and in the absence of appropriate language policies, individual academics can exercise their agency and subvert dominant institutional ideologies to create classroom heteroglossic and heterocultural implementational spaces (Flores & Schissel, 2014). Van der Walt (2013) describes a number of models or ‘scenarios’ by which diverse languages and cultures can be ‘managed’ in universities which conduct education and assessment in the national language, where teachers may not share students’ first languages and cultures, and even where there may be only one speaker of each language. The most relevant to the situation of pre-service teacher education in the university attended by Seo-yun would simply involve lecturers “bringing multilingual learning strategies to the attention of students” (Van der Walt, 2013, p. 136) and encouraging the public use of translanguaging in students’ non-English languages, for example, in group discussions, note taking, compilation of bilingual glossaries and drafting as means of preparing for the production of assessable assignments and exams in English.

The limitations of this scenario are obvious in that it still privileges English as the neutral language of education above all other languages, and would not promote the development of academic registers in students’ other languages. Indeed, Van der Walt (2013) concedes that, “This scenario may be the best that a lecturer can do in an environment that is restrictive in terms of institutional or student perceptions about the importance of the high-status LoLT [language of learning and teaching]” (2013, p.136). However, it represents a significant step forward from the prevailing model which ignores multilingualism and denies the academic potential that translanguaging represents for accessing conceptual knowledge encoded in other languages. It presents a means by which students such as Seo-yun, who considers her Korean vocabulary and speaking as stronger than her English vocabulary and speaking, can achieve greater comprehension of the complex, dominant language texts encountered in higher education (Flores & Schissel, 2014).

If implemented within a pre-service teacher education degree this scenario could also greatly contribute to the language and pedagogical education of their monolingual pre-service teacher peers by providing “opportunities for future teacher candidates to observe excellent models of teaching bilingual learners” (Brisk, Homza & Smith, 2014, p.173) which are currently not in common practice in multilingual mainstream classrooms. Hornberger (2002) reports on the powerful impact on both multilingual and monolingual pre-service teachers she observed in a university class in southern Africa in which a professor encouraged students to discuss and engage with class materials in their first languages which she did not share. All pre-service mainstream primary teachers need to master these skills during their training if they are to work effectively with bilingual students (de Jong & Harper, 2005). Promotion of the deployment of translanguaging in higher education may also make a contribution to increasing the retention of beginning teachers in the first five years of their careers (Mason & Poyotas-Matas, 2015).

Conclusion

This article has reported the story, derived from a wider three year study, of Seo-yun, a Korean-Australian student initially enrolled in a pre-service teacher degree at an Australian university. Her unfolding story and her decision to abandon her teacher training exemplify and humanise the ways in which the linguistic and cultural skills and conceptual knowledge of diverse multilingual students are routinely ignored in English-medium teacher education

(Nieto, 2010). These multiple costs of the marginalisation of the pedagogical potential of her Korean-English bilingualism to the student herself, to her monolingual pre-service teacher peers, and to their future linguistically diverse students in Australian primary schools, were considered. It concluded with a discussion of a scenario through which the linguistic and cultural knowledge of diverse students in pre-service teacher courses may be accessed, for the benefit of all students, through the promotion of translanguaging processes. Ultimately, Seo-yun's story provides teacher educators with much to ponder.

Limitations

A significant limitation of this article is that it is derived from a larger study in which students, including Seo-yun, self-selected to participate. In addition, it relies on Seo-yun's self-reported comments about events in her university classes over three years which were not verified through observation (although these were consistent with comments from other study participants). Its contribution, however, is that it has provided a rare insight into one linguistically diverse student's developing agency and engagement over three years within a monolingual higher education environment in Australia.

References

- Adesope, O., Lavin, T., Thompson, T., & Ungerleider, C. (2010). A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Cognitive Correlates of Bilingualism, *Review of Educational Research*, 80(2), 207-245 <http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0034654310368803>
- Adoniou, M. (2015). English language learners, multimodality, multilingualism and writing. In J. Turbill, G. Barton & C. Brock (Eds.) *Teaching Writing in Today's Classrooms. Looking Back to Look Forward*. Norwood: Australian Literacy Educators' Association, pp. 316-332
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2013). *Cultural Diversity in Australia*. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2071.0main+features902012-2013>
- Australian Curriculum and Research Authority. (2014). *EAL/D Overview and Advice*. Available from [http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/resources/EALD Overview and Advice revised February 2014.pdf](http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/resources/EALD_Overview_and_Advice_revised_February_2014.pdf)
- Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2008). *Staff in Australia's Schools 2007*. Canberra: Australian College of Education.
- Australian Government, Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education [DIICCS RTE] (2013), *All Domestic Students by Language Spoken at Home, Type of Attendance and Gender, Full Year 2012*, <http://www.innovation.gov.au/highereducation/HigherEducationStatistics/Pages/OverviewOfHigherEducationStatisticsCollections.aspx>
- Bourdieu, P., & Passerson, J. (1990). *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. (2nd ed.) Sage: London
- Brisk, M., Homza, A., & Smith, J. (2014). Preparation to Practice: What Matters in Supporting Linguistically Responsive Mainstream Teachers. In D. Freeman & Y. Freeman (eds.) *Research on Preparing Pre-service Teachers to work effectively with Emergent Bilinguals (Advances in Research on Teaching, Volume 21)*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp 167-199 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/s1479-368720140000021006>

- Cenoz, J. (2013). Defining multilingualism. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 33, 3-18
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S026719051300007X>
- Clyne, M. (2005). *Australia's Language Potential*. Sydney: UNSW Press
- Coleman, J. (2012). Moving beyond an “instrumental” role for the first languages of English Language Learners. *TESOL in Context*, 22(1), 18-37
- Coleman, J. (2014). Realising the ‘pedagogical potential’ of multilingual pre-service teachers. *Exchanges: the Warwick Research Journal*, 2(1), 35-52
- Coleman, J. (2015). Accessing the Linguistic ‘Funds of Knowledge’ of Students in Teacher Education Programmes. *English in Australia*, 50(1), 29-37
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the Bilingual Classroom: A Pedagogy for Learning and Teaching? *The Modern Language Journal*, 94(1), 103–115 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x>
- Cummins, J. & Early, M. (eds.). (2011). *Identity Texts: the collaborative construction of power in multilingual schools*. Stoke-on-Trent, UK: Trentham
- De Jong, E. J. & Harper, C. A. (2005). Preparing mainstream teachers for English-language learners: Is being a good teacher enough? *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 32, 101-124
- Education Services Australia. (2011). *National Program Standards for Accreditation of Education Services Australia*. Carlton South: Education Services Australia
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis: the critical study of language*, London: Longman
- Flores, N., & Schissel, J. L. (2014). Dynamic Bilingualism as the Norm: Envisioning a Heteroglossic Approach to Standards-Based Reform, *TESOL Quarterly* 48 (3), 454–479 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/tesq.182>
- Higby, E., Junga, K., & Obler, L. (2013). Multilingualism and the brain. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 33, 68-101 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0267190513000081>
- Hornberger, N. (2002). Multilingual Language Policies and the Continua of biliteracy: An ecological approach. *Language Policy*, 1, 27-51
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1023/A:1014548611951>
- Kaplan, R. B., & Baldauf, R. B. (1997). *Language planning: from practice to theory*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters
- Lingard, B., Ladwig, J., Mills, M., Bahr, M., Chant, D., Warry, M. et al. (2001). *The Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study*. Brisbane: Education Queensland
- Lo Bianco, J. (2013). *Communication Ecology*. Available from
http://www.petaa.edu.au/imis_prod/w/Teaching_Resources/Project_40/w/Teaching_Resources/P40/Bianco_essay.aspx
- Lucas, T., & Villegas, A. M. (2013). Preparing linguistically responsive teachers: Laying the foundation in preservice teacher. *Theory into Practice*, 52(2), 98-109
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2013.770327>
- Marriott, H. (2013). Multilingualism among university staff: a case study of language management at an Australian university. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 10(4), 454-468 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2013.832126>
- Marshall, S. (2009). Re-becoming ESL: multilingual university students and a deficit identity. *Language and Education*, 24(1), 41-56
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09500780903194044>
- Martin, P. (2009). They have lost their identity but not gained a British one: non-traditional multilingual students in higher education in the United Kingdom. *Language and Education* 24(1), 9-20 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09500780903194028>
- Mason, S., & Poyotas-Matas, C. (2015). Teacher Attrition and Retention in Australia: Toward a New Theoretical Framework, *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(11), 45-66 <http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2015v40n11.3>

- May, S. (2014). Justifying Educational Language Rights. *Review of Research in Education*, 38(1), 215-241 <http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0091732X13506694>
- Nieto, S. (2010). *Language, Culture, and Teaching: Critical Perspectives, Vol. 2*. New York: Routledge
- Pavlenko, A., & Blackledge, A. (2004). *Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters:
- Phillipson, R. (2009). Epilogue: querying language in 'English-medium' higher education. *Language and Education*, 24(1), 75-79
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09500780903194069>
- Preece, S. (2009). Multilingual identities in higher education: negotiating the 'mother tongue', 'posh' and 'slang', *Language and Education*, 24(1)21-39
- Riessman, C. K. (2005). Narrative Analysis, in *Narrative, Memory and Everyday Life*, Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield, pp. 1-7
- Rodriguez, T. L., & Hye-sun, C. (2011). 'Eliciting critical literacy narratives of bi/multilingual teacher candidates across the U.S'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27, 496-594 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.10.002>
- Rubino, A. (2010). Multilingualism in Australia: Reflections on current and future research trends. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 33(2), 17.1-17.21
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2104/aral1017>
- Safford, K., & Kelly, S. (2010). Linguistic Capital of Trainee Teachers: knowledge worth having? *Language and Education*, 24(5), 401-414
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09500781003695567>
- Van der Walt, C. (2013). *Multilingual higher education: beyond English medium orientations*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters
- Van der Walt, C. & Dornbrack, J. (2011). Academic biliteracy in South African Higher Education: Strategies and Practices of successful students. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 24 (1) 89-104 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2011.554985>
- Wallace, C. (2005). The Cultural and Linguistic Resources of Advanced Bilingual Learners in a Multilingual London School, *Prospect*, 2005(1), 82-94

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the reviewers of this paper for their thoughtful and helpful comments, and Dr Trish Weekes for her support.