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Tutoring Through the Lens of Translingualism

Stephanie Samboo

Sheridan College, stephanie.samboo@sheridancollege.ca

Danielle Palombi

Sheridan College, danielle.palombi@sheridancollege.ca


Sarah Sinclair

Sheridan College, sarah.sinclair@sheridancollege.ca

Kathleen Oakey

Sheridan College, kathleen.oakey@sheridancollege.ca

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Tutoring through the Lens of Translingualism



A New Perspective for College Writing Centre Tutors

Conference Description

This presentation will explore how Sheridan College's Tutoring Centre, in collaboration with ESL and Communications faculty, is building capacity for a meaningful culture shift in how our Tutoring Centre addresses multilingual learners.

Inspired by Translingualism research, faculty members collaborated with our tutors to deepen their understanding of Student needs and enrich the tutors' practice through exposure to SoTL literature and Translingual approaches.

Translingual Theory argues for **an approach that (1) honors the power of all language users to shape language to specific ends, (2) recognizes the linguistic heterogeneity of all users of language both in the United States and globally, and (3) directly confronts English monolingualist expectations by researching and teaching how writers can work with and against, not simply within, those expectations** (Horner, Lu, Royster, & Trimbur, 2011, p. 305).

The presentation will provide an introduction to Translingual theory and practice, as well as an overview of the first phase of the project. Highlights will include the project rationale, framework, initial successes and long-term goals of this approach, including the ongoing development of a "tutor manual" that will be expanded and edited by future tutors to reflect a truly responsive text that evolves with experience.

AGENDA

Tutoring through the Lens of Translingualism



- **Background & Context**
 - Introduction to Sheridan's Learning Services
 - Recognizing Gaps & Opportunities
- **Project Inspiration**
 - Introduction to Translingualism: Theory and Practice
- **Project Vision**
 - Phase 1: Pilot Goals
 - Interactive Workshop
 - Initial successes and Long-Term Goals
- **Next Steps**

BACKGROUND

Sheridan's Learning Service Supports

Learning Assistants support students 1:1

- ✓ **Discipline Focus:** *Math, Accounting, Programming, Chemistry, Architecture, Interior Design, etc.*
- ✓ **Skills Focus:** *Writing, Citation, English Conversation, and Presentation Skills*

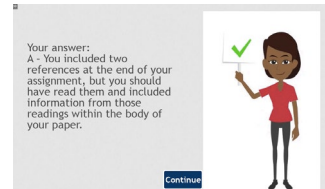
PALs & Peer Tutors support students and many first-year courses

Learning Skill Guides support students & faculty using practical tips and tools

Sheridan Academic Integrity (AI) Tutorial engages community via interactive content & scenario-based learning



tutoring.sheridancollege.ca



Academic Integrity

- **700** remediation sessions in 2018
- **Citation Support Sessions**
- **Academic Integrity Facilitator**

Online Tutorials Jan 2019-Present:

- **2,721** hits Time-Management Module
- **2,728** hits Taking Notes Module

Targeted workshops

- study skills, research, exam tips, and stress relief workshops
- Specialized group focus
 - Centre for Indigenous students
 - Accessible Learning
 - etc

Tutoring Centre Services

- **12,500** tutoring appointments
 - 60 minutes of 1:1 support
 - April 2018 - April 2019
- **192** first-year courses utilized PAL
- **Peer Tutoring** extensively used by
 - Accessible Learning Students
 - programs where PAL & Learning Assistants unavailable
- **Exam Crams** for high-risk programs (eg. Java, Business Math).
- Dedicated Tutors at Each Campus

PROJECT RATIONALE

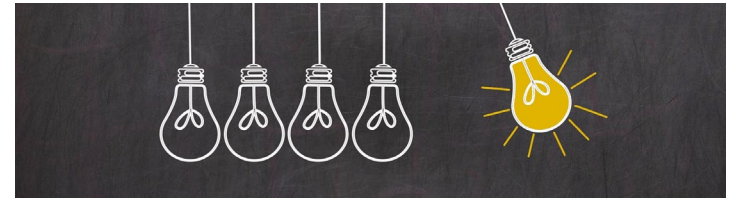
Tutoring through a Translingual Lens



- **SEM Committee Feedback:**
 - audit repeatedly indicates multilingual learners lack sufficient support
- **Increase in Requests from Faculty:**
 - professors are reaching out more to Tutoring Centre to support multilingual students, especially at Davis campus
- **Current Tutor Training Gap:**
 - Current training sessions address (1) equity & diversity, (2) accessibility, (3) academic integrity
 - Gap in the direct support/strategies for multilingual learner needs

PROJECT INSPIRATION

Tutoring through a Translingual Lens



“BUILDING A HOUSE FOR LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY” (Condon & Olson,)




Writing Centre Tutors used **SOTL scholarship** to

- enrich their practice
- deepen their understanding of student needs
- develop personal pedagogy and philosophy
- advocate for culture shift on approach to learners

Created first edition “**tutor manual**” designed to be

- expanded and edited by future tutors
- evolved with student experience
- reflective of a truly responsive, organic text



Presenter Notes: Premised on a book, *Building a House for Diversity* (Roosevelt Thomas) begins with a short fable about how a friendship between two animals is threatened when the house built for a tall, skinny giraffe cannot accommodate his invited guest, a broad, bulky elephant. Using this story as a vivid metaphor for the difficult issues inherent in diversity, the book goes on to demonstrate how managing diversity can be seen as a set of skills that anyone can learn and use.

Building a House for Linguistic Diversity- precipitated by racist comments on blogs by students at Ohio and Nebraska-Lincoln University. Making fun of students/faculty who speak English as an additional language.

International students are guests in the homes we have built. How do we include them in our homes? Do we listen to their voices and needs or do we like the giraffe, already assume that our way is the best way for them?

Frankie Condon was Director of the Writing Centre at University Nebraska- Lincoln-engaged tutors in a scholarly exercise of understanding diversity and learning strategies on how to be inclusive, and how to practice this in the Writing Centre. Shifts in tutors- 1. focus on global errors shift to focus on one specific error to ensure student feels comfortable and heard and then move on to global error. 2. Redefined success for each individual consultation- process not a product. 3. Adopted a culture of inquiry- learning, openness, journey towards social justice.

An Introduction to **Translingual** Theory

3 Principles

- 1) honoring the **power of all language users to shape language** to specific ends;
- 2) recognizing the **linguistic heterogeneity** of all users of language both in the United States and globally;
- 3) directly **confronting English monolingualist expectations** by researching and teaching how writers can **work with and against, not simply within, those expectations.**”

(Horner, Lu, Jones, Royster & Trimbur, 2011, p. 305).

TRANSLINGUALISM: An Introduction

Tutoring through a Translingual Lens




Translingual Theory

“...sees **difference in language not as a barrier** to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a **resource for producing meaning** in writing, speaking, reading, and listening” (Horner, Lu, Jones Royster & Trimbur, 2011, p.303).

Canagarajah (2013) sees **language acquisition as performative** competence:

- Negotiate on equal terms
- Focus on practice, not norms
- Start from your positionality
- Co-construct rules and terms of engagement



Presenter Notes: Language difference is seen as norm of language acquisition and use.
Performative not communicative competence.

TRANSLINGUALISM: An Introduction

Tutoring through a Translingual Lens

A Shift in Perspective **is** Necessary

Monolingualism → Multilingualism → Translingualism

However

How do I put Translingualism Theory into practice

What does it mean to have a **Translingual Disposition**?


“a general **openness toward language and language differences...allows** individuals to **move beyond preconceived, limited notions of standardness and correctness**, and it therefore facilitates interactions involving different Englishes. Considering the historical marginalization of ‘nonstandard’ varieties and dialects of English in various social and institutional contexts, translingual dispositions are essential **for all users of English in a globalized society**, regardless of whether they are ‘native’ or ‘nonnative’ speakers of English.”
(Lee & Jenks, 2016, p.319).

Traditional

Grammar
Determinism
Individual
Purity
Fixity
Cognition
Monolingual

Translingual

Pragmatics
Agency
Community
Hybridity
Fluidity
Context
Multilingual



Presenter Notes: In “Lingua Franca English, Multilingual Communities, and Language Acquisition”, Canagarajah re-evaluates the underlying assumptions of Second Language Acquisition theory in light of the Translingual Approach. He asks us to re-examine the many dichotomies that exist in language acquisition such as grammar versus pragmatics, determinism versus agency, individual versus community, purity versus hybridity, fixity versus fluidity, cognition versus context, and monolingual versus multilingual (Canagarajah, 2007, pp. 923-924).

Canagarajah’s discussion on SLA theory argues that language acquisition should be an adaptive, practice-based and an emergent model, not a theoretical model based on the acquisition of static prefabricated structures.

Language acquisition does not only occur individually and cognitively, but within a community where language users can negotiate meanings and co-construct new meanings with other interlocutors within a context.

As more and more World Englishes come into existence, language acquisition should be studied in heterogeneous, multilingual settings from an emic/insider perspective.

Project Scope

Initial **Vision** for Phase One

Create Weekly **Study Goals** for tutors

- introduce SoTL scholarship
- propose learning goals
- build recommended annotated reading list

Adapt Faculty-Focused **Teaching Resources**

- Collaborative Design: ESL faculty and *Centre for Teaching & Learning*
- Learning modules on multilingual learners

Integrate **Practical Training** by TESL faculty

- week 2 / 3 (approximately)
- mid-semester Reading Week (approximately)

PROJECT SCOPE: PHASE ONE

Tutoring through a Translingual Lens

- **Pilot Project Timeline:**
 - 7 weeks over the spring/summer semester
- **Minimum goals:** (1) training session with faculty; (2) development of annotated bibliography; (3) formal & informal discussions of putting theory to practice
- **Extended goals developed with tutors**
 - **Integrate activities** into expanded annotated bibliography
 - **Summarize** each source,
 - Suggest how to **apply** it to tutoring practice
 - Integrate activities to '**check** understanding'
 - Add **Formal & Informal Reflection** as final, culminating activities
 - Reflect directly on **relationship** between scholarship and practice
 - Develop individualized **teaching philosophy**.
 - Discuss **similarities/differences** in reflections

PROJECT SCOPE: PHASE ONE

Tutoring through a Translingual Lens

Curating Scholarship : 10-12 readings

What we looked for:

- **Scholarly** articles and book chapters
- Both core **theoretical** readings, and **practical** research studies
- Subject focus (for research studies) included:
 - The **ESL student experience** of tutoring services
 - The **Tutor experience** of tutoring ESL students
 - Keywords: politeness, dominance, response/respond, translingual, multilingual
- Manageable vocabulary & Manageable length (10-20 pages)

Readings were short-listed by AD, Librarian, and tutors.
Final selection of Core Readings by tutors.

Scenario Workshop

Test Your Understanding!

Give an example of how you would respond to the following monologue using each of the 5 motivational types.

Student: “This assignment is really difficult for me! I don’t even know where to begin even though it’s very similar to the last paper we wrote in this class. I mean... yeah, I guess I did well on that last paper but this just seems so much harder. I have a feeling that I’m going to have to stay up all night and I haven’t gotten a full night of rest in what seems like forever.”

1. Praise
2. Statements of Encouragement
3. Demonstration of Concern
4. Expressions of Sympathy/Empathy
5. Reinforcement of Ownership and Control

Scenario Feedback & Questions



INITIAL SUCCESSES

Tutoring through a Translingual Lens

“After reading a fair amount of literature and articles on Writing Centres and English tutoring, **the task of helping ESL students improve their English feels a whole lot less daunting.** While reading the articles, I was actually surprised at how much I could relate to the issues faced by other tutors that were documented in the texts. I was surprised because I assumed the articles would be incredibly dense and academic, but **in reality, [the articles] were practical, helpful, and a reflection of what I was going through on a daily basis.**”

- Stefani Starivlah, English Tutor 2018

NEXT STEPS & LONG-TERM GOALS

Tutoring through a Translingual Lens



Next steps: Phase Two (Fall 2019-Winter 2020)

- Adding on to existing literature and manual
- Putting into practice lessons learned during tutoring sessions
- Reflection on practice: what did I learn, student survey on how they felt their needs were being met, how they were made to feel, etc.

Long term goals:

- How do we transfer what we have learnt in Tutoring into the classroom experience?
- What conditions must be met for faculty to adopt a translingual disposition in the classroom?

Questions?

Contact Information

Stephanie Samboo, MA, OCELT, PhD Candidate stephanie.samboo@sheridancollege.ca
Associate Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Danielle Palombi, MA, OCT, EdD Candidate danielle.palombi@sheridancollege.ca
Manager, Learning Services

Sarah Sinclair, MA, OCELT sarah.sinclair@sheridancollege.ca
Coordinator, General Education Courses
Professor, Communications and Literary Studies

Kathleen Oakey, MLIS kathleen.oakey@sheridancollege.ca
Librarian, Humanities and Social Sciences