

Challenging the monolingual habitus in contemporary internationalised academia

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Cet article explore l'habitus linguistique de la pratique universitaire dans le contexte de l'université contemporaine internationalisée. Il affirme qu'il existe actuellement un habitus monolingue fort dans de nombreux aspects du travail universitaire qui est soutenu par des politiques nationales et institutionnelles d'internationalisation qui mettent l'accent sur l'adoption de la langue et des pratiques académiques du monde anglophone et qui ignorent le rôle de la langue dans la construction et la présentation des connaissances et l'importance des traditions académiques. L'article s'appuie sur des expériences de recherche plurilingue pour faire valoir l'importance d'un habitus plurilingue dans tous les aspects du travail universitaire et examine un exemple de collaboration de recherche dans laquelle une politique linguistique fortement plurilingue a été adoptée plutôt que d'utiliser une seule langue de travail. Il examine ce qu'une telle méthode de travail peut apporter à la pratique universitaire contemporaine et comment un tel plurilinguisme peut conduire à une pratique de recherche plus profonde et plus réflexive.

Este artículo analiza el habitus lingüístico de la práctica académica en el contexto de la universidad contemporánea internacionalizada. El artículo afirma que actualmente existe un fuerte habitus monolingüe en muchos aspectos del trabajo académico, respaldado por políticas de internacionalización nacionales e institucionales que hacen hincapié en la adopción de la lengua y las prácticas académicas del mundo anglófono e ignoran el papel de la lengua en la construcción y presentación del conocimiento, así como la importancia de las tradiciones académicas. El artículo se basa en experiencias de investigación plurilingüe para defender la importancia de un habitus plurilingüe en todos los aspectos del trabajo académico y examina un ejemplo de colaboración en investigación en el que se adoptó una política lingüística marcadamente plurilingüe en lugar de utilizar una única lengua de trabajo. El artículo analiza lo que este método de trabajo puede aportar a la práctica académica contemporánea y cómo este plurilingüismo puede conducir a una práctica de investigación más profunda y reflexiva.

Mots clés:

habitus linguistique, internationalisation, collaboration en matière de recherche, plurilinguisme/multilinguisme, politique linguistique.

Palabras clave:

habitus lingüístico, internacionalización, colaboración en materia de investigación, plurilingüismo/multilingüismo, política lingüística.

Keywords:

linguistic habitus, internationalisation, research collaboration, multilingualism, language policy.



1. Introduction

As academia is increasingly internationalised, the language policies adopted by international research collectives have often been based on assumptions that using a lingua franca is the most effective way to engage across linguistic and national borders. The language policies of such collectives are usually based on 'common sense' assumptions that a single language of communication is the natural response to working in contexts of linguistic diversity. Such tacit understandings of language choices are problematic because they impose linguistic hierarchies without explicit acknowledgment or reflection and can create or reinforce linguistic inequalities, that have wider significance than just the presence or absence of languages within a specific academic enterprise.

This paper aims to critique such covert policies by drawing on experiences of working multilingually in an international research collaboration to consider the implications of language choices in academic work. It reflects on the work of the AILA Research Network (ReN) "Intercultural mediation in language and culture teaching and learning/La médiation interculturelle en didactique des langues et des cultures", a multinational group of researchers who work with two different academic languages – French and English, although there were also many other languages in their individual repertoires. In this ReN, different members had different levels of access to each language ranging from a strong command of both languages to no knowledge of one of the languages. This meant that there was no 'natural' language that could work as a lingua franca and that the group needed to develop a way of communicating that allowed people to collaborate together across languages and academic cultures. This was done through a language policy of systematic bilingualism in French and English that involved a process of informal translation and other forms of linguistic mediation, with recourse to other languages when this was helpful for shared communication (see also, Liddicoat & Derivry-Plard 2025; Liddicoat et al. 2023).

The paper will begin with a consideration of the nature of academic research collaboration that this project was designed to counter – monolingual research practice, that evidences a monolingual linguistic habitus (Gogolin 1994, 2009) as the norm for international academic collaborations. It will then consider what a multilingual habitus might be in research practice, reflecting on the experience of the ReN in the context of themes emerging from the wider thinking on researching multilingually (Goodman & Seilstad 2025; Holmes 2016; Liddicoat & Derivry-Plard 2025).

2. The monolingual habitus in contemporary academic work and its consequences

The internationalisation of academia has become a priority for governments and universities across the world (Buckner 2022). In contemporary

internationalisation policies, universities aim to recruit international students, establish partnerships with foreign institutions, engage in joint research programs, and participate in global academic networks. They see internationalisation as a way to enhance their global reputation, advance in rankings, and secure funding from international organisations (Hauptman Komotar 2019; Zippel 2024). In contemporary policies on internationalisation, however, there is often little critical recognition of the impact that internationalisation has on the ways that academic work is done, and especially the languages in which such work is done.

One consequence of contemporary modes of internationalisation has been the increasing adoption of English for both teaching and research (Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörnsdóttir 2015). This has become especially the case in research, where internationalised academic practice has typically come to mean research conducted in and reported through English. Superficially, this emphasis on English as an academic lingua franca would seem to indicate that multilingualism is seen as important, as many academics are required to work in a language other than their primary one. However, the way that such multilingualism is understood in academic contexts is in reality a form of monolingual habitus (Gogolin 1994, 1997) in which multilingualism *per se* is not valued. The multilingual aspects of this practice, that is abilities to work in and across languages, are less valued in institutional and national discourses, than the ability to work in English. Thus, the academic work undertaken by multilingual individuals is governed by an increasing monolingual habitus that normalises the use of a single language (English), often replacing the use of national languages for communicating research findings, or devaluing research published in national or other languages (Soler & Kaufhold 2025). This monolingual habitus results from the geopolitics of research, the ways that academics are socialised into research practice, and institutional language policies about the conduct and communication of research.

The use of English as a lingua franca is often considered to be a facilitator of international collaboration because it promotes communication among researcher from different countries (Vieira et al. 2022). However, statements about the use of English in the research literature, especially literature published in English, tends to be uncritical and does not consider the consequences of monolingual language policies. Participation in international research projects requires non-Anglophone academics to work in English. This creates inequalities of both access to and power within research collectivities for individuals and epistemological inequalities resulting from the inclusion of some knowledges and the exclusion of others.

Inequalities of access relate to who is able to participate in research, and in monolingual contexts, this fundamentally relates to language abilities. In collaboration, access is controlled linguistically, and thus, the monolingual use

of English has an impact on who is admitted or excluded from participation. The participation of non-Anglophone academics in, and their contribution to, research is heavily dependent on English language abilities and those without the necessary language abilities are effectively excluded from the field (Okamoto 2010).

Inequalities of power relate to who controls the production of knowledge. When academic research is conducted and communicated only in English, those with a strong command of the language and who normally work in it have greater control over knowledge production. As Catala argues language operates as meta-epistemic filter, "predetermining in a structurally biased way what kinds of epistemic contributions are (made) available or count as admissible or inadmissible" (2024: 89). This power is manifested in a number of ways. The most obvious is the exclusion of those who do not speak English, or who do not speak it well, from the process of knowledge production. This is, thus, a direct correlate of inequalities of access. However, inequalities of power can be manifested even for those who are included, as working in a language that is not one's usual language of communication entails an additional cognitive load that can have an impact on engagement (McAlpine 2025). Academics who are working in their non-primary language may have difficulty engaging in academic discussions and fewer opportunities to contribute than those who regularly use the language. This may result from their command of the language or from feelings of insecurity in using it with more competent others (Horn 2017). Some members of an international collaboration may, therefore, find it challenging to express complex ideas in the working language of the collaboration and this can potentially lead to oversimplification or misrepresentation of their contributions. Moreover, they may find it difficult to influence agenda-setting and decision-making within the collaboration.

Inequalities in access to and power in a collaboration have consequences for what knowledges are included or excluded. Working in one language often means working within one epistemological tradition (e.g., citing academic literature or theoretical reference points). While having a shared language is a useful tool for international collaboration, it is often the cultural meanings incorporated in the language that seem to have a much greater impact on academic communication (Okamoto 2010) as language is not simply a neutral vehicle but a cultural construction of knowledge. Communicating academic knowledge in another language is not simply a case of learning the words and structures required but rather of learning the cultural construction that lies behind those words (Weidemann & Kuhn 2005). Otani (2007) observes that a Japanese academic speaking about Japanese concepts in English may encounter severe difficulties and even experience culture shock because English does not always have the resources for expressing concepts developed in other languages. Otani's comment highlights that translation between

languages is not always possible, or where it occurs may not lead to successful communication of ideas. This may even be the case where the communication appears to be successful at a superficial level because the mismatch of cultural meanings is hidden or unrecognised in the translation. Translation often focuses on the level of denotation but what is important in understanding complex concepts is not simply denotation but also the ways that the concept is embedded with webs of meaning-making and theorising (Liddicoat 2016a, 2016b). The problem is centrally related to the nature of interpretation itself. Gadamer (1960) argues that interpretation is both linguistic and historical. It is linguistic because it is done in relation to the forms of language in which meanings are expressed and each language provides different affordances for meaning making. Specialist vocabularies are conceptual systems reflecting enculturated ways of knowing the world and ideas are expressed and understood through the culturally contextualised linguistic resources that exist within the system to create meanings. Interpretation is historical because it is influenced by previous experiences of encountering similar meanings. That is, one is predisposed to understand something in the ways in which it has been understood previously. In academic linguistic practices, concepts and theories have been developed in particular language within particular communities and are influenced by the language of their formulation and by the historical development of the meaning-making practices of the academic tradition in which they are elaborated.

When concepts and theories move across languages, the nature of interpretation is an issue for how they are received and processed in the new language (Liddicoat & Zarate 2009). For example, reading the works of Bakhtin in Russian or in English is a very different experience. In English translations of Bakhtin's works, the word discourse is found frequently and this work enters into a theoretical web of ideas relating to discourse. However, the Russian word that is usually translated as 'discourse' is слово (word), which invokes a different web of ideas and thus a different theoretical and conceptual contextualisation. Translation is then not simply a rewording but an integration of ideas into an already established conceptual milieu which, because of its own practices of meaning making, interprets meanings in terms of its existing history of interpretation. Problems of translation, especially where concepts do not translate easily, are consequential for knowledge production. Where an idea cannot be articulated easily in English it may be marginalised or excluded in discussions conducted in English, or if included, may be misunderstood or oversimplified as a result of the difficulties in formulating the idea across languages. The result is often that internationalisation of academic knowledge production becomes a standardisation of academic practice along the lines of the concepts and theories of the dominant language of academic work (Chakkarath 2010).

This standardisation can become normative in that, because concepts and ideas formulated in English form the basis of standardisation, concepts and theories elaborated in other languages may be seen as less legitimate or relevant as they are not well integrated into the standardised system. They may thus be ignored as valid contributors to academic knowledge production. This is evidenced in citation practices that ignore material published outside normalised English language academic. Marín and Zawacki-Richter's (2019) analysis of research published in Spanish and English educational technology journals and found that Spanish authors cite papers from English language journals, but English language authors do not cite studies from Spanish journals, even when published in English. Such studies show a selection bias in academic practice and an epistemological restriction on sources of academic knowledge that privileges work published in English-language journals, that is language operates as a meta-epistemic filtre.

This section has argued that there is a monolingual habitus in contemporary academic practice that constructs academia as monolingual and privileges English as the default language of academic work. It has also argued that the monolingual habitus has consequences for access and inclusion in academic knowledge production. The next sections will consider what an alternative multilingual habitus might look like and what it would contribute to internationalised academia.

3. Researching within a multilingual habitus

A multilingual habitus in academic practice involves, at least minimally, developing a multilingual focus; that is, recognising, valuing and drawing on all languages present in the academic context, in relation to all aspects of the research, including:

- who we research: This includes recognising that the linguistic and cultural positioning of participants are relevant, legitimate and consequential in the research process and seeking to uncover the relevance and value of their language repertoires for informing research questions, data elicitation and data analysis. Decisions to include or exclude research participants based on their language repertoire has consequences, both intended and unintended, for how knowledge is collected and understood and for the relevance of research findings.
- what we research: This includes understanding that all knowledge is 'language'd and that the languages present in the research domain construct how questions, problems and situations are understood and represented. It also involves recognising that the languages present are used, understood, and valued differently by different actors (researchers, researched) involved in the study and that this is relevant to

understanding the phenomena being researched, even where issues of language and culture are not otherwise in focus (Fay et al. 2023).

- how we research: This includes recognising that the practice of research is a linguistic act at all levels in the research process from research design through data collection and analysis to how research is disseminated. As research is an act of language use, it is necessary to recognise the impacts of language choices on the process of doing research (Holmes et al. 2013; Goodman & Almukhambetova 2025). Simply recognising the presence of languages does not in itself constitute a multilingual habitus. Much research in multilingual contexts has considered languages as a problem to be overcome in order to maintain the validity of research. In such research designs the language of the data collection is considered as immaterial once instruments and results have been translated and the content of the data is considered important, not its modes of expression
- understandings of disciplinarity and transdisciplinarity: This includes recognising that academic traditions are not simply the transmission of uniform sets of ideas in different languages but rather that they are linguistic and cultural constructions and representations of knowledge with their own historical and epistemological trajectories and associations (Liddicoat 2018).
- epistemologies used in research: This includes recognising that as knowledge is languaged, different languages construct understandings of the world differently with consequences for how the world is known, understood and expressed. The language(s) of research may open or close possibilities for the epistemologies that are included and developed in the process of researching (Liddicoat & Derivry-Plard 2025).
- processes of collaboration: This includes recognising that collaboration is achieved in and through language(s) and that the language of collaboration is a non-trivial dimension of how collaboration is enacted and achieved, with consequences for participation and collegial engagement (Holmes 2016; Liddicoat & Derivry-Plard 2025).
- research dissemination: This includes recognising that the language used in disseminating research permits or excludes access to research information. Even where a language is commonly used as a lingua franca within the academy, this lingua franca may not be relevant for communicating with all potential audiences for the knowledge that is created through research (Fay et al. 2023; Liddicoat & Derivry-Plard 2025).

The following sections will consider how such dimensions are enacted in research and what a multilingual habitus may look like in different aspects of the research process.

3.1 *Ways of working*

Tremblay (2014) argues for shared and reciprocal multilingualism as the solution to linguistic uniformity and the default recourse to a lingua franca. However, a situation in which all members of a research team shared the same repertoire of languages is likely to be difficult to achieve in practice, especially with large and widely dispersed collaborations. In the ReN, as not all members shared a common language, communication ultimately had to happen in both languages as using a single language would have immediately excluded some members. The ReN therefore developed a systematic policy of bilingualism in English and French in which everything needed to be articulated in each language. In this model, those who were able to use both languages for academic communication acted as linguistic and cultural mediators for those who did not share a common language. In addition to English and French other languages were sometimes used in smaller group discussions where a group shared an additional language.

A wide range of mediational actions were used in the group. In some cases, members were able to translate for themselves between languages, and this was often a significant act for the speaker as it led to confrontations between the ways of expressing similar ideas in each language. This was not always because the speaker had used their dominant language in the first contribution; that is, it was not a reflection of language ability but rather of the complexities of rewording ideas across languages. In many cases, the relanguaging needed to be done by someone other than the original speaker. In these cases, the result was not always a strict translation but could take other forms of linguistic mediation such as summaries or explanations, depending on the nature of the contribution and the issues that relanguaging raised. Integrating the linguistically encoded ideas of others did not, therefore, require shared language abilities across the whole research team; it involves creating communicative spaces in which researchers' languages could be used and differing language practices could be accommodated. Moreover, it allowed for collaboration that was not dependent on the language knowledge of the whole group and allowed people to work together productively even when they did not share a common language.

3.2 *Working across languages as transdisciplinary engagement*

A multilingual habitus in research practice means engaging with the ways ideas are created and communicated and the role of languages within this. Multilingual academic practice is not simply working across languages, but also across epistemologies and academic traditions, which are socially, culturally, historically and linguistically situated. This situatedness is consequential for how knowledge is developed, held and understood and also for how particular elements of knowledge are constructed and integrated within disciplinary fields.

Different academic traditions construct disciplinary spaces in different ways and these constructions are not simply linguistic but represent the historical development of academic thinking and academic alignments within the disciplinary field. In the experience of the ReN, this disciplinary framing was consequential for how we understood each other as academics and how we positioned ourselves and our work within the academic field. The majority of the members of the group working in English identified their disciplinary field as Applied Linguistics. However, they were not perceived by their colleagues working in French as working in *linguistique appliquée* but rather as working in *didactique des langues*. Similarly, the majority of the members who worked in French identified themselves as working in *didactique des langues*, but this categorisation was not understood as a discipline by the English-speaking members but as a sub-discipline of Applied Linguistics.

At a superficial level, this may seem unproblematic as it relates mainly to disciplinary identity but the consequences are actually more wide reaching in terms of what was seen to be relevant to working together on a language education topic. However, this difference also had consequences for how participants understood the nature of the work they were undertaking. Applied Linguistics as a discipline is not limited to work focusing on language education (Cook 2002; Grabe 2002) and academics who consider themselves as applied linguists may work on and/or draw on literature related to language in both educational and non-educational contexts, without seeing a distinction between these areas in disciplinary terms. Moreover, Anglophone Applied Linguistics sees itself as an interdisciplinary field in which academics may draw on linguistics as a disciplinary area but also draw on other disciplinary areas, such as education sciences. In the French academic tradition, *linguistique appliquée* and *didactique des langues* are strongly separated as disciplines, largely the result of historical tensions between researchers in the field of language education (Véronique 2009). *Linguistique appliquée* is seen as a rather narrowly focused applied form of linguistics, while *didactique des langues* is seen as an enterprise which is driven not by a discipline such as linguistics, but rather by classroom practices and realities on which subsequent theorisations are developed (Bailly 1997). The solid boundaries that have emerged in the French academic tradition mean that the two disciplines have come to shape their own epistemologies, methodologies and theories and have drawn on different resources to construct their disciplinary content. Moreover each has developed differently from Anglophone Applied Linguistics.

Each of the areas of focus – Applied Linguistics, *linguistique appliquée* and *didactique des langues* – represent three ways of conceptualising the epistemological space and either enable or constrain different ways of articulating and understanding knowledge of the field. In bringing together researchers working on language education in French and English, the result

of these different understandings of discipline means that communication is not just across languages but across disciplinary understandings and requires openness to new epistemological possibilities and ways of constructing the field of enquiry (Liddicoat 2018). These differences, however, only became apparent when academics were communicating their knowledge in their own working languages and ideas were transferred between languages. The issue in working collaboratively then is not simply one of finding translation equivalents across languages but rather understanding the concepts and associated theories and theorisations that terminologies represented.

In some cases, there were simply no equivalent discourses across the two working languages of the group to translate concepts. For example, it proved difficult to translate 'literacy' into French as specific collocations used by English-speaking academics a varieties of literacy ('computer literacy', 'Asia literacy', 'emotional literacy') were not translatable using French terminologies related to (*alphabétisme, littéracie*), so that what was conceived as part of a unitary construct in English related to the understanding and manipulation of symbolic systems was not so conceived in French, which constructed the field differently creating different senses of linkage or separation ('*connaissances en informatique*', '*connaissances des langues et des cultures de l'Asie*', '*aptitude émotionnelle*').

Even where terminologies are shared, understandings of these may differ between academic and linguistic traditions because terminologies are situated within local epistemologies and interpretative histories. The name of the ReN is a case in point. In deciding on the name a number of debates emerged around key terms and the final decision about the name was the result of compromises:

- mediation/*médiation* – for those members working in English, the idea of mediation had a different extension than for those working in French, to the point where aspects of mediation thought to be central for one group could be more difficult to see as relevant for the other. For the English-speaking members, mediation was fundamentally a process of teaching and learning and was grounded in readings of Vygotskian learning theory in English, but this theoretical starting point was not shared in the same way by the French-speaking members. For the French-speaking members, *médiation* was more centrally focused on problem solving and conflict resolution, which the English-speakers tended to feel was of less central to language education contexts and more related to classroom management. The clarification of how different academic traditions understood and worked on mediation/*mediation* involves lengthy discussions of the seven years of the project.
- intercultural mediation/*médiation interculturelle* – for English-speaking members this seemed an obvious name but for French-speaking

members it appeared tautological as they believed the word *médiation* already included the idea of 'betweenness' and proposed *médiation culturelle*. However, English-speakers felt 'cultural mediation' implied mediation within a culture and was thus a monocultural encoding. This related the differences in the conceptualisation of 'mediation/*médiation*' and the ways these terms were embedded in each disciplinary context. In Vygotsky theory, the processes of teaching and learning are understood as being mediated through symbolic tools such as language and as being undertaken in a cultural context. In English this is often termed 'cultural mediation' and so, where multiple cultures were involved, the mediation had to be intercultural as the mediation was not within a culture but across cultures. However, for French speaking members, the focus on conflict resolution was felt to have already included the idea of cultural difference as the central object of focus and mediation occurred in such contexts of difference. *Médiation culturelle* was thus seen as essentially an intercultural enactment. Some of the issues that informed this discussion resulted from the differences in how Vygotsky's thought has been transmitted into each academic culture. Vygotsky's (1934/2005) Russian text does not use the word mediation at all and instead refers to посредники (intermediaries). It is work drawing on these theories that has introduced the terminology relating to mediation, which has usually been referred to as *cultural mediation* in English, but *mediation pédagogique* in French. These two collocations are not present in Vygotsky's work as посредники is not collocated with either cultural or pedagogical in his writing. These different terminologies represent two different emphases in conceptualisations of the same idea in each academic community, although the basic understanding of mediation as cultural and pedagogical acknowledged in both traditions.

- Teaching and learning/*didactique* – the conceptualisation of the focus of the project around language education was problematic to represent (For the complex relations between *didactique* and English terminologies, see Liddicoat 2009). For French speaking members, the focus of the ReN was clearly *didactique* but representing this with a single term in English was problematic as the English word 'didactic/didactics' has strong negative connotations that the French word does not, indicating outmoded and inflexible teaching approaches and focused only on teaching not on learning.

A final terminology that was not in the name but was common in discussion related to words such as *multilingual*, *plurilingual* vs *multilingue*, *plurilingue*. For English-speaking members, the two terms were close synonyms but for French-speaking members these were two different concepts focusing on societal or individual aspects. Although the distinction is made in English in Council of Europe documents, this use is not widespread outside Europe (Moore & Gajo

2009; Piccardo 2019). It was therefore often necessary to rephrase statements made in English using the prefix *multi-* with a form in French that using *multi-* or *pluri-*. This translation problem revealed that for the English-speakers the two concepts were not easily separated as the individual and societal levels were understood as closely intermeshed and the French use meant try to impose a separation that was not readily apparent, while French speakers often found this collation of two separate ideas to be confusing.

These few examples do not simply represent terminological differences but rather differences in the conceptual building blocks each academic tradition uses to understand its object of enquiry. It was only when trying to move concepts between languages that we realised that we were not simply re-expressing ideas in each language but rather we were moving ideas across conceptual boundaries in such a way that the import of the act of translation had to be clarified as part of the mediation process. This experience lies in contrast to the idea that translation can provide mutual understanding and when translation is rendered invisible it may lead to false assumptions of mutual understanding when what is really needed is engagement with a different conceptual representation.

3.3 Multilingualism in research dissemination

A multilingual habitus in disseminating research is not simply drawing on a variety of academic and linguistic traditions and communicating them in a single academic language; that is adopting a one-way multilingualism with a monolingual outcome. Multilingual academic practice is an attempt to participate in and contribute to multiple academic cultures. It involves communication in multiple languages. This does not simply mean translation of work into other languages, for the reasons indicated above, but rather re-articulating ideas in different languages respecting the linguistic and cultural affordances and constraints offered by each language. In the ReN, we opted to published our work in both English and French in the same publication and in one case in three languages (English, French and Japanese) as all had been relevant in the development of ideas (e.g., Liddicoat & Derivry-Plard 2021; Liddicoat et al. 2023; Liddicoat & Zarate 2016). This was sometimes done as translation, although the translation often involved some additional mediational work in one of the languages to better situate concepts or explain understandings. In some cases, we adopted other forms of linguistic mediation, such as providing summaries or marginal comments identify the main points of a paragraph in the other language. We adopted this approach not simply because we valued multilingualism but because we wanted to communicate with different audiences and make our work available to different academic communities and traditions. This decision created difficulties as we had to negotiate with journal editors and publishers who normally published monolingually and argue for a multilingual text.

Publishing multilingually, however, has benefits beyond accommodating to audiences and building connections between communities of readers. In the act of reformulating ideas across languages it becomes possible to reveal instances where the formulation in one language is not universal but dependent on particular linguistic, cultural and communicative practices. It requires a conscious attempt to fit new ideas into different epistemologies and understanding the resonances of these ideas in new contexts and recognise moments of superficial similarity but underlying difference. Such events can be informative for ongoing academic discussions.

4. International collaboration as an ethical issue

Our decision to work multilingually meant slowing the research process and spending extra time to ensure communication between languages and participants. At first glance this may seem an increase in effort that runs counter to efficiency in research. However, by slowing the research process down we were able to achieve greater depth of understanding and greater sophistication in our theorising. Through this process of considering the languaged nature of academic work we learned a new disposition towards how we research and how we relate to each other as researchers. This disposition involves openness to languages and their speakers and recognising that different ways of conceptualising the field on enquiry are not distractions from the purpose of the research but rather moments of possible learning. It also involves acceptance of the discontinuities and potential conflicts that come from working across academic languages and cultures and willingness to see the process of negotiation of meaning as central to research rather than as a communication problem to be resolved. Ultimately, it involves moving away from the idea that the purpose of research is to identify a single 'correct' understanding of the object of enquiry but rather to develop acceptance of different ways of seeing, understanding and theorising, and to build understanding of what each contributes to knowledge. This involves becoming aware of the multiple ways of understanding the field that is being researched, accepting the legitimacy of this plurality, and accepting the validity and usefulness of viewing the same field through different conceptual framings.

All of this represents an ethical engagement with diversity within academic collaboration; that is, the multilingual habitus is an ethical engagement with academia as a diversly languaged space. It involves questions of fairness, inclusion, and access to opportunities for collaboration and contribution to knowledge construction. A monolingual habitus in research can create barriers to participating internationalised academia and may contribute to cultural and epistemological erosion and epistemological imperialism or discriminating against people and ideas within the academic domain. Ethically, acknowledging

and addressing linguistic inequality helps challenge systemic discrimination and promotes inclusivity in academia as elsewhere.

Note

AI was not used in developing this article.

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