



Requires Authentication | Published by **De Gruyter Mouton** | August 19, 2015

Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics

Ricardo Otheguy , Ofelia García and Wallis Reid

From the journal [Applied Linguistics Review](#)

<https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2015-0014>

Citations 837

Abstract

The concept of *translanguaging* is clarified, establishing it as a particular conception of the mental grammars and linguistic practices of bilinguals. Translanguaging is different from *code switching*. Under translanguaging, the mental grammars of bilinguals are structured but unitary collections of features, and the practices of bilinguals are acts of feature selection, not of grammar switch. A proper understanding of translanguaging requires a return to the well known but often forgotten idea that named languages are social, not linguistic, objects. Whereas the idiolect of a particular individual is a linguistic object defined in terms of lexical and structural features, the named language of a nation or social group is not; its boundaries and membership *cannot* be established on the basis of lexical and structural features. The two named languages of the bilingual exist only in the outsider's view. From the insider's perspective of the speaker, there is only his or her full idiolect or repertoire, which belongs only to the speaker, not to any named language. Translanguaging is *the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages*. In schools, the translanguaging of bilinguals tends to be severely restricted. In addition, schools confuse the assessment of general linguistic proficiency, which is best manifested in bilinguals while translanguaging, with the testing of proficiency in a named language, which insists on inhibiting translanguaging. The concept of translanguaging is of special relevance to schools interested in the linguistic and intellectual growth of bilingual students as well as to minoritized communities involved in language maintenance and revitalization efforts.

Keywords: [translanguaging](#); [code switching](#); [named languages](#); [idiolects](#); [language education and assessment](#)

References

- Auer, Peter. 1999. *Code-switching in conversation: Language interactions and identity*. London: Routledge.
- Auer, Peter. 2005. A postscript: Code-switching and social identity. *Journal of Pragmatics* 37(3). 403–410.
[10.1016/j.pragma.2004.10.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2004.10.010) (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2004.10.010>)
- Blackledge, Adrian & Angela Creese. 2010. *Multilingualism: A critical perspective*. London: Continuum Press.
- Canagarajah, Sursh 2011a. Codemeshing in academic writing: Identifying teachable strategies of translanguaging. *Modern language Journal* 95. 401–417.
[10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01207.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01207.x) (<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01207.x>)
- Canagarajah, S. 2011b. Translanguaging in the classroom: Emerging issues for research and pedagogy. *Applied Linguistics Review* 2. 1–27.
[10.1515/9783110239331.1](https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110239331.1) (<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110239331.1>)
- Chomsky, Noam. 1986. *Knowledge of language*. London: Praeger Publishers.
- Creese, Angela & Arian Blackledge. 2010. Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? *Modern Language Journal* 94. 103–115.
[10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x) (<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x>)
- Fishman, Joshua. 1964. Language maintenance and language shift as a field of inquiry. *Linguistics* 9. 32–70.
- García, Ofelia. 2009. *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Malden, MA & Oxford: Wiley/Blackwell.
- García, Ofelia. 2011. From language garden to sustainable languaging: Bilingual education in a global world. *Perspective: A publication of the National Association for Bilingual Education* Sept/Oct 2011, 5–10.
- García, Ofelia & Li Wei. 2014. *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism, and education*. London: Palgrave Macmillan Pivot.
[10.1057/9781137385765](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765) (<https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765>)
- García, Ofelia & Ricardo Otheguy. 2015. Spanish and Hispanic bilingualism. In Manel Lacorte (ed.), *The Routledge handbook of Hispanic applied linguistics*, 639–658. New York: Routledge.
- Gumperz, John. 1976. The sociolinguistic significance of conversational code-switching. *Working papers of the language behavior research laboratory*, 46. Berkeley: University of California.

Gumperz, John. 1982. *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

[10.1017/CBO9780511611834](https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511611834) (<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511611834>)

Heller, Monica (ed.). 2007. *Bilingualism: A social approach*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

[10.1057/9780230596047](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230596047) (<https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230596047>)

Hornberger, Nancy & Holly Link. 2012. Translanguaging and transnational literacies in multilingual classrooms: A bilingual lens. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 15. 261–278.

[10.1080/13670050.2012.658016](https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2012.658016) (<https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2012.658016>)

Jørgensen, J. N., M. S. Karrebæk, L. M. Madsen & J. S. Møller. 2011. Polylinguaging in superdiversity. *Diversities* 13. 24–37.

Lewis, Glyn, Bryn Jones & Colin Baker. 2012a. Translanguaging: developing its conceptualisation and contextualisation. *Educational Research and Evaluation* 18. 655–670.

[10.1080/13803611.2012.718490](https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2012.718490) (<https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2012.718490>)

Lewis, Glyn, Bryn Jones & Colin Baker. 2012b. Translanguaging: Origins and development from school to street and beyond. *Educational Research and Evaluation* 18. 641–654.

[10.1080/13803611.2012.718488](https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2012.718488) (<https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2012.718488>)

Lin, Angel. 2014. Hip Hop Heteroglossia as practice, pleasure, and public pedagogy: Translanguaging in the lyrical poetics of “24 Herbs” in Hong Kong. In Angela Creese & Adrian Blackledge (eds.), *Heteroglossia as practice and pedagogy*, 119–136. London: Routledge.

[10.1007/978-94-007-7856-6_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-7856-6_7) (https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-7856-6_7)

Makoni, Sifree & Alastair Pennycook. 2007. Disinventing and reconstituting languages. In Sifree Makoni and Alastair Pennycook (eds.), *Disinventing and reconstituting languages*, 1–41. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

[10.21832/9781853599255-003](https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853599255-003) (<https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853599255-003>)

Makoni, Sifree & Alistair Pennycook. 2010. *Disinventing and reconstituting languages*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Myers-Scotton, Carol. 2005. *Multiple voices: An introduction to bilingualism*. Hoboken, NJ, USA: Wiley.

O'Rourke, Bernadette, Joan Pujolar & Francisco Ramallo. 2015. New speakers of minority languages: The challenging opportunity. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* Number 231 (entire issue).

[10.1515/ijsl-2014-0029](https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2014-0029) (<https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2014-0029>)

Otheguy, Ricardo. 2009. El llamado espanglish. In Humberto López-Morales (ed.), *Enciclopedia del español en los Estados Unidos*, 222–247. Madrid: Instituto Cervantes & Editorial Santillana.

Otheguy, Ricardo. 2015. Variationist sociolinguistics and linguistic theory in the context of pronominal perseveration. In Rena Torres Cacoullos, Nathalie Dion & André Lapierre (eds.), *Linguistic variation: Confronting fact and theory*, 319–334. Routledge Publishers.

Otheguy, Ricardo & Nancy Stern. 2011. On so-called Spanglish. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 15. 85–100.

[10.1177/1367006910379298](https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006910379298) (<https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006910379298>)

Otheguy, Ricardo & Nancy Stern. 2013. Scholars and citizens: Judging the unfortunate term “Spanglish.” *Anthropology News*, Winter 2013.

Otheguy, Ricardo, Ana Celia Zentella & David Livert. 2007. Language and dialect contact in Spanish in New York: Toward the formation of a speech community. *Language* 83. 770–802.

[10.1353/lan.2008.0019](https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.2008.0019) (<https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.2008.0019>)

Otheguy, Ricardo & Ana Celia Zentella. 2012. *Spanish in New York: Language contact, dialectal leveling and structural continuity*. New York, NY, USA: Oxford University Press.

[10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199737406.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199737406.001.0001)

(<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199737406.001.0001>)

Pennycook, Alistair 2010. *Language as a local practice*. London & New York: Routledge.

[10.4324/9780203846223](https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203846223) (<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203846223>)

Reid, Wallis. 1991. *Verb and noun number in English : A functional explanation*. London & New York: Longman Publishers.

Reid, Wallis. 2011. The communicative function of English verb number. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 29. 1087–1146.

[10.1007/s11049-011-9154-0](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11049-011-9154-0) (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11049-011-9154-0>)

Saussure, Ferdinand de. 1916 [1986]. *Cours de linguistique générale*. Translated as: *Course in general linguistics*, by Roy Harris. La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishers.

Sayer, Peter. 2013. Translanguaging, TexMex, and bilingual pedagogy: Emergent bilinguals learning through the vernacular. *TESOL Quarterly* 47. 63–88.

[10.1002/tesq.53](https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.53) (<https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.53>)

Shin, Naomi Lapidus & Ricardo Otheguy. 2013. Social class and gender impacting change in bilingual settings: Spanish subject pronoun use in New York. *Language in Society* 42. 429–452.

[10.1017/S0047404513000468](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000468) (<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000468>)

Urciuoli, Bonnie. 2013. Is “Spanglish” a bad term? *Anthropology News*, Fall 2013.

Wei, L. 2011. Moment analysis and translanguaging space: Discursive construction of identities by multilingual Chinese youth in Britain. *Journal of Pragmatics* 43. 1222–1235.

[10.1016/j.pragma.2010.07.035](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.07.035) (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.07.035>)

Williams, Cen 1994. Arfarniad o Ddulliau Dysgu ac Addysgu yng Nghyd-destun Addysg Uwchradd Ddwyieithog [An evaluation of teaching and learning methods in the context of bilingual secondary education]. Unpublished University of Wales (Bangor) Doctoral Thesis.

Published Online: 2015-8-19

Published in Print: 2015-9-1

©2015 by De Gruyter Mouton

— or —

PDF **30,00 €**

From the journal



Applied Linguistics Review

Volume 6 Issue 3

Articles in the same Issue

Frontmatter

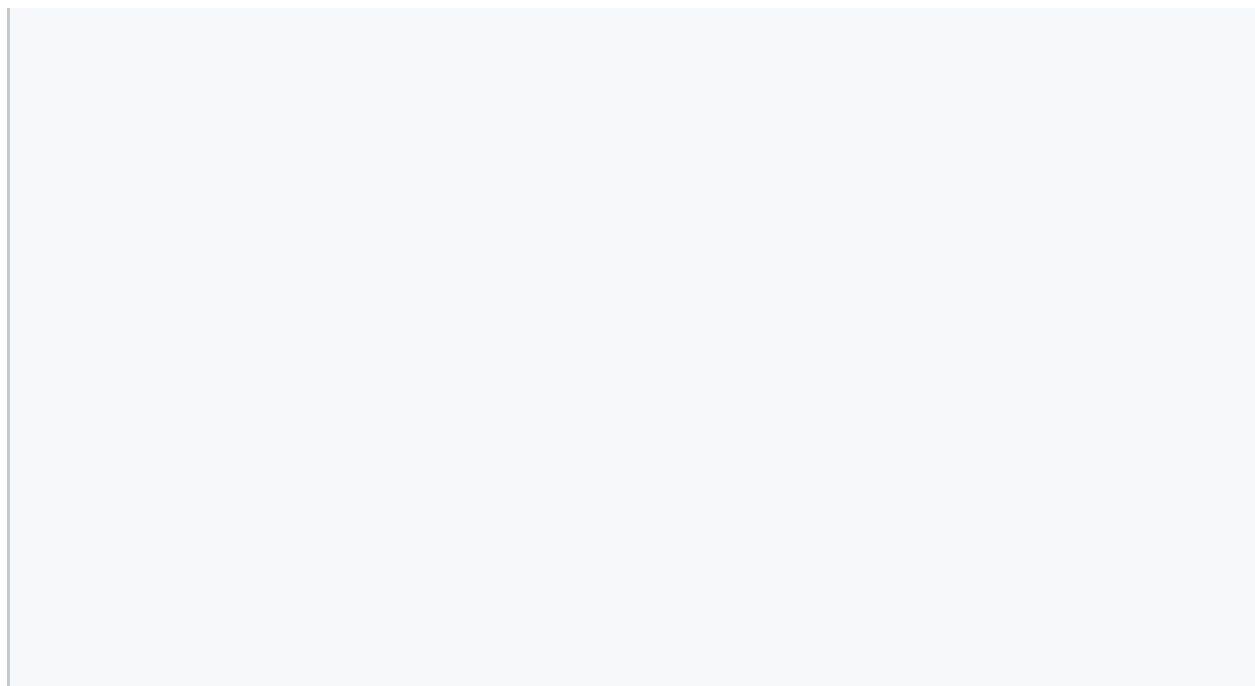
Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics

British 'Bollocks' versus American 'Jerk': Do native British English speakers swear more – or differently – compared to American English speakers?

Language, identity, and insider/outsider positionality in Caribbean Creole English research

Resisting linguistic marginalization in professional spaces: Constructing multi-layered oppositional stances

Topic-as-script and Topic-as-action in Language Assessment and Teaching



Downloaded on 10.6.2023 from

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/applirev-2015-0014/html>