# Designing a modern language course for culturally and linguistically diverse students

*Kiyu Itoi*
kiyu@apu.ac.jp
*Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University*

## Abstract

*Cultivating learners' multimodal communication skills and their intercultural awareness is necessary for effective collaboration. With this aim, a translanguaging dual language (TDL) course was developed at a Japanese multilingual university drawing on the pedagogy of multiliteracies (PoM) and translanguaging. The research questions this study addressed were: (1) What kinds of teaching and learning activities can be provided to allow students to negotiate and co-create knowledge? (2) How do students in a tertiary TDL course engage with the PoM? In the course, role-play videos were made by students to demonstrate approaches to communication with their classmates from various backgrounds. A multimodal textual analysis of the video data was conducted. The findings suggest that the course fostered students' capability of engaging and negotiating locally situated communication strategies using various semiotic resources including translanguaging. This article also suggests pedagogical implications for student-oriented classrooms that allow space for students' negotiation and co-construction of knowledge.*

*Key words: translanguaging, multimodality, pedagogy of multiliteracies*

## Résumé

*Dans le but de cultiver les compétences de communication multimodale et la conscience interculturelle des apprenants, un cours de langue bilingue avec translanguaging (TDL) a été développé dans une université japonaise, en s'appuyant sur la pédagogie des multilittératies (PdM) et le translanguaging. Les questions de recherche abordées dans cette étude étaient les suivantes : (1) Quels types d'activités d'enseignement et d'apprentissage peuvent être proposés pour permettre aux étudiants de négocier et de cocréer des connaissances ? (2) Comment les étudiants d'un cours universitaire TDL s'engagent-ils dans la PdM ? Grâce à une analyse multimodale de la vidéo, les résultats suggèrent que le cours a favorisé la capacité des étudiants à s'engager et à négocier des stratégies de communication localement situées en utilisant diverses ressources sémiotiques,*

*y compris le translanguaging. Cet article suggère également des impli-*
*cations pédagogiques pour les classes orientées vers les étudiants, qui*
*laissent un espace pour la négociation et la co-construction des connais-*
*sances par les étudiants.*

*Mots-clés : translanguaging, multimodalité, pédagogie des multilittératies*

<div align="center">要旨</div>

協働学習を効果的に行うためには、学習者のマルチモーダルなコミュニケーション能力
と異文化間能力を養うことが必要である。そこで、日本にある多文化・多言語環境の大
学において、マルチリテラシーズ教育（PoM）とトランスランゲージングを活用した
トランスランゲージング・デュアルランゲージ（TDL）コースが開発された。本研究で
は、（1）学生同士での共通理解の成立、意味構築を促すために効果的な学習活動や教
育の在り方（2）TDLコースの履修学生がどのようにPoMを捉え参加するのかを明ら
かにすることを目的とする。本稿では、様々なバックグラウンドを持つクラスメートと
コミュニケーションを取る際に気をつける点や、好ましいアプローチを示すために、学
生が作成したロールプレイビデオのマルチモーダル分析に焦点を当てる。分析を通し、
学生がトランスランゲージを含む様々な記号論的資源を用い、教室のローカルコンテク
ストに沿ったコミュニケーションストラテジーを構築する能力を向上させたことがわかっ
た。また、本稿では学生間での共通理解の成立、意味構築を行うことができるような、
学生が主体となる教室作りの方向性を提言する。

キーワード：トランスランゲージング，マルチモーダル，
マルチリテラシーズ教育

## Introduction

The mobility of people and information across borders has increased in today's globalized world. Given this, and the advancements in technology, traditional language and literacy education has encountered challenges and limitations. In 1996, the New London Group (NLG) proposed a pedagogy of multiliteracies (PoM) to focus on the multiplicity of communications platforms, as well as on cultural and linguistic diversity. Although the PoM was mainly developed in Anglo-speaking countries such as the United States and Australia, it can also be useful in non-English-speaking countries such as Japan. Since most of the students will use English as a lingua franca, the ability to negotiate and make meaning using various available designs (NLG, 1996) as well as critical intercultural awareness, rather than the mastery of one form of English, are important aspects to be considered in EFL classrooms.

Another important aspect of the PoM is the concept of designing. Designing refers to the "process of shaping emergent meaning" (NLG, 1996, p. 75); through designing, meaning is created by designers, who are the people involved in the communication. In addition, with new available designs, meanings are not simply reproduced but are also transformed, and new meanings

continue to emerge based on the designers' personal interests and experiences. In other words, in language classrooms, both the teachers and the students are active participants and initiators (i.e., designers) in this meaning-making process; thus, courses should be designed and re-designed based on the students' interests and experiences.

In addition, as the NLG (1996) stated, a teacher's role is no longer to impart one form of knowledge to provide students with "the knowledge" necessary in order to be successful citizens in a monolingual and monocultural society. In today's globalized society, people need to communicate effectively with people from different linguacultural backgrounds by using multiple languages, including diverse forms of English. Therefore, teachers need to help students to develop "the capacity to speak up, to negotiate, and to be able to engage critically" (p. 67) with their own particular contexts. From this perspective, a teacher's job is to provide students with opportunities to interact with people from various backgrounds and to learn to communicate and co-create knowledge with the people around them using all the resources that are available to them.

Drawing on the PoM, as well as on translanguaging (García, 2009), a translanguaging dual language project (TDL) course for advanced-level English and Japanese learners was developed in a university in Japan by a group of Japanese and English language teachers, including myself. The university offers a unique learning environment in which students from around 90 countries across the world come to study together. In order to maximize this learning environment, the TDL course was developed with the aim of cultivating the multimodal communication skills necessary for communication in various multicultural contexts in the 21st century among learners, as well as the intercultural sensitivity and awareness that are necessary to collaborate effectively with others. Although most of the Japanese and English language courses are taught in the respective languages, the TDL course incorporated the concept of translanguaging, which refers to the "act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous language, in order to maximize communicative potential" (García, 2009, p. 140). In other words, a monolingual policy was not imposed in the classroom and translanguaging was encouraged to allow students to negotiate and construct knowledge utilizing their cultural and linguistic resources. The present study aims to explore how the PoM and translanguaging pedagogy can be applied in a post-secondary level language classroom in which English and Japanese are learned by students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to provide insight into the application of the PoM in plurilingual and pluricultural contexts. The research questions were as follows:

1. What kind of teaching and learning activities can be offered to allow students to negotiate and co-create knowledge?

2. How do students in a tertiary TDL course engage with the PoM?

The data from this TDL class were used to explore the research questions. In particular, in the present paper, multimodal and multilingual videos created by the students in the class and the comments that other students made about the videos were analyzed to examine the students' engagement in the PoM. In addition, the reflective journal that the researcher wrote based on the field notes she took in class was used to understand the students' language use and meaning-making process.

In the following sections, I will first outline the Japanese education system with a particular focus on English education; I will then discuss how the PoM and translanguaging can be incorporated in language classrooms and will describe the research design of the study. Following this, I will illustrate how students from diverse linguacultural backgrounds engaged with the PoM while using translanguaging fluidly in the classroom. I will also discuss the theoretical implications concerning how translanguaging can be utilized in the meaning-making process in students' designing and re-designing of their learning, and how teachers can be agents of change to alter the conventional concept of language education and the monolingual standard.

### *Conventional teacher-student relationships in Japan*

Like many other East Asian countries, the Japanese secondary educational system has a strong emphasis on students' performance in standardized entrance examinations. Thus, students' assessments in secondary education are based heavily on their performance in the standardized examinations, and many parents invest in private examination preparation courses and tutoring outside of schools (Yamamoto & Brinton, 2010). Therefore, teachers are seen as knowledge providers who can impart knowledge to students. In addition, the Confucian heritage culture plays a role in teacher-student relationships in Japan. Teachers are seen as authority figures; the students follow the teachers and do not ask questions or argue, even if they disagree with the teachers (Nguyen et al., 2006). As students are raised in such an educational system, even in higher education when performance in standardized examinations no longer matter, the teacher-student relationship usually remains the same. Regardless of whether the course is a lecture course or a seminar course, students usually attend class to learn from the teacher, and they expect to have knowledge imparted by the teacher.

## *Perceptions of English in Japan*

According to Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) Japan, one of the goals of English education in Japan is to develop "the ability to fluently communicate with English speaking persons" (MEXT, 2014, p. 1); who the "English speaking persons" are is implied in the discourse of Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs). In Japan, ALTs are sent to all schools, and many of the ALTs work in the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET). Eligibility for the JET programme includes having "excellent standard pronunciation, rhythm, intonation in the English language" (JET Program USA, 2019). Considering that compulsory English education starts in the first grade, this means that many of the Japanese English learners are used to the form of English used by "native speakers."

Matsuda's (2003) study found that, although Japanese students "perceive English as an international language in a sense that it is being used internationally, they do not believe it belongs internationally" (p. 484), and Chiba et al. (1995) found that Japanese students tend to have negative attitudes toward non-native varieties of English accents. Regardless of the fact that many of the English speakers are non-native English speakers, the varieties of English that are spoken in so-called English-speaking countries (e.g., the United States, Australia and Canada) are considered to be the proper forms of English in Japan (Konakahara & Tsuchiya, 2020).

## *Importance of incorporating the PoM in language education in Japan*

The New London Group (1996) argued that, as the world we live in has become more diverse, the nature of work and the work environment have changed. Therefore, instead of obedient workers who can follow one way of doing things, critical and creative workers who can adapt to the given contexts are and will be needed. In other words, a teacher's job is no longer to simply produce students who can follow certain ways of learning and doing things, but rather to help students to develop the capacity to engage with the local contexts that are presented to them by negotiating with others. Thus, in a classroom in which students and teachers from different backgrounds learn together, there should not be expectations regarding how students should participate and learn in the specific academic community as this should be negotiated by all the members of the classroom community.

I also grew up in the Japanese educational system until high school and was socialized into a classroom culture in which teachers are expected to be responsible for delivering the knowledge that students need, and students are expected to listen to the teacher and learn as much as possible by listening to the lessons. Therefore, asking questions, being critical or sharing my ideas

was not part of the classroom culture into which I was socialized. However, as I was socialized into different academic discourses by studying at an international university in Japan and in Finland during my undergraduate studies and in Canada for my master's degree, I realized that I was developing a negative L2 identity due to not being able to meet the academic expectations of the new academic discourses (e.g., Morita, 2004) in Finland and Canada. International students tend to develop negative L2 identities, particularly when confronted by the new academic discourse in universities in so-called English-speaking countries for complex reasons which include a perceived lack of English proficiency and different cultures of learning (Jin & Cortazzi, 2017). Typically, in so-called English-speaking countries students are expected to participate and engage in classroom discussions, share their own ideas and act as full members of the discourse community (e.g., Hiraga et al., 2003). Due to such differences in the cultures of learning, when students cannot meet the academic expectations of their new classroom discourse, they tend to struggle.

In addition, due to the ideologies pertaining to English education in Japan, which Kubota (2018) called *genso*, which means misconceptions, including native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006), I was unable to develop a positive identity as a non-native English speaker and teacher. However, as I learned different theories about language education and realized how much I was influenced negatively by native-speakerism, I felt that language education, particularly in a non-English-speaking country such as Japan, needed to change to accommodate the growing diversity of communication styles. In a rapidly changing world, students need to develop skills to "interact effectively using multiple languages, multiple Englishes, and communication patterns that more frequently cross cultural, community, and national boundaries" (NLG, 1996, p. 64). Therefore, in order to prepare students to engage in the society that is becoming more diverse than ever, I felt that educators needed to work on a pedagogy that allows students to bring their unique linguistic and cultural backgrounds and to negotiate and co-construct meaning with their peers.

## Research context

The TDL project course was developed by six English and Japanese language teachers to challenge the monolingual standard language education and to allow students to learn about the world and make meaning with their peers using all the available semiotic resources (Lin et al., 2020). As I was one of the curriculum developers for the course, and taught the course together with a Japanese language teacher, my beliefs about teaching and my experiences as an English learner and as a teacher had an impact on the design of the course.

This study was conducted at a middle-sized private university in the southern part of Japan. The university offers a multicultural environment, with half

of the students being international students from over 80 countries and regions around the world. Bilingual education is implemented in both Japanese and English in most of the content courses. Regardless of the students' first languages and whether they are domestic or international students, all the students are required to choose between English or Japanese as the medium of instruction when they enrol. Based on the language they choose as the medium of instruction, they are called either Japanese basis stream or English basis stream students. The English basis stream means that the students are required to take most of their content classes in English, but are also required to take standard track language classes in Japanese. The language courses that the students are required to take in their language basis programme constitute their standard language education. However, once they complete their required language classes, they are allowed to be enrolled in any elective advanced language courses offered in the language programme.

Two instructors (including myself) co-taught the course; both of us were female Japanese instructors. I was in charge of the English part, and the other instructor was in charge of the Japanese part. The 95-minute class was offered two days a week for 14 weeks; one class was conducted mainly in English, and the other was conducted mainly in Japanese based on the concept of two-way dual language education (Collier & Thomas, 2004). However, during discussions, the students were encouraged to translanguage freely as they saw fit to maximize their communicative potential (García, 2009). As the students came from different parts of the world including Japan, Korea, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Australia and the United States, there was great cultural and linguistic diversity in the classes.

The course was developed for students studying advanced-level English and Japanese, respectively, after completing the mandatory language classes. The elective language course was designed incorporating the PoM and the concept of translanguaging (García, 2009). An important aspect of the PoM curriculum is called *situated practice*, which emphasizes the importance of providing students with activities that interest the learners and take their previous and current experiences into account, which will motivate learners to learn effectively. In order to provide students with meaningful contextualized tasks, a needs assessment survey was conducted among approximately 430 students. The survey included questions about the students' previous experiences of interacting with students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the challenges they faced in intercultural communication and using the target language, their interest in a language course for both Japanese and English learners, the topics and skills that they would be interested in learning, and the ideal style of the course (i.e., teacher-led, student-led or research-based). The initial contents of the course, such as topics to be covered in class and the activities to

be offered, were then determined based on the survey results. Accordingly, the following five topics — education, the environment, social issues, big data and AI — were selected in order for students to learn intercultural communication.

In addition, the Multimodality Entextualization Cycle (MEC) (Lin, 2015) was employed to ensure the development of the students' linguistic abilities along with other skills needed in the 21st century. The MEC cycle is a curriculum genre that was originally developed for teachers teaching in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Content-based Education (CBE) settings. The MEC cycle consists of three stages; however, there is no end point as it is a cycle that allows for reiteration. In the first two stages of the cycle, students are encouraged to use multimodalities such as visuals, videos and translanguaging to learn about and engage with the topic, and to make meanings. Conversely, in the third stage, they are expected to produce a spoken and/or written text in their target language. The use of multimedia platforms is encouraged at various stages of the MEC. By moving away from "[k]nowledge-transmission-oriented and fact-focused approaches to teaching which serve to perpetuate the dominant ways of interpreting the world" (Kubota & Lin, 2009, p. 12), the course focuses on the students' negotiation and co-construction of meaning and knowledge. Therefore, all the stages in the MEC cycle were used in the planning and implementation of the course. Although this course incorporated some aspects of CLIL, it also differed from conventional CLIL courses; for example, the definition of CLIL is "a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language" (Coyle et al., 2010, p. 1), and this dual language project course also focused on the learning of languages and content, which was intercultural communication via various topics. However, it differed from CLIL in the sense that, while conventional CLIL courses often entail more teacher language or content instruction, this dual language project course was focused heavily on student-led learning. In other words, the students were constantly involved in the designing and re-designing of the course (NLG, 1996).

In terms of language use, although monolingual ideologies are dominant in many CLIL contexts, including the Japanese context, the students' L1 and translanguaging can be used as scaffolding to facilitate students' learning (Lin, 2015). Moreover, in a discussion between Japanese and Arabic speakers attending a CLIL course at a Japanese university, the students engaged in translanguaging, and the translanguaging space was co-constructed simultaneously during the discussion (Tsuchiya, 2019b). Tsuchiya (2019a) also suggested that the use of translanguaging could create a paradigm shift in language education in Japan by altering students' language-learning experiences and their perceptions of language learning as being the achievement of native-speaker competence. Moreover, Nikula (2007) found that L1 use in CLIL classrooms could

serve as support for students to develop their identities as emergent bilinguals. Therefore, translanguaging pedagogy was applied in the course in order to challenge the monolingual ideology of language learning and to allow for the co-construction of meaning.

## *The study*

The TDL project course was offered online and 31 students enrolled. The focus of this paper is the analysis of the videos that the students created at the beginning of the course and the students' comments about the videos, which will be discussed in detail in the following section. I received ethical approval from both the university in Japan at which the study was conducted and from the university at which I am studying for my PhD. Invitation to participate in the study was sent to all the students in the class via email, including details about the study and a consent form. The students were informed that confidentiality would be guaranteed by changing their names and that of the course that they were in, and that they could withdraw at any time. Those who were interested in participating signed the consent forms and returned them to the researcher and the videos created by the students who gave their consent were used for the multimodal analysis in the study. In addition, although I was an instructor in the course, the videos used for the analysis were made as part of the course before the consent forms were sent, and the students were informed that their participation or non-participation in the study did not affect their final grades. The other source of data, my reflective journal, was written based on the field notes I took in class. After each lesson, I wrote a journal entry as a way of reflecting on the class; thus, the reflective journal was included in the study in order to understand the dynamic language use and meaning-making processes in the classes.

### The activity

At the beginning of the semester, a mini unit called the Cultural Awareness Activity workshop was offered on three lesson days. Nine activities were offered (Table 1) in order to increase the students' critical intercultural awareness regarding anti-racism and of potential issues that the students may encounter when working with students from different backgrounds.

In this Cultural Awareness Activity unit, students attending different language classes first met separately with their teachers; the course was explained, the students were informed that most of the activities would be based on group work, and that they would be learning how to work collaboratively with diverse group members, which would be important and useful not only at university, but also in society in general. They were then given three questions to think about in groups:

**Table 1**

Summary of activities in the Cultural Awareness Activity unit

| | Activity | Language |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Orientation to the course with an emphasis on collaborative group work | Japanese/English |
| 2. | Discussion of the three scenarios, coming up with what to do and phrases to use | Japanese/English |
| 3. | Thinking about the three scenarios individually at home in their stronger language | Japanese/English |
| 4. | Discussion of the three scenarios in mixed groups, and helping each other with language | Combination |
| 5. | Making a role-play video about one of the assigned scenarios | Combination |
| 6. | Watching and commenting on videos made by the classmates | Japanese/English |
| 7. | Oral reflection on the first group work, and a discussion of possible class rules in mixed groups | Combination |
| 8. | Decide about class rules | Combination |
| 9. | Written reflection on the mini topic, the Cultural Awareness Activity, conducted individually at home | Japanese/English |

Q1: What are some ways in which you can disagree in a sensitive way to avoid offending others?

Q2: What should you do when you do not understand someone's English/ Japanese in order not to offend them?

Q3: What can you say and do when discussing sensitive topics that may offend or upset other group members? For example, religion/lifestyle habits, war (comfort women, and so on) and gender (homosexuality and marriage).

These questions were generated by the instructors in order to prevent any potential discomfort students may have experienced, which may have led to unsuccessful group work throughout the semester. For example, what may be considered to be sensitive topics may vary depending on the culture and the specific context. Therefore, we provided some examples of what may be considered to be sensitive topics based on the discussions taking place in East Asia, including Japan, such as issues regarding comfort women and the topic of ho-

mosexual marriage; however, we emphasized that the students could propose their own topics.

The students were given a worksheet (Appendix 1) on which they could add explanations of what they could/should do and phrases they could use in each given scenario in their target language. They completed the worksheet as they discussed the three questions. The worksheet was divided into two parts, Japanese and English, and the students completed the part in their target language during the class. They were asked to think about the same questions in the other language, which was normally their first or stronger language, as their assignment. They were also told to think in the opposite language when completing the other part, as there may be differences in phrases and approaches when speaking in the two different languages.

The students from the different language classes met for the first time in the subsequent lesson; they were allocated into mixed groups and were asked to share what they had written on their worksheets. According to the MEC cycle, the first stages are intended for students to learn about and engage with the topic and meaning making. Therefore, the students were encouraged to translanguage and use multimodalities in the discussion. After they had shared what they had written on their worksheets and added more ideas and phrases, each group was randomly assigned one of the three scenarios to produce a role-play video. As the final stage in the MEC cycle is intended for students to produce spoken and/or written texts in their target language, the students were instructed to make two separate videos, one in Japanese and the other in English. Simple instructions were given to the students for this activity: they were simply asked to make two role-play videos about the assigned scenario in Japanese and in English, respectively, and that all group members must be included in the videos. They were then instructed to post their videos on the educational platform that the school used, to watch the videos posted by other groups and to make comments about at least three videos in their target language.

## Findings and data analysis

### Students' videos

In this section, I will share the findings from the students' videos and comments and will provide an analysis of the videos from the PoM perspective. Having been given the simple instruction to make role-play videos about the assigned topics, the students came up with a variety of scenarios and content. Of interest, many of the groups made videos including two different examples with a narrator explaining why and how the characters' attitudes and communication were not good. Normally, a non-sensitive approach was introduced

first via role play, followed by a narrator reflecting on the non-sensitive example and explaining what was not good about it and how it could be improved. A better approach was then illustrated in an improved version of the role play.

The students used various semiotic resources in the role-play videos. One aspect of the PoM, *available designs*, refers to the resources used to create meaning, including linguistic, social and cultural resources, and semiotic systems such as pictures and gestures. Not only were different languages, facial expressions and gestures used in the videos as part of the role play, but many other semiotic resources were also used to maximize communication with the audience. For example, one group recorded their role play using Zoom and used the chat function to show the main points (e.g., showing respect and providing alternative suggestions when disagreeing); their script was presented to the audience in both Japanese and English to maximize understanding (Appendix 2). Similarly, another group used various semiotic resources that were edited into the video to communicate their ideas clearly. For example, they used text and emojis (e.g., "bad example 🙅 ") when they were showing bad and good examples in the role play. In addition, this group used text in conjunction with oral narration while the narrator was explaining why the first example was not good and what would be better approaches in the situation (Appendix 2). Not to mention, there was no explicit instruction other than creating videos in English and in Japanese showing a sensitive approach to the topics was given. The use of various semiotic resources was also valued by the other students, as can be seen in the following comment:

> Instead of explaining the problem and its solution, utilizing the Zoom chat box to post the information was really helpful and to include both English and Japanese texts as well. (Student A)

In addition, many of the videos were based on the students' own experiences. For example, two groups made videos based on their experiences in the city in which the university is located. Both videos were about asking how to get to a specific place in the city, and showed people replying but speaking very quickly. The groups demonstrated polite ways to ask their interlocutors to speak more slowly and to tell them precisely what they did not understand. Other students related their own experiences in the comments responding to these videos, as in the following example:

> When I came to Japan as an exchange student, I had a similar experience. So we can understand what the group was trying to explain based on our own experience and this topic was well chosen. (Student B)

Both the videos and the comments included the students' cultural and social resources. In other words, the students used various available designs, such as

different languages and semiotic resources including their cultural and social resources, when designing and learning from the videos.

In addition, the students' comments about the videos suggested that the videos played the role of teachers by teaching the audience how to be culturally sensitive communicators. At the same time, when the students watch videos created by other groups, not only were they learning from the "teachers," they were also acting as critical learners who do not simply learn from the videos by watching them, but also by reflecting on their own past experiences and giving feedback to the video creators. There were some comments that indicated that the students were reflecting on their previous intercultural communication and group work, connecting these experiences to the videos created by their peers, and making comments about how they could improve their intercultural communication in the future. For example, one comment was as follows:

> I think this was a good video. When I was in my first year, I took a course which had intercultural collaborative group works, and I was criticizing other people's opinions or denying others' like it was demonstrated in the video. After that, the atmosphere of the group became bad and group members did not want to work collaboratively anymore. I had regretted this experience since then. In order to work collaboratively with others, when we have a discussion, we should talk like her (the girl in the video). This video is easy to understand, and the example shown is valuable. (Student C)

Another aspect of the PoM, *transformed practice*, refers to the process of meaning making by reflecting on what has been learned and applying the knowledge to personal contexts. As demonstrated in the excerpt above, the students were not only learning from the videos, they were also evaluating the videos and connecting them to their own experiences.

## Language use

In this section, I will use my reflective journal to explore the students' language use. As outlined in the activity section, the MEC cycle was integrated into the lessons. While the students completed their worksheets and the videos in the respective languages in the final stage of the MEC cycle, multimodalities and translanguaging were utilized in the first stages of the cycle. The fluid use of multimodalities and translanguaging in the meaning-making process can be observed in my journal entry for activities 4 and 5:

> Reflective journal #1
>
> What was interesting to me was how freely students switched between languages. One group I observed/joined was working on the Japanese part first. Everything was in Japanese, like from reading the question to discussing the

ideas to writing down the ideas. International students were explaining something in Japanese, and the Japanese student was writing down what she says in Japanese, but it was translated into a natural Japanese phrase. And naturally, the Japanese student asked other students「口調ってわかる?」and one student didn't understand, but another international student said「トーンオブボイスっていうのかな」. So she was trying to explain to the other international student the meaning in English words with Japanese pronunciation. Another thing that was interesting to me was that when the Japanese student wrote down「見下すような態度を取らない」from what they have talked about, one international student said「見下すは何ですか」so I made a gesture, like hand going down from my eye level, and she was like ahh and she understood and she wrote it down in her notes as it was a new expression for her. I witnessed the moment of learning through a natural interaction using multimodality. It was very interesting.

The dynamic nature of the students' language use, and how the nature of the diverse student body was assisting their learning can be seen in this reflective journal entry. What can also be observed in the journal is how the students use their full linguistic repertoire to help each other to learn regardless of their L1. In addition, in the example of a student explaining a Japanese word, 口調, using the English words "tone of voice" with the Japanese pronunciation, "toon obu boisu," we can observe that the students did not use one form of the language, but multiple forms of languages to communicate with each other. In addition, when I explained the Japanese word to the student who had asked the meaning of it, I did not use spoken language but a gesture instead, which she understood and learned a new word. What is also evident from this interaction is that I was not the central part of the students' learning, but part of their learning, adding to their learning by using my semiotic resources. As Lin (2019) argued, translanguaging and the use of semiotic resources play a crucial role in the meaning-making process in language classrooms.

## *Discussion*

In this section, I will discuss the findings from the study mainly in two aspects: teacher-student roles and language use in relation to conventional CLIL courses discussed in the research context. Table 2 is the summary of the differences in conventional CLIL courses and in the TDL course.

### Teacher-student roles

One important aspect of the PoM is the shift in the power dynamics in the teacher-student relationship. As demonstrated in the findings, teachers can shift the conventional teacher-student relationship to a more student-oriented one by allowing students to be creative and to discuss and negotiate meanings with their peers. What the teachers prepared for the lessons were the broad

**Table 2**

Summary of the differences in conventional CLIL courses and in the TDL course

|                    | Teacher-student roles  | Language use |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Conventional CLIL  | Tend to be teacher-centred | Mainly focus on the target language Translanguaging for learners' understanding |
| TDL course         | learner-centred        | Translanguaging for negotiation |

direction and value orientation, which was that cultural diversity should be respected. However, the students produced various scenarios, content, examples and intercultural communication strategies to navigate their own learning using various semiotic resources. In this approach, teachers are no longer the only source of knowledge, or the most knowledgeable people in the classroom. Instead, teachers are the facilitators and students are the content makers who are also part of the designing and re-designing process. Moreover, by creating a safe space, students can utilize all the available designs in their classroom to maximize their communicative potential.

## Use of translanguaging

The MEC cycle was employed and the use of translanguaging was encouraged in the process of negotiation and construction of knowledge in the TDL course. As can be observed in the reflective journal, both the students and the teacher were engaged in meaning making by drawing on all the available linguistic and semiotic resources (Lin, 2020). In other words, the students drew on their available designs to design and re-design their own learning. In this process, translanguaging operated as part of the available design and served as a crucial part of the negotiation and meaning-making process.

Moreover, when the students were allowed to utilize all the available designs, they co-created knowledge with their peers and negotiated not only the language, but also what was appropriate when communicating with people from diverse backgrounds. In other words, in the first stages of the MEC cycle, the students learned the content, which was interculturally sensitive approaches when working collaboratively in multicultural settings, with the help of translanguaging and the use of semiotic resources. In this process of learning, the teachers' job was not to teach the students what was appropriate, but to create and facilitate activities that allowed for the students' voices and negotiations. In this way, teachers can allow students to negotiate and create meaning with their peers, bringing their own experiences into the classroom and learning from each other's unique cultural and linguistic resources, which also leads

to transformed practice. Moreover, this process in the first stages of the MEC cycle led to the final stage of the cycle, which entailed the students producing texts using the worksheets and the videos in their target language.

## *Conclusion*

The principal aim of the present paper was to demonstrate how the PoM and translanguaging pedagogies can be applied in a language classroom in which students with diverse backgrounds were learning two different languages in a university setting in Japan. Specifically, the study explored the following research questions:

1. What kinds of teaching and learning activities can be provided to allow students to negotiate and co-create knowledge?
2. How do students in a tertiary TDL course engage with the PoM?

Using the role-play videos and the comments students made, as well as the research journal in the analysis, the study found that a language course can foster students' ability to engage in and negotiate locally situated communication strategies by allowing them to use translanguaging and various semiotic resources. In addition, by using all the available designs, students can design and re-design their own learning and teachers can also be part of the designing and re-designing of the learning by using their available designs. The findings of this research echo those of Lin and He (2017), who found that translanguaging entails "naturally occurring speech/action events during which participants of multilingual/multicultural backgrounds deploy their multilingual/multicultural resources" (p. 242). Adding to this, the present study argues that translanguaging should be seen as a crucial aspect of the students' negotiation and meaning making and can enhance the leaning outcomes when combined with the PoM. In addition, the present paper showed how the MEC cycle could be integrated with translanguaging and the PoM; however, the extent to and manner in which translanguaging and the PoM can assist in the final stage of the MEC, which is the production of text in the target language, can be explored further.

Lastly, as Tian and Shepard-Carey (2020) argued, teachers need to "develop agency and become classroom language policymakers to actively negotiate with and even challenge the dominant (monolingual) structure" (p. 9). Although it can be challenging to develop a course and to be accepted by the stakeholders, as this paper demonstrated, it is worth offering such courses because the students can teach and learn more than a teacher could teach by utilizing all their semiotic resources. Due to the rapidly changing world, pedagogy needs to accommodate students' diversity and allow space for the negotiation of meaning and the co-construction of knowledge.

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## *Appendix 1*

Worksheet for approaches and phrases to use in multicultural collaborative work

### Cultural Awareness Database
### 多文化協働学修で気をつけること

| English | 日本語 |
|---|---|
| **Question 1:**<br>What are some ways you can sensitively disagree to avoid offending others? | **質問 1 :**<br>相手を嫌な気持ちにしないで、反対意見を述べる |
| · start with phrases such as "Your idea is good but···" or "I agree but.."<br><br>· Always have a calm attitude and ask politely.<br><br>· Speak calmly and straight. | その意見もいいと思うけど、私はこの意見の方がいいんじゃないかなあと思います。<br><br>·相手の意見もいいと思っていることをまず伝える。 |
| **Question 2:**<br>What should you do when you don't understand someone's English/Japanese in order not to offend them? | **質問 2 :**<br>相手を嫌な気持ちにしないで、相手の言ったことが分からないと伝える |
| · Ask them politely to repeat what they have said.<br>· If somebody understands their language translate for them<br>· Keep an open mind and try to understand them. | すいません、○○の部分がよく分からなかったのですがもう 1 度説明してもらってもよろしいでしょうか？<br><br>·あくまでも自分が悪いスタンスで伝える。 |
| **Question 3:**<br>What can you say and do when discussing sensitive topics that may offend or upset other group members?<br>· Ex: religion/lifestyle habits, war (comfort women,etc), gender (homosexuality and marriage) | **質問 3 :**<br>相手を嫌な気持ちにしないで、デリケートなトピックについて話す<br>例: 宗教/生活習慣、戦争 (comfort women, etc),<br>　ジェンダー (ホモセクシャリティ and 同性婚) |
| · Avoid talking about those topics or just don't get involved in them.<br>· Emphasize that it is only your opinion, and everyone has an opinion on certain matters.<br>· Apologize beforehand and after (E.g. I'm sorry if I offend you / No offense) in order for the person to understand they mean no harm or offense. | いやな気持ちにさせてしまったら申し訳ないんだけど、▲▲についてどう思う？<br>（▲▲についてのお話聞かせてもらえないかな？？）<br><br>·嫌な気持ちにさせたらごめんなさいと一言断りを入れてから話し始める。 |

## *Appendix 2*
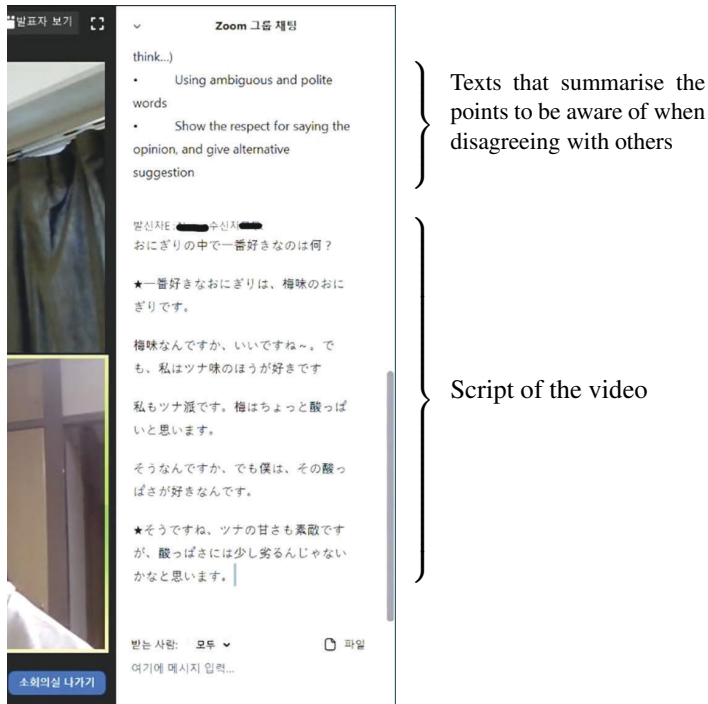


**Figure 1**

Main points and scripts written in the chat in a student video

Three students narrating the points to be aware of when disagreeing with others
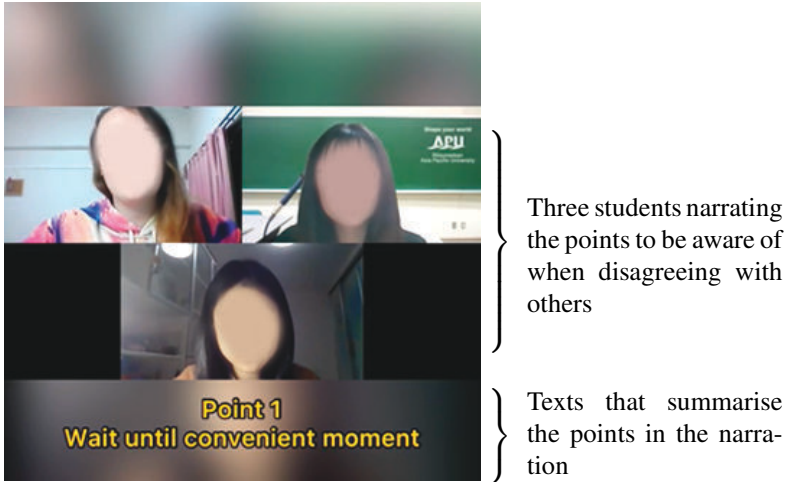
Texts that summarise the points in the narration

**Figure 2**

Students narrating points to consider with texts embodied in the video