Conforming migrant ideologies of English:
The homogenising impact of linguistic stratification

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Abstract

This article aims to examine English language ideologies held by translators and interpreters from migrant backgrounds in Australia in relation to transnational mobility and migrants' effort to fit into the host society. Based on the analysis of mediatised autobiographical narratives written by language workers, the article explores how mobility desires and integration efforts are tied to English language ideologies shaped by linguistic stratification. Specific attention is paid to discursive processes by which beliefs in English are constructed and naturalised in line with the dominant language ideologies attached to English. Analysis demonstrates that positive ideologies of English are constantly highlighted and mobilised to simplify the reality, whereas the actual conditions which affect migrants remain predominantly unsaid. By exploring the intersections between language ideologies and linguistic stratification, the article considers language ideologies as a way of deepening our understanding about the relationships between linguistic stratification and macro power structures.

Keywords: Australia, language ideologies, linguistic stratification, migrants, multiculturalism, translation and interpreting

Résumé

Cet article vise à examiner les idéologies linguistiques de la langue anglaise des traducteurs et interprètes issus de l'immigration en Australie en relation avec la mobilité transnationale et les efforts des migrants pour s'intégrer à la société d'accueil. Basé sur l'analyse de récits autobiographiques médiatisés écrits par des travailleurs bilingues, l'article explore comment les désirs de mobilité et les efforts d'intégration sont liés aux idéologies de la langue anglaise façonnées par la stratification linguistique. Une attention particulière est accordée aux processus discursifs par lesquels les croyances à propos de l'anglais sont construites et naturalisées conformément aux idéologies linguistiques dominantes attachées à l'anglais. L'analyse démontre que les idéologies positives de l'anglais sont constamment mises en avant et mobilisées pour simplifier la réalité, alors que les conditions réelles qui affectent les

migrants restent majoritairement non dites. En explorant les intersections entre les idéologies linguistiques et la stratification linguistique, l'article considère les idéologies linguistiques comme un moyen d'approfondir notre compréhension des relations entre la stratification linguistique et les macros-structures de pouvoir.

Mots-clés : Australie, idéologies linguistiques, stratification linguistique, migrants, multiculturalisme, traduction et interprétation

Introduction

Migration is a key feature of the contemporary world, in which, as of 2020, 281 million people or 3.6% of the total global population were living in countries in which they were not born (International Organization for Migration, 2022). Mobility typically flows from the Global South to the Global North, which is generally regarded as a sign of development and modernity (Van der Land, 2017). Although Australia is geographically located in the Global South, the country is considered as part of the Global North due to its status as a developed nation and its membership of the West, i.e., an English-speaking Anglo country (Kalemba, 2022).

As a popular migration destination, Australia is commonly known as a multicultural country, in which around 26% of the total population or over 7 million people were born overseas as of 2021 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Compared with other western multicultural societies (e.g., Canada, New Zealand, and the U.K.), Australian multiculturalism has faced little public backlash and is frequently proclaimed as a success by Australian politicians for its role in promoting social harmony and inclusion (Elias et al., 2021). The neat representation of multicultural Australia in which people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds live in harmony, however, may mismatch often struggling realities experienced by migrants. While migrants are officially included in the all-embracing spirit of Australian multiculturalism, migrants tend to be excluded from full social participation and remain on the periphery (Ang, 2001). In the Australian labour market, for example, discrimination against migrants from minority backgrounds is a persistent issue (see Junankar et al., 2010; Kosny et al., 2017).

The impact of the local stratification of linguistic diversity on the migrant struggles is particularly noteworthy. Although Australia does not have an official language, English has reigned as a de-facto national language since the white settlement in the 18th century, relegating other languages to the bottom of the linguistic hierarchies (Cho, 2023). It is not just any English but so-called "Standard Australian English", an imagined uniform variety of English which is used as a yardstick to determine the degree of linguistic legitimacy (Dovchin,

2019). Under the linguistic hierarchies deeply entrenched in Australian society, migrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds (hereafter NESB) tend to perceive English as a primary tool for integration into the host society.

Such language-based hierarchies are not specific to Australia but apply to the global context as well. There is a general perception that English-speaking countries are developed, prosperous, and wealthy, as demonstrated by the popularity of the major English-speaking countries (e.g., Australia, Canada, the U.K., and the U.S.) as migration destinations among people from the less developed parts of the world. Globally, English tends to be seen as a sign of modernity and development and is generally regarded as a key tool to achieve economic enhancement (Said-Sirhan, 2014). At an individual level, English is generally regarded as a key to career advancement, social mobility, and female liberation by individual language learners in the non-English-speaking parts of the world (see Cho, 2017; Piller & Takahashi, 2006).

Considering the local and global structures centred around English, it is worth questioning what ties there are between English and macro structures and how ideas attached to English influence individuals' mobility trajectories. This article investigates this very question in the case of migrants to find out about how individual language ideologies of English shape transnational mobilities and migrant efforts to fit into the host society. To this end, this study analyses mediatised autobiographical narratives of translators and interpreters from migrant backgrounds who are based in Australia. Attention is paid to discursive processes by which specific beliefs in English are constructed and naturalised in line with the dominant language ideologies attached to English.

The article is structured as follows: the following section on literature review discusses power and hierarchies in language and the linguistic stratification centred around English. After presenting the methodology of the present study, I analyse English language ideologies which emerge from the narratives, with a specific focus on if/how the identified ideologies are in line with the dominant discourses of English in both the global and local contexts. The article concludes with the discussion of the elements that contribute to the normalisation of the linguistic and power hierarchies by considering language ideologies as a way of deepening our understanding about the relationships between linguistic stratification and macro power structures.

Migrants in language-based power relations

Linguistic stratification is inseparable from linguistic insecurity, which is defined as "Speakers' feeling that the variety they use is somehow inferior, ugly, or bad" (Meyerhoff, 2006, p. 292). Labov (1966) developed the concept from his pioneering work on the sociolinguistic stratification in New York City, where he identified speakers' tendency to treat their speech varieties as

inferior to what was considered as the standard forms of English. Speakers' recognition of the gap between their own speech output and the desired speech form is found to be strongly linked to social class, as exemplified by the lower middle class New York speakers' tendency to hypercorrect speech according to the linguistic norm (Labov, 1972). The findings bear resemblance to those of Bourdieu (1977), who paid attention to the hypercorrecting tendency of *petit bourgeoisies* due to class consciousness relating to linguistic legitimacy. Though coming from different strands of sociolinguistics, both research highlights the social impact of language on individuals' consciousness, behaviours, and class desires, all of which shape and are shaped by macro power relations.

Since Labov, the field of linguistic insecurity has continued to evolve, with the notion applied to different geographical and social contexts. The illegitimatising impact of the prestigious language on speakers unable to produce the legitimate language strongly relates to standard language ideology (see Lippi-Green, 2012; Wiese, 2015). According to standard language ideology, the domination of a particular language variety is not a natural phenomenon but is ideologically driven to benefit a particular class and maintain the existing social structures (see also Bourdieu, 1991). In light of standard language ideology, linguistic insecurity can be considered as not just subjective feelings but outcomes of unequal power relations operating in local as well as global fields hierarchised by language.

An emerging body of research specifically explores the intersections between language ideologies and linguistic insecurity held by migrants, with a focus on English. Park's (2014) research on linguistic insecurity among transnational workers engaged in the new economy is one good example. Reframing the notion of linguistic insecurity as "a way of exploring the link between language ideologies and the subjective experiences of translational workers" (p. 243), the study highlights how linguistic insecurity stemmed from conflicting ideologies attached to English which is implicated in the tensions between the old ideology of language as a marker of identity and the new ideology of language as a skill (see also Heller, 2010). While the transnational worker of the study fully embraces the latter ideology of language as an essential skill for career advancement, the traditional dichotomy embedded in native vs. non-native speakers of English is found to make the worker feel inferior and insecure about his future possibilities. By demonstrating the strong ties between linguistic insecurity and language ideologies, the study emphasises language ideologies as a useful way of understanding the evolving nature of linguistic stratification.

The transnational nature of linguistic stratification as a cause behind linguistic insecurity is also highlighted in Said-Sirhan's (2014) study on Malay

migrants in Singapore. Illustrating feelings of insecurity held by migrants unable to produce "Standard English", the research reveals the state ideology of English as a language capital in meritocratic and neoliberal Singapore as one primary factor, which exacerbates linguistic insecurity experienced by the migrants. The local variety of English is delegitimised by the state emphasis on "good" English as a key to national development, making migrants with limited competence in English feel devalued and vulnerable (see also Foo & Tan, 2019).

English as a cause of linguistic insecurity figures prominently in Cho's (2015) research on English-Korean interpreters based in Korea too. The participants were former sojourners or migrants who acquired English language proficiency through early exposures to English during their time abroad. The study identifies a heightened sense of linguistic inferiority held by the participants, who viewed their English language proficiency as not meeting the expected "native-level" English. In Korea, English competence is highly valued, and there is a strong societal tendency which idealises sojourning abroad, particularly studying in the Inner Circle countries (e.g., Australia, Canada, the U.K., and the U.S.). As people who learned English overseas are often regarded as perfect, if not native, speakers of English among Koreans, the subjects felt inferior and insecure about their language skills, despite being proficient speakers of English. The study highlights the socially constructed nature of linguistic insecurity which relates to the global dominance of English and the native speaker norm deeply embedded in the global linguistic hierarchies.

Taken together, the extant research emphasises that linguistic insecurity is not only subjective but also structural and that is strongly implicated in the global linguistic stratification characterised by the power of English. It bears noting that the global structure is not automatically sustained; it requires active consent and participation from people who believe in the legitimacy of the macro hierarchies. Taking popular ideas attached to English in non-English-speaking countries as an example, English is predominantly associated with positive ideas (see Introduction). By extension, English-speaking countries have traditionally been associated with positive imageries. For migrants from the less developed parts of the world, English-speaking countries constitute core members of "the West" which is popularly imagined as a dream, a fantasy and an inspiration (Salazar, 2011). In the case of Australia, which is regarded as part of the West, the country is often imagined by aspirant migrants as a dream country in which negative social elements such as discrimination and racism are not relevant in the multicultural ethos of inclusion for all (Takeda, 2014).

Considering the ties between linguistic stratification and the popular imagination of English, it is important to question what roles English plays

in constructing and reinforcing popular ideas relating to migration and social integration in this age of transnational migration. This study, therefore, examines the following questions:

1. How is English imagined by people in non-English-speaking parts of the world and how do those beliefs mediate decisions to migrate?

2. What specific individual ideas are attached to English in terms of migrants' efforts to fit into the host society?

3. How are the identified language ideologies tied to the popular discourses of English?

The article examines these very questions, with one group of migrant language workers as a key site of investigation. By analysing mediatised autobiographical narratives of migrant translators and interpreters in Australia, it investigates discursive processes by which consent to the linguistic stratification and macro structures is naturalised.

The study

In order to address the research questions, the study analyses mediatised autobiographical narratives of translators and interpreters in Australia. The researcher collected articles from *Practitioner Spotlight*, the online repository of professional and personal journeys of translators and interpreters in Australia run by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (hereafter NAATI), a governing body of professional translators and interpreters in Australia. Since it first appeared on the NAATI website in April 2020, *Practitioner Spotlight* has published monthly articles contributed by translators and interpreters from various cultural backgrounds in Australia. The autobiographical narratives generally follow the story patterns of pre-migration days, professional experiences and a life in Australia.

In total, 24 articles have been published between the period of April 2020 and September 2022. Nineteen out of the 24 contributors have migrant backgrounds, and all nineteen articles have been collected in October 2022 for the purpose of data analysis. The language backgrounds of the contributors are Assyrian Neo-Aramaic, Brazilian-Portuguese, Croatian, French, Hungarian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Nepali, Norwegian, Serbian, Spanish, Thai, Turkish, and Urdu (see Appendix). Out of the nineteen people, four migrated when they were young, thirteen as adults, and the time of the arrival in Australia was unclear in the case of two narrators.

The samples represent a rare collection of stories written from the very perspectives of migrant translators and interpreters working at the forefront of multiculturalism. In line with the key research aim of examining English

language ideologies, data analysis focuses on examining if and how a particular view of language has been constructed, how this compares with the dominant discourses of English and why particular stories get mobilised in the ways they do. In order to analyse the data, a critical thematic analysis (hereafter CTA) as developed by Lawless and Chen (2019) was undertaken.

While thematic analysis is widely used for narrative analysis, Lawless and Chen (2019) argue that its focus on identifying recurrent themes leaves the analysis lacking a critical framework. As a method designed to complement a lack of criticality in thematic analysis, CTA places an emphasis on why and how certain codes are recurrent, repeating, and forceful in ways that help to maintain and reproduce social structures and inequalities. CTA may appear to be similar to Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter CDA), yet the main difference is that CDA focuses on the linguistic form and function of texts (Fairclough, 2013), whereas CTA takes patterned themes as a basis to understand how thematic patterns are reflective of dominant macro ideologies. To achieve the aim, Lawless and Chen (2019) have developed a two-stage coding system which consists of open and closed coding. The initial stage of open coding aims to identify discursive patterns which are salient in individual narratives as well as across the data. The ensuing closed coding then focuses on uncovering elements that might be absent and/or might be concealed in relation to dominant ideologies.

In an effort to uncover elements that might be concealed, "erasure and highlighting" (Irvine & Gal, 2000) serves as an appliable tool to understand the processes of naturalisation in the closed coding stage. The concept of erasure and highlighting represents a process of creating a particular phenomenon by simplifying social situations that do not conform to dominant ideologies and highlighting certain social elements within dominant ideological frameworks. Erasure and highlighting are mutually complementary and must occur synchronously, as the strategy simplifies the social field to naturalise the workings of the powerful macro ideologies, while masking the complex realities that do not fit the dominant ideologies (see Park, 2010 for example).

A caveat is in order: considering the nature of the data, which is designed to promote the profession of translation and interpreting for the public, it can be conjectured that the overall tone of the narratives, particularly those relating to the profession, may be positive. In consideration of the nature of the data, it is important to question why the narratives are presented in certain ways, if certain elements remain unsaid, and how the discursive strategies employed in the data help disseminate ideas that are in line with the dominant ideologies. The data, therefore, represent an ideal site to examine the discursive operation of linguistic stratification from the unique perspectives of migrant translators and interpreters whose voices remain underheard.

Data analysis identifies selective representations of Australia and English, in which positive images of Australia and English are constantly highlighted, yet actual conditions of migrants remain invisible. Table 1 presents the data analysis schema of the present research.

Table 1
Data analysis schema

Open coding		Close coding	
		Highlighted	Erased
Australia	• Australia as a Western country • Australia as a land of opportunities • Australia as a multicultural country	• North-South dichotomy • Positive images of Australia	• Migrant realities
English	• English as a language of developed countries • Value of English • Struggles of NESB migrants • Translation and interpreting as linguistic and cultural bridges	• Symbolic and practical importance of English • Language services essential for multiculturalism	• Value of other languages • Non-linguistic elements which impact migrants

In what follows, the article discusses the results of the data analysis in detail.

Results

This section presents two distinctive types of English language ideologies relating to transnational mobility and migrants' integration efforts. The ideologies relating to transnational mobility are discussed in the context of the global North-South dichotomy. English language ideologies relevant to migrant integration efforts are contextualised in Australian multiculturalism.

English as a medium to the West

One of the most prominent themes of the narratives is fantasies and dreams attached to the West and Australia held by the narrators prior to migration. The analysis of the texts indicates that English-speaking people in western countries were imagined to be happier and wealthier compared to local people in the original countries. This has led some people to develop fantasies about overseas and desires for the foreign land, where life was believed to be much better than the familiar at home, as narrated by a Nepali translator and interpreter (Example 1):

(1) Growing up, I met people from all over the world but most of them were 'Whites'. Interestingly, even though they all looked alike, the way they spoke English was very different. I found this fascinating. Moreover, they seemed so carefree and had a lot of money to buy anything, eat in the restaurants and live in the hotels. I thought, at their home, do they ever cook and clean like my mum? Do they have to worry about the bills like we do? I wanted to find out. I decided that, one day, I will go there to see for myself and live such a 'happy' life, if there is one.   (Nepali translator and interpreter, Article 4)

The contrast between *here* and *there* can be explained by the concept of "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991). Similar to a nation where the members will never know, meet, or even hear of most of the people in the country, yet "in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (p. 6), the West is often imagined to be a coherent set of spaces which offers better opportunities and an enhanced range of possibilities (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). For many people living in less developed parts of the world, countries in the Anglosphere are imagined to be similar (Stratton, 2009), and the description of Western people being wealthy, happy, and carefree in the narrative fits the popular imageries of the West.

It bears noting how the West is specifically imagined to be occupied by people fluent in English. While the concept of the West encompasses not only English-speaking but also non-English-speaking countries (e.g., non-English-speaking countries in Europe), the land of happiness is presented to belong to the former in the narrative, as demonstrated by the specific mentioning of English and mostly 'white' people who spoke the language. English as a signifier of the fantastic West can be demonstrated by another narrative written by a Spanish translator and interpreter (Article 6). Thanks to her bilingual skills, the narrator worked for the New Zealand Embassy in Lima. Through the job, the narrator discovered "the fascinating world of "foreigners"" (quotes original). Although unspecified in the article, *foreigners* in this context — the New Zealand Embassy — are conjectured to be English-speaking westerners. Equating fantasies about a foreign land with English illustrates the naturalisation of English as a language of the West.

As a language of the West, English is valorised in the narratives. Some narrators describe their first exposure to English as novel and fascinating. In the narrative of one Korean interpreter (Article 18), the interpreter became engrossed with English language learning as a young boy and likened his language journey to "love affairs". English is described as a language of enormous instrumental value, which "could open or shut doors depending on your level of proficiency", according to a Turkish interpreter (Article 14). The positive ideas attached to English are in line with the typical association of English with something fantastic among people living in the other parts of the

world (see Introduction).

Opportunities to converse in English in the pre-migration times are described as the actualisation of the pre-held dreams attached to the West, hence English as a medium to acquire a membership of an imagined community (Cho, 2017; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). See Example 2:

(2) During my four-year undergraduate study, I got a chance to spend one year in Dublin, Ireland as an exchange student. Being able to speak English in an English-speaking country was like a dream come true.

(Mandarin interpreter, Article 15)

As part of the Anglosphere, Australia was specifically imagined as a dream country by many narrators. The narrators' encounters with Australia occurred through diverse avenues. In the case of one Thai translator, he developed fantasies about Australia as influenced by his architecture classes at a university in Thailand, in which Australia was used as primary case studies. Those who had travelled for sightseeing or had sojourned in Australia for English language learning had highly positive experiences, which in turn influenced their eventual moves to Australia (Examples 3, 4, and 5):

(3) Being a new country with one of the most advanced planning systems in the modern world, I was intrigued by the idea of seeing the 'real' Australia.

(Thai translator, Article 11)

(4) I originally learned English as part of the standard Japanese high school curriculum and first visited Australia for a one-month English program at university. Being immersed in a new culture, even for a very short time, was eye opening for me.   (Japanese translator, Article 10)

(5) Fast forward ten years, not only did I see the Opera House with my own eyes, I also decided to live in Australia, this beautiful country permanently.

(Mandarin translator and interpreter, Article 8)

While the analysis of the data highlights Australia as a fantastic Western country and English as a tool to get connected to a bigger world, the value of other languages is, however, hardly discussed in the narratives. Where other languages are mentioned, the learning of these languages is described as a natural outcome of growing up in a multilingual environment in the original countries. In the case of a translator and interpreter who specialises in Dari, Hazaragi, Persian and Urdu (Article 7), for example, he says that individual multilingualism was "not only common but expected" in his border city in Pakistan. A similar pattern can also be found in the case of an Indonesian translator (Article 13) in which the translator recalls her upbringing in a multilingual milieu in Africa as "as normal to me as breathing".

While the narratives naturalise this kind of learning as an activity requiring no effort and hence carrying little commercial value, it is worth noting the

rediscovery of the value of languages other than English in Australia. As an example, the aforementioned Indonesian translator recalls that it was not until she moved to Australia as an adolescent that she saw the benefits of her multilingual resources, which were (in her words) "expanding my worldview and developing skills that could enable exciting travel and career opportunities". A narrative like this serves to promote Australia as a land of opportunities, where bilingual skills can facilitate both professional careers and the pursuit of leisure activities.

The analysis of the data indicates strong relationships between the West and English, which serves as a sign of the developed parts of the world, a language of the fantastic Anglosphere and a medium to the desired destination. As part of the English-speaking world, Australia is described on predominantly positive terms, with English as one key shaper of the pre-held fantastic images of Australia. Having examined language ideologies relating to the pre-migration times, the next section investigates language ideologies narrated in the post-migration experiences in Australia.

English as a cause of and solution to migrant struggles

The analysis of the post-migration data indicates Australia as a multicultural country and predominantly positive portrayal of Australian multiculturalism. At a mundane level, diversity in ethnic food is celebrated as a symbol of multiculturalism, a discourse aligned to *food multiculturalism* in which ethnic food has long been used as representations of cultural diversity in Australia (Flowers & Swan, 2012). For example, a Spanish translator and interpreter (Article 6) links multiculturalism specifically to food, by saying "multiculturalism arrived [in the 1980s] and with it lovely food, restaurants and cafes". At a philosophical level, multiculturalism is associated with the primary ethos of freedom and tolerance. In the words of a Japanese translator (Article 10), she was impressed by "particularly the cultural diversity and free expression of that diversity" during her short-term sojourn in Australia. The same article describes her encounter with Australian multiculturalism as highly liberating, as demonstrated in the following expression: "I felt as if I could breathe more easily in Australia". The expressed contrast between Australia and her home country serves to highlight Australia as a nation of high democratic values which represent the fundamental spirit of Australian multiculturalism (Jakubowicz, 1981).

The discursive process by which Australia is constructed as an exemplary multicultural society can be illustrated by another narrative relating to Australia's reception of refugees. In her recollection of the influx of Spanish-speaking refugees in the mid-1980s, the aforementioned Spanish interpreter (Article 6) says that "They [refugees] were very welcome and comfortably

housed at the Pennington Hostel". She goes on to highlight individual language support available for new arrivals in those days such as translating school report cards and correspondence for every migrant. Furthermore, politicians are described to be highly interested in multiculturalism and multilingualism. Such narratives help to construct Australia as a model multicultural nation, which respects humanitarian values and provides generous welfare support to facilitate refugee settlement in the society.

It is, however, important to note a considerable lack of discussions about negative social elements affecting migrants in multicultural societies. Research (e.g., Fozdar & Torezani, 2008; Junankar et al., 2010; Kosny et al., 2017; Li, 2019) shows that many migrants in Australia experience cultural biases, discrimination, and racism. These negative elements are, however, not mentioned at all in the samples. Out of the 19 samples, there are only two accounts which discuss a gap between dreams and realities encountered in migration journeys. At the same time, the career of the narrators is highlighted in particularly positive terms. The freelancing nature of the profession is described as a source of excitement and enrichment, which is linked to personal and professional development as exemplified in Examples 6 and 7:

(6) I fell in love with the breadth and variety of the interpreter's life and the diverse experiences it offered [. . .] The excitement and possibilities are endless and I just never know when my phone is going to ring or an email pop with the next assignment.

(Translator and interpreter in Portuguese and Spanish, Article 12)

(7) There is a very wide range of types of texts that need to be translated that I am always learning something new.

(Translator in Serbian, Croatian and Hungarian, Article 3)

Considering the nature of the data, which are designed to promote the profession of translation and interpreting, such positive portrayals of the profession may not come as a surprise. It is, however, worth noting discursive processes by which the normative expectation of translation and interpreting as a cultural and linguistic bridge helps construct positive images of Australia. The metaphor of translation and interpreting as a cultural and linguistic bridge, link, or connector is commonly found in the data. In the words of a Mandarin translator and interpreter (Article 8), translation and interpreting represents "the vital link in communication for the CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) communities". Translators and interpreters are described as powerful for their ability to connect "two worlds which would not have meaningful contact without us", according to another narrator specialising in Serbian, Croatian, and Hungarian (Article 3).

The role of translation and interpreting work as a cultural and linguistic bridge also means that it is critical for the success of multiculturalism in

Australia. In the words of a Japanese translator (Article 10), translation and interpreting is said to be essential for "creating a truly egalitarian multicultural society at all levels" and language workers bring people "close to the promise of a truly multicultural society". While the bridge metaphor is reflective of the important work that language workers perform to enable access to critical information for CALD communities, it bears noting how struggling migrant experiences tend to be simplified as language issues, and translation and interpreting is presented as a solution, if not *the* solution to address social exclusion of migrants (Example 8):

(8) I learnt a second lesson when I met some Nepali speaking refugees from Bhutan living in Australia that life is still incredibly hard even though your basic needs are met when you do not speak the language of the place you are in. Some refugees with zero English were finding it so hard to navigate the surroundings, to access the healthcare system and to know their rights. Then, I realised, I can be a help to them bridging the gap between two languages. I sat for the then Paraprofessional Interpreter Test in Nepali and started working as an interpreter.
<div align="right">(Nepali translator and interpreter, Article 4)</div>

A similar narrative comes from a Mandarin interpreter (Article 15), who emphasised her professional duty to empower her fellow countrymen, who were described to be in vulnerable positions for being unable to speak English. In these narratives, language is presented as a key contributor to a migrant hardship: no English, no social inclusion. Conversely speaking, a lack of English as a formidable obstacle to social inclusion implies that social inclusion is achievable as long as language barriers are removed. This is precisely where translation and interpreting is constructed as a key multicultural enabler for its role in addressing language barriers. While the important social work that language workers perform cannot be understated, it should be noted how the focus on language barriers serves to disregard other significant problems affecting migrants in Australia.

As discussed previously, migrants in Australia experience varying degrees of social exclusion. In particular, racial discrimination is often a key cause of social exclusion yet is seldom addressed in social inclusion policies in which racism is assumed to be not relevant in multicultural Australia (Berman & Paradies, 2010). Denial of racism is indeed a key characteristic of Australian politics, and denying Anglo-privilege is said to be part of an effort to maintain a positive cultural self-image as a multicultural society (Dunn & Nelson, 2011). For denial to work, it takes silence about the problem. Dunn and Nelson's (2011) research reveals negative consequences for people in Australia from discussing, criticising, and reporting racism. The same study also demonstrates the reluctance of migrants in Australia to acknowledge racism to avoid potential costs associated with becoming a victim of racism (see also Paradies,

2006). An attempt to become invisible to the host population is indeed a strategy employed by a powerless group for survival (Stratton, 2000). As the unequal power relations in the social field operate to conceal the negative social elements, they, in turn, work to strengthen the ideal images of the host society — Australia — as a fair and inclusive society in which social exclusion is not relevant.

The discursive construction of translation and interpreting as a key to social inclusion is reinforced by reported satisfaction from helping others among the narrators. As described in the following excerpts (Examples 9 and 10), the narrators accentuate translation and interpreting as a form of social work performed for people in vulnerable positions and highlight the life-changing impact of bilingual work on migrants:

(9) Seeing the impact of my work brought me great satisfaction as I helped people from different walks of life access critical information in medical centres, hospitals, courts and tribunals and so on.   (French interpreter, Article 16)

(10) Many interpreting clients are the most vulnerable people of our society — and playing a role in removing some of their obstacles means a lot to me.
                    (Translator and interpreter in Norwegian and Urdu, Article 19)

The reported sense of reward for helping people in need is, indeed, found to be one significant motivator for translators and interpreters in Australia (Hale, 2011). At the same time, it is worth noting how language work is described as a key enabler of Australian multiculturalism. As illustrated, migrant struggles are predominantly tied to a lack of English and social exclusion is presented as an issue that can be addressed by language workers, with significant non-linguistic issues such as racism unmentioned at all. The construction of language as a facilitator of social inclusion, in turn, serves to strengthen the desirable images of Australian multiculturalism, in which members are happily engaged with cultural diversity and make conscious effort to promote social inclusion.

Discussion and conclusion

This study has examined migrant language ideologies relating to English in pre-migration and post-migration phases. Data analysis identifies two distinctive types of language ideologies: English as a language of and a medium to the West; English as a cause of and solution to migrant struggles. While positive ideas relating to English and Australia are highlighted, negative elements which impact day-to-day experiences of migrants on the ground are erased. The key findings of the research can be summarised as follows.

First, the identified ideology of English as a language of the West and a connector to the bigger world reveals the role of English in normalising

fantastic imageries of English-speaking countries. As demonstrated, the West is often equated with English-speaking countries, which tend to be seen as affluent and developed societies by people in the other parts of the world. The pre-migration ideas about the West indicate English as a sign of wealth and development and general beliefs in the superiority of the English-speaking Anglophone countries. The findings reveal the potential significant role of English in shaping and influencing migration desires. Relatedly, the identified idea of English as a language of the West highlights the role of English in naturalising the macro global structures centred around English. The findings, therefore, provide a glimpse into how the existing structures are sustained and strengthened by popular subscription to the ideas of English as a language of the superior world.

Second, the ideology of English as a cause of migrant hardship serves to naturalise translation and interpreting as an enabler of social inclusion for the marginalised. In this discourse, Australia is presented as a model multicultural nation which is free, egalitarian, and generous to migrants. The construction of Australia as a successful multicultural country is, albeit ironically, facilitated by the construction of English as a cause of migrant struggles. According to this logic, migrants tend to suffer due to a lack of English language proficiency, which can be effectively addressed by the provision of translation and interpreting services. While the important role that language workers play cannot be understated, it should be noted that language is not the only source of problems for migrants. Racism, for example, is an ongoing issue in Australia (see section "English as a cause of and a solution to migrant struggles"). The analysis reveals how language ideologies serve to simplify the reality in a way that conforms to popular discourses of translation and interpreting as a cultural and linguistic bridge, hence naturalising English as a cause of and a solution to migrant struggles.

Third, the identified language ideologies are found to be in line with the general discourses relating to the linguistic stratification centred around English, and it is important to pay attention to how the linguistic stratification shapes and potentially constrains migrant narratives. The homogenising impact of the popular discourses of English is well illustrated in the highlighting of only the positive elements of English within the macro structures characterised by the global North-South dichotomy and Australian multiculturalism. Individual narratives often serve as "carriers of dominant messages" (Goodson, 1995, p. 95), yet the degree of conformity might be stronger in the case of migrants who tend to feel insecure about their positions in the host society. By paying attention to *what is unsaid*, the findings emphasise the importance of investigating silence about particular social elements in migrant stories at the intersection between language ideologies and linguistic stratification.

Finally, the research highlights the relevance of language ideologies to studying linguistic stratification and linguistic insecurity, which is the key theme of this special issue. By demonstrating the strong ties between language ideologies and linguistic stratification, the study illustrates the importance of situating linguistic insecurity in a macro context of power structures. Studies on linguistic stratification and insecurity tend to focus on issues at the individual level, and it is important to expand the scope of research to investigate issues which affect minority groups in a broader context to gain insight into unequal power relations operating in the social field. In this regard, language ideologies are considered as a way of enhancing our understanding about the relationships between the linguistic stratification and macro power structures which operate at both global and local levels.

By examining the processes by which ideas are normalised, the study has highlighted the power of dominant ideologies which effectively make negative elements invisible, despite the disproportionate impact of dominant ideologies on the marginalised populations.

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Appendix:
Narrator profiles

Article No.	Publication date	Gender	Language background in addition to English
1	23 May 2022	M	Translator and interpreter in Indonesian
2	21 January 2022	F	Interpreter in Assyrian Neo-Aramaic
3	29 November 2021	F	Translator in Serbian, Croatian, and Hungarian
4	01 November 2021	F	Translator and interpreter in Nepali
5	01 October 2021	F	Interpreter in Mandarin and Cantonese
6	30 August 2021	F	Translator and interpreter in Spanish
7	02 August 2021	M	Translator in Persian, Dari, and Urdu Interpreter in Hazaragi, Dari, and Urdu
8	01 July 2021	F	Translator and interpreter in Mandarin
9	01 June 2021	F	Translator in Korean
10	03 May 2021	F	Translator in Japanese
11	01 March 2021	M	Translator in Thai
12	01 February 2021	F	Translator and interpreter in Portuguese and Spanish
13	01 December 2020	F	Translator in Indonesian
14	26 October 2020	M	Interpreter in Turkish
15	02 October 2020	F	Interpreter in Mandarin
16	31 August 2020	F	Interpreter in French
17	27 July 2020	M	Translator and interpreter in Mandarin
18	02 July 2020	M	Translator and interpreter in Korean
19	26 May 2020	F	Translator and interpreter in Norwegian and Urdu