

Language Teaching and Learning as Cultural Translation

This talk explores the teaching and learning of foreign languages as a process of cultural translation. I draw examples from a sociolinguistic ethnography of translanguaging practices in a karate club in east London, UK, where formulaic Japanese is taught as part of karate techniques, practised as the language of performance and rituals and valued as the key indicator of karate expertise over other languages. Key karate verbal routines such as *osu* and *kiai*, while linguistically difficult to translate, bespeak core karate values such as respect and confidence. I examine how cultural traditions, values and practices are translated through the process of teaching and learning of such formulaic language and explore the theoretical implications of taking language teaching and learning as a process of cultural translation.

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