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STUDY

Power dynamics in translingual practices for Chinese as a Second Language writing education

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of power dynamics – represented by linguistic privilege, learning environment, and identity formation – on translingual practices in Chinese as a Second Language (CSL) writing education. It focuses on a specific case involving Chinese language learners at a Sino-US joint-venture university in China to elucidate these dynamics in a real-life context. The findings revealed how societal expectations, internalized power dynamics, and prevailing language ideologies nurtured perceptions of a diminished Chinese identity and influenced students' language preferences and engagement in CSL writing. The article argues that the decolonization of writing education necessitates critical awareness of power dynamics and the challenges they pose to monolingual ideologies. It also proposes pedagogical strategies to incorporate power dynamics into translingual practices by emphasizing the need to embrace language diversity and fluidity, facilitate translingual identity formation, and employ reflective practices. By raising awareness of power dynamics in translingual practices, educators can empower students to confront the linguistic status quo, promote linguistic justice, and cultivate a more equitable CSL writing education.

1. Introduction

Translingual practices, which highlight the dynamic negotiation and synergy between diverse linguistic and semiotic resources for meaning-making, have increasingly become one of the focal points of research in language and writing education (Canagarajah, 2013; García & Li, 2014; Horner et al., 2011; Sun & Lan, 2023). However, the current research heavily focuses on English language education because of its widespread use as a global lingua franca (Sun, 2022; Sun & Lan, 2021a). Although there has been some discussion on the power dynamics within translingual practices in the context of Chinese language education (Song, 2022; Wang, 2022), this discourse has predominantly concentrated on oral communication, which leaves written communication inadequately examined. This paper, therefore, addresses this void by investigating the power dynamics inherent in translingual practices, particularly in the context of writing in Chinese as a Second Language (CSL). In the current global context, understanding such dynamics is fundamental to fostering effective and inclusive language and writing education.

The entrenched position of English in language and writing education has led to an extensive study of its influence on power relations in these fields (De Costa, 2022). However, power relations in language are not static; they dynamically shift in various discourses, such as when English is considered a first, second, or foreign language. Moreover, rapid globalization has disrupted traditional language hierarchies by recognizing and harnessing the roles of other languages, including Chinese, in diverse discourses. This shift suggests a need to explore emerging power dynamics in language, specifically translingual practices in language and writing education. This paper, therefore, serves

two key objectives: Firstly, it investigates the relatively under-explored area of power dynamics in CSL writing by conducting an in-depth analysis of CSL students' writing samples and language ideologies at a Sino-US joint-venture university in China. This case study aids in understanding how power dynamics influence translingual practices within the CSL writing process. Secondly, it outlines potential strategies for language educators to enhance students' awareness of these dynamics, thereby equipping them to navigate the intricate translingual practices more effectively for learning.

This investigation into power dynamics in translingual practices within CSL writing education contributes to the existing literature by focusing on under-explored CSL written communications and exploring how CSL learners navigate and influence power dynamics through their translingual practices in an academic context. It helps comprehend the relationship between student writings, their linguistic choices, and the underlying power dynamics. This research also proposes pedagogical approaches that embrace the linguistic diversity of CSL learners to foster an educational environment that is both inclusive and adaptable to the diverse learner needs.

2. Power dynamics in translingual writing practices

Since Horner et al.'s (2011) pioneering proposition of a translingual approach to writing – which highlights writer agency, considers heterogeneity as the norm, and advocates for a challenge to monolingualism – translingual practices have made their mark as an area of investigation within writing education. With the increasing interest in translingual practices, a crucial element has surfaced that encompasses the inherent power dynamics and their ramifications for a decolonial agenda in the field of writing education (Canagarajah, 2024; Cushman, 2016; Lee, 2023). This decolonial initiative arises as a response to the enduring legacy of English hegemony in global communication, which is inextricably linked with the residues of colonialism. Such historical power imbalances have repeatedly manifested themselves and been perpetuated in language education (Flores, 2013; García et al., 2021; Li & García, 2022). A translingual approach to writing serves to confront these deeply ingrained power dynamics by recognizing the fluidity, synergy, and negotiability of language, including those marginalized within the conventional linguistic hierarchy. Scholars, such as Canagarajah (2024), argued that translingual practices offer an effective tool for multilingual students to question and challenge the entrenched norms and conventions of academic writing, thereby enabling them to assert their unique linguistic identities. Similarly, Lu and Horner (2016) emphasized a shift away from monolingualism and homogeneity toward an understanding of language and writing as inherently variable and heterogeneous phenomena. These perspectives reveal a profound decolonial transition within writing education as they strive to dismantle monolingualism and leverage all language and cultural resources to foster a more inclusive and equitable educational environment.

Building upon the decolonial agenda in writing education, translingual practices play a role in addressing linguistic justice, especially within the increasingly multilingual and multicultural contexts. Traditional writing education, primarily oriented toward English, has been influenced by an expected norm often associated with native-speaker proficiency (Matsuda, 2006). However, this prescriptive norm has been confronted by translingual practices, which challenge the monolithic nature of English monolingualism and accentuate the legitimacy and importance of other languages – and their interactions – in the writing process (Canagarajah, 2013). This deep dive into power dynamics within translingual practices initiates a critical appraisal of the dominance typically attributed to native-speaker norms and prompts advocacy for linguistic justice within writing education (Lee, 2016). This perspective is also articulated by Horner et al. (2010), who emphasized the necessity for writing education to shift away from monolingualism, which often privileges one language – usually English – or a standardized variety of English such as American Edited English or Standard Written English. They argued that English monolingualism, which has deeply pervaded societies and higher education systems, undervalues the linguistic and cultural resources that multilingual and multicultural students bring into the classroom and underestimates the complexity and variability of these students' language use. These studies emphasize the essential requirement to recognize the

fluid and dynamic nature of language – an understanding that is especially relevant when dealing with issues of linguistic justice within the vibrant multilingual realities of contemporary classrooms.

The call for a decolonial agenda in translingual studies extends beyond mere discourse around linguistic justice, especially within writing education. It also carries substantial pedagogical implications that can enrich teaching and learning processes. This becomes evident when educators encourage the use of their students' diverse linguistic repertoires to facilitate teaching and learning. In their research, Lee and Jenks (2016) substantiated this by illustrating that students in composition courses who were empowered to draw upon their full linguistic repertoires demonstrated improvements in their academic performance. This critical transition from a monolingual to a translingual perspective marks an essential step toward the decolonization of writing education. It challenges the dominance of English and other presumed 'standard' languages and endorses the utilization of a range of linguistic resources in shaping written expression (Sun, 2023; Sun & Lan, 2021b; Sun et al., 2021). These studies underscore the necessity to foster equitable and inclusive pedagogical approaches within multilingual and multicultural settings and reaffirm the decolonial impetus in writing education. Recent years have witnessed this focus on translingual practices, and the conversation on translingual practices and their interconnected power dynamics has started to be explored in Chinese language education. This evolving focus, which builds on the burgeoning discourse and heightened interest in translingual practices, has deepened the understanding of specific power dynamics at play within Chinese language education. The subsequent section will delve into these explorations and their implications in detail.

3. Power dynamics in translingual practices for Chinese language education

The evolving dynamics of power, intricately tied with translingual practices, serve to enrich Chinese language education. Mirroring the decolonial efforts highlighted in the previous section, these dynamics have substantial bearings on critical aspects of Chinese language learning, which include the role of educators, the involvement of learners, and the establishment of egalitarian learning environments. The role of educators in navigating power dynamics through their translingual practices emerges as a key theme (Han, 2022; Song, 2022; Tian, 2022). Tian (2022) underscored a balancing act that educators in dual language bilingual education programs were tasked with, where they must construct translingual spaces without undermining the preservation of language-minoritized spaces. This challenge echoes the interplay of power relations and translingual practices discussed earlier and asserts its relevance and necessity in Chinese language education. Han's (2022) work added further findings by highlighting the agency of bilingual Chinese language teachers. These educators employed their own and their students' linguistic repertoires to enhance instructional content and dynamic teaching processes. By harnessing the potential of their students' diverse linguistic resources, educators enriched the pedagogical experience and constructively engaged with the complex power dynamics in play. Similarly, Song (2022) advocated for the role of teachers as agents of sociolinguistic infrastructuring through the application of translingual practices to foster a decolonial space for knowledge construction, challenge dominant monolingual ideologies, and promote epistemic justice. These insights, gleaned from the role of educators and their practices, provide valuable avenues for further research and pedagogical development.

Another critical area where power dynamics exert influence, closely intertwined with translingual practices, is learner participation in Chinese language education. This aspect underscores the reciprocal nature of translingual practices, whereby the learners' engagement both influences and is influenced by these practices (Han, 2022; Nie et al., 2022). Expanding on this notion, Han's (2022) research provides an illustration by showcasing how learner engagement could help shape the translingual practices adopted in the classroom while also being empowered by them. In similar research, Nie et al. (2022) posited that translingual practices could effectively facilitate learner engagement only when there was harmony between pedagogical ideology and practice. This insight illuminates the criticality of power dynamics in shaping the norms and practices within classrooms. These studies reveal that a balance of power, harnessed through congruent pedagogical approaches, can be instrumental in

encouraging learner participation. This consideration of power dynamics furthers the understanding of translingual practices in Chinese language education by drawing attention to the role of the learners themselves and the importance of aligning instructional ideologies and practices. This perspective suggests that the effective use of translingual practices necessitates an environment where pedagogical ideologies and practices are in sync, which reflects the broader goals of fostering linguistic diversity and inclusivity. Thus, an insightful approach toward power dynamics, including both the perspectives of educators and learners, becomes indispensable in the pursuit of enriching Chinese language education.

Power dynamics in translingual practices are also crucial in creating equitable learning spaces. Zheng (2021) posited that promoting translingual practices within immersion contexts could catalyze both instructional and communicative affordances, which effectively addressed the power imbalance entrenched in monolingual ideologies. In a similar vein, Chang (2022) underscored that when applied with critical insight, translingual pedagogies could serve to challenge and alter existing power dynamics. This, in turn, fostered culturally and linguistically sustaining practices, thereby contributing to the reduction of inequity issues. These investigations collectively illuminate the pervasive nature of power dynamics within translingual practices in Chinese language education. They influence aspects as diverse as pedagogical strategies, learner engagement, and the overall learning environment. Yet, a critical gap remains in these studies in that they are primarily focused on oral communication, leaving the field of written communication, which presents a distinct set of challenges and dynamics (Wu et al., 2022), relatively underexplored. Given the criticality of this gap, understanding power dynamics in translingual practices for CSL writing education becomes essential to inform more equitable, inclusive, and effective writing instruction. This understanding can not only enrich the practice of CSL writing education but also contribute to a more profound comprehension of the intricate interplay between power dynamics, language ideologies, and pedagogical practices. This necessitates a critical exploration within the domain of CSL writing education research. The present study, thus, focuses on the following research question:

How do power dynamics impact translingual practices in the CSL writing process?

4. The study

In the pursuit of understanding the complexities of power dynamics and their impact on translingual practices in CSL writing, a case study was adopted as the main research method. This choice was rooted in the unique characteristics of translingual practices – that is, their emergence and contingency, which cause them to adapt and evolve according to specific contexts. This dynamism necessitated an in-depth, context-specific approach, which makes a case study an appropriate research method for this study (Creswell, 2013). Conducting a case study allowed for an intensive exploration and understanding of the participant's experiences, practices, and perspectives within their distinct context. By doing so, it helped avoid potential overgeneralization issues and focused on the depth and intricacies of the specific case. Moreover, this method enabled the extraction of broader pedagogical insights relevant to the wider context of CSL writing education while preserving the specificity of the participant's experiences. Therefore, a case study facilitated a close examination and insightful presentation of the participant's unique experiences while concurrently drawing wider insights into the interplay between power dynamics and translingual practices in CSL writing education.

4.1 Contexts and participants

This study was situated in a liberal arts and science university in southeastern China, established from a partnership between a US university and a Chinese university. The multicultural and multilingual academic backdrop of this university serves as an appropriate setting to explore the influence of power dynamics on translingual practices in the CSL writing process. The university's environment does more than provide context – it becomes an essential part of the research. The exchange of diverse

languages and cultural perspectives that are related to the university's educational principles is crucial to this study. Its curriculum is steeped in liberal arts and science education to foster intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, collaboration, and self-exploration – principles that resonate with the pedagogical objectives of this research. All international students at this university are enrolled in the CSL program, which emphasizes intercultural competency. Chinese domestic students, on the other hand, take English for Academic Purposes courses. The CSL program explicitly incorporates cultural concepts such as 'cultural comparison' and 'intercultural communication' into its pedagogy. This academic community, diverse in its linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds, offers a wealth of perspectives, experiences, and discourses – critical elements for investigating translingual practices. Hence, this setting presents a tangible, real-life scenario to explore the intricate relationship between language, power, and identity within CSL writing and translingual practices.

This study involved 23 international students at this university, who represent a cohort from over 60 countries worldwide. These students brought a wide range of linguistic and cultural experiences to the study, thereby enriching the investigation with multifaceted perspectives on translingual practices in the CSL writing process. They were enrolled in various levels of Chinese language courses (200 (the beginning level with essay writing assignments), 300, and 400 levels), which offered a broad view of students' experiences across different levels of language learning. The university's academic policy mandates that all international students acquire a minimum of eight credits from Chinese language courses and pass a 200-level Chinese course, which ensures a certain degree of linguistic competence among the study participants. This policy, coupled with the diverse student pool, provided a foundation for exploring translingual practices and power dynamics within the context of CSL writing education. In this study, 23 international students provided their course essays for analysis, and 14 students participated in detailed interviews. These primary sources offered valuable insights into students' experiences, perspectives, and practices, thereby enriching the understanding of power dynamics in translingual practices for their CSL writing.

4.2 Data collection

To gain a comprehensive understanding of power dynamics in translingual practices for CSL writing, student essays from different writing proficiency levels – that is, 200, 300, and 400 Chinese language courses – were collected. These essays were submitted into corresponding box folders for an organized compilation of linguistic data. The diversity and depth of this collection were exemplified by one student, who contributed 16 essays from five distinct courses across both 200 and 300 levels. This data collection process yielded 182 essays from 23 international students who represented different language proficiencies. These essays allowed for analysis of students' language practices in their CSL writing. Therefore, this body of student work served as an indispensable resource for the effective illumination of the intersection of language use and power dynamics within the CSL writing context.

Complementing the essay collection, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of the student participants based on their willingness to participate. These interviews helped investigate the students' personal perceptions, experiences, and attitudes toward their translingual practices, which offered a unique and experiential lens to the research question. They also afforded a more nuanced understanding of students' language choices and how these choices were influenced by power dynamics. Participants included seven students from the 200 level, five from the 300 level, and two from the 400 level (see Table 1 for their background information). Each interview, which lasted between 35 and 50 minutes, was conducted in English, as suggested by several students, to ensure they could express themselves comfortably and effectively. Two research assistants and one of my colleagues helped with the data collection and organization process. The data, including transcripts of the interviews, were securely stored in password-protected university box folders. Before the collection of any data, informed consent was signed by all participants in accordance with the university's ethical guidelines. In addition, all potentially identifiable information was anonymized to ensure participants' confidentiality.

Table 1. Interview participants' background information

Student	Country(ies) from	Main language(s) speak/ use other than Chinese	Gender	Courses essays from	Years of learning/ using Chinese
A	Morocco	Arabic & English	F	201A&B	2
B	US	English	F	301A&B, 302A	3
C	Vietnam	Vietnamese & English	F	201A&B, 202A&B	2
D	Russia	Russian & English	F	201A	2
E	Vietnam	Vietnamese & English	F	201A&B, 202A&B, 301A	2
F	Vietnam	Vietnamese & English	M	201A&B, 202A	1.5
G	US	English	F	301A&B	Since childhood (heritage language)
H	Vietnam	Vietnamese & English	F	202A&B	1.5
I	Mongolia	Mongolian & English	F	201A & 202A	3
J	US	English	F	301A&B	10
K	Malaysia	Malay & English	M	406, 409	Since childhood (heritage language)
L	Malaysia	English & Malay	F	406, 409, 415	Since childhood (heritage language)
M	Italy	Italian & English	M	302A&B, 302A	2.5
N	US & Japan	English & Japanese	F	232A	7

4.3 Data analysis

The data collected for this study were scrutinized using qualitative thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995; Lin, 2014). As a common tool in qualitative research, thematic analysis uncovers patterns across data sets (Kim & Canagarajah, 2021; Lapadat, 2012), while critical discourse analysis is frequently used for exploring the juncture of language use and power dynamics (Darics & Clifton, 2019; Hart, 2018; Shepard-Carey, 2022). Together, they form a fitting analytical approach for probing the influence of power dynamics on translingual practices in CSL writing. Data analysis commenced with a thorough exploration of the collected essays and interview transcripts by concentrating on themes and patterns related to power dynamics and their impact on translingual practices in specific discourses, including linguistic privilege, learning environment, and identity formation. It is necessary to note that I read through all essays from the 23 participants and only focused on the analysis of the 14 interviewees' essays for the purpose of data triangulation. Using a combination of inductive and deductive coding, I identified recurring themes and patterns relevant to the research question, which elucidated the intricate navigation of students within their linguistic discourse and the strategic usage of their language resources. This process yielded insights into how the students navigated the complexities of their linguistic environment, how they strategically leveraged their language resources to communicate effectively, and how their language proficiency levels influenced their translingual practices. Importantly, this process unveiled the power dynamics at play, including how the students negotiated linguistic power and how they grappled with issues of linguistic justice and equitable education within the multilingual and multicultural academic environment.

Then, the analysis continued by merging the findings from the essays and interview transcripts. This subsequent step focused on instances demonstrating translingual practices and the strategic

utilization of diverse linguistic and cultural resources. When the essays or interviews hinted at relevant power-related themes, I cross-referenced the materials for a more profound understanding. For instance, if a student spoke about using English vocabulary in their Chinese essays during the interview, I would then turn to their written work to further examine this practice, and vice versa. This ensured that the analysis remained anchored in both the students' written products and their personal experiences, which provided a nuanced picture of the intersection between power dynamics, translingual practices, and CSL writing (see Table 2 for the final coding scheme with themes and example quotes). This multi-faceted analysis not only provided a comprehensive insight into translingual practices in CSL writing but also enhanced the understanding of power dynamics and their correlation with linguistic justice and equitable education. This attention to power dynamics via thematic and critical discourse analysis enhanced the comprehension of the complexities of translingual practices and underscored the critical role of linguistic justice and equitable education in the domain of CSL writing.

The data collection and analysis process revealed several critical considerations pertaining to the thematic and critical discourse analysis. Firstly, the qualitative nature of interpretation inherently carries a degree of subjectivity, which potentially affected my research outcomes. Secondly, my linguistic

Table 2. Final coding scheme with themes and example quotes

Theme	Student	Example quote
Linguistic privilege	H	'I don't think that any language should be allowed to be used in Chinese essays because it's important that we use the language effectively to express every topic.'
	A	'Actually, I just follow [what the Chinese language instructor teaches]. I don't try to argue.'
	I	'No [no other languages should be used in Chinese writing], because when I look up what I want to express in Chinese, I feel like I learn a lot of Chinese.'
	M	'And in a way for everything to be in Chinese allows you to have some sort of full immersion in the language. I think it is very useful in the long term.'
Learning environment	B	'I think it [learning environment] does [affects] because I think I've learned a lot faster here [in China] than I did when I was in the US. I'm surrounded by Chinese a lot more.'
	A	'Hearing people speaking in Chinese, I can listen to the tones, and so when I want to speak Chinese, I will be more fluent. I think I'll know how to pronounce the word kind of.'
	J	'The environment, if you feel uncomfortable when getting things wrong, or you feel ashamed if you're speaking incorrectly, then it definitely impacts your learning negatively.'
	D	'Environment matters for me, but my efforts matter more.'
Identity formation	N	'I think it [learning Chinese] was an empowering move for identity and it really made me confident because I knew like when I went back to America, I was like, like it's okay, I'm going to keep on learning Chinese.'
	I	'It's not just in Chinese essays, my English is better than my Mongolian. So, like when writing anything, really, I always write in like English and I always say it in English, it does make me feel less Mongolian. It does.'
	C	'If I use Chinese, I know more about the culture because a lot of the terms in Chinese cannot actually be translated into English. So, I think the language we use defines us.'
	E	'I feel like I have a like completely different personality when I speak another language. I just have a different personality. Even my sister, whenever she's observing me, learning Chinese or English or speaking another language, she always said that you are so different.'

and cultural background could influence the interpretation of power dynamics within translingual practices relevant to CSL writing. Thirdly, the intricate nature of power dynamics involved in translingual practices presented a challenge to capture in its entirety, which potentially left nuances unexplored. These considerations collectively acknowledge alternative interpretations and highlight the need for ongoing research to enhance our comprehension of power dynamics in translingual practices for language education.

5. Unraveling power dynamics in translingual practices for CSL writing

Building upon the data, aspects of power dynamics that impact translingual practices in CSL writing were identified. These dynamics were interwoven through various aspects of the language learning process, including linguistic privilege, learning environment, and identity formation. Integral to the findings was the interrelation between the students' narrative accounts from the interviews, their presented writing samples, and the power dynamics that were identified. Together, these elements shed light on power dynamics' multifaceted impact in shaping translingual practices within the CSL writing environment.

5.1 Linguistic privilege

The power dynamics that shaped translingual practices initially unfolded from linguistic privilege, which was observed when individuals who were fluent or 'native' speakers of Chinese occupied a dominant position. This privilege surfaced in myriad forms, including nuanced comprehension of grammatical intricacies, skillful use of idiomatic expressions, and precise conveyance of cultural subtleties. Consequently, this power imbalance impaired the self-recognition and competence of low-proficiency learners in written Chinese expression. Interview evidence reinforced the influence of linguistic privilege on translingual practices. For example, Student C, a 200-level Vietnamese student, shared a universal concern, stating, 'Even though I speak like properly to Chinese, they still don't understand because the way I speak it maybe is not native, so they don't understand it.' This expression of unease embodies the concern when a learner feels their language use is disempowered by the linguistic privilege associated with 'native' Chinese speakers. Similarly, when asked about whether other languages should be allowed in Chinese essays, Student I, another 200-level student from Mongolia, said, 'No, because when I look up what I want to express in Chinese, I feel like I learn a lot of Chinese. … They [other languages] would hinder me because I would just write it in that language instead of Chinese.' This preference for a 'pure' linguistic immersion was also shared by other students (see Table 2). These perspectives underscore the privileged status of both the 'native' speaker and language, which potentially perpetuate the cycle of linguistic privilege. These findings illustrate the less visible yet deeply impactful aspect of language learning and its attendant power dynamics.

In addition to the privilege of the 'native' language, the specific context of this study – a joint-venture university in China with an English Medium Instruction (EMI) policy – put English, rather than students' first languages, into a position of enhanced prominence. The university's policy, albeit indirectly, amplified English as a privileged language, subtly affecting students' translingual practices in CSL writing. Student M, a 300-level learner from Italy, provided an illuminating example of this dynamic. He stated, 'Sometimes English is also useful … [when] I don't fully understand the scope of a certain piece of feedback, or maybe I don't understand the meaning of a word.' Notably, his choice to transition to English, as opposed to his 'native' Italian, when grappling with some concepts indicated linguistic privilege and its impact on shaping translingual practices in this distinctive context. Student I, a 200-level learner from Mongolia, shared a similar opinion, saying, 'I use English [to help her CSL writing] because I can find more people who speak English than Mongolian [in this context] to help me.' This idea was shared by all 200 and 300-level students who can speak languages other than English. In contrast, advanced 400-level students exhibited a sense of agency and resilience in dealing with linguistic privilege. Student L reflected, 'That's like different perspectives in this

[language choice] … So, I would just choose the one that makes more sense to me.' Student K, the other 400-level learner, shared similar ideas, saying, 'I think it [using other languages for CSL writing] can be a good thing because different languages and words with the same meaning also express the way that we use it. It can be very different.' Because they both are Chinese heritage learners, their self-assured declaration mirrors the confidence of advanced learners, who navigate linguistic privilege by depending on personal comprehension to influence their translingual practices within various discourses. These findings illuminate the influence of linguistic privilege on power dynamics in translingual practices for CSL writing, which highlights the importance of context and writer agency.

The dynamic of linguistic privilege also manifests in students' written texts, which underlines how power dynamics impact translingual practices in CSL writing. Such privilege affects the way students navigate, utilize, and interweave various linguistic and cultural resources, particularly influenced by their respective language proficiency levels. Consider Student C, a 200-level learner struggling with the concept of linguistic privilege (mentioned above). Despite her efforts to communicate appropriately in Chinese, she faced barriers to mutual understanding. Her text

在晚上，电视官的外面没有人，只有一个男生。他穿很乱的衣服，看起来像用东西坏电视官的门 … [At night, there is no one outside the television officer, only a young man. He wears very messy clothes and looks like he is using something to spoil the door of the television officer …]

offered an illustration of her struggle. While her narrative showed a foundational understanding of Chinese, it also displayed a range of unconventional phrases such as 电视官的外面 and 用东西坏电视官的门. For instance, 电视官的外面, when translated literally, means 'outside the television officer'. Here, 电视官 is an odd combination where 电视 stands for 'television,' and 官 usually signifies an 'official' or 'officer', thereby making 'television officer' an unusual term in most contexts. These linguistic expressions subtly hinted at her emerging competence in CSL writing and exposed the power imbalance she confronted in that her attempts at communication were commonly regarded as less effective or acceptable compared with those Chinese linguistic norms and writing conventions. The hurdles she encountered provide an illustration of the effect of linguistic privilege on language learning.

In addition, the university's EMI policy impacted Student M's strategic choice to utilize English for enhanced comprehension. His excerpt

'网红'指的是在网上便非常有名的现象。以化妆品为例，*K-POP* 歌手丽萨（她是很有名 *BLACKPINK* 组合的一员）用着一种口红叫 *MAC* … ['Internet celebrity' is a phenomenon that is very famous on the Internet. For instance, K-POP singer Lisa, a well-known member of BLACKPINK, uses a type of lipstick named MAC …]

exhibited a nuanced understanding of Chinese and suggested a higher language proficiency level (300) compared with Student C's (200). This enhanced proficiency allowed him to strategically harness a broader set of linguistic resources during the writing process despite the final text being predominantly in Chinese. The selection of examples with English proper nouns, such as BLACKPINK and MAC, instead of Italian (his 'native language') ones, underlined the impact of linguistic privilege on his translingual practices. This phenomenon was common in other students' texts regardless of which country they were from, or which language was their 'native language'. Opting for English instead of their 'native language', such as Vietnamese, Russian, Mongolian, and Italian, could be perceived as a manifestation of the prevailing influence of English on both a global and local scale. English is often perceived as a lingua franca of the world, especially in academic and professional contexts, including this study's context. This influence, facilitated by the EMI policy, led to the preference for English even when the learner's first language might offer equivalent examples. This use of English in a predominantly Chinese text underscores the pervasive influence of English, thereby illustrating the role of

linguistic privilege in translingual practices. These findings validate the inherent power dynamics and exemplify how linguistic privilege shapes translingual practices in CSL writing.

The text produced by Student L, who possessed a more advanced proficiency level (400), showcased a critique of cultural representation in the movie 尚气 (*Shang-Chi*). Her writing

> 讨论《尚气》这部电影，避不开的一个话题是它是否正确地展示了中华文化。《尚气》的辱华争议出自于文武（梁朝伟饰）和满大人（The Mandarin）的联系。[Discussing the film 'Shang-Chi,' an inescapable topic is whether it accurately portrays Chinese culture. The controversy over 'Shang-Chi' insulting Chinese culture stems from the connection between Wenwu (played by Tony Leung) and The Mandarin.]

reflected her grasp of both grammatical complexity and cultural nuances. Her composition, predominantly in Chinese, revealed a level of translingual practices that surpass the mere utilization of multiple languages. It embodies a sophisticated meshing of diverse linguistic resources and cultural insights that influence the entire writing process. For example, her precise usage of the term 辱华争议 (controversy over insulting Chinese culture) and her use of Chinese names and English proper nouns reflect a thoughtful approach to CSL writing, one that highlights the flexible, agentive, and dynamic use of linguistic and cultural resources for achieving communicative goals in various discourses. Similar examples could also be found in Student K's, the other 400-level learner, CSL writing. In one of his essays, he wrote:

> Webtoon上的作品十分地多元化，只要好好利用，必定能让网络教育更加进步，帮助年轻人了解不同的思想与故事。[The works on Webtoon are very diverse, and if utilized well, they will undoubtedly advance online education and help young people understand different ideas and stories.]

Their dynamic use of resources reaffirms the multidimensional nature of translingual practices and reiterates that writing is not merely a linear translation of thoughts into words. Rather, it is a complex negotiation and application of diverse linguistic and cultural resources, even when the final text is primarily in one language. The intricate relationship between linguistic privilege and translingual practices sheds light on the sophisticated power dynamics in language learning.

5.2 Learning environment

The interplay between the learning environment and linguistic privilege was critical in shaping students' translingual practices in CSL writing. This environment, comprising classroom dynamics, broader language contexts, and feedback mechanisms, played a vital role in the existing power dynamics inherent in translingual practices for CSL writing. Due to the word count constraints of a journal article, the succeeding sections will center on interview data, with less in-depth analysis of written texts. Classroom dynamics often marked the students' initial exposure to power dynamics. Here, instructors, empowered with authority, set the norms and expectations to govern language use. This dynamic was encapsulated in the reflection of Student A, a 200-level participant from Morocco: 'Actually, I just follow [what the Chinese language instructor teaches]. I don't try to argue,' she confessed. Similarly, Student B, a 300-level student from the US, said, 'I follow their [Chinese language instructors] suggesting suggestions, and I take notes a lot, and I try to refer to those notes on the next time I'm doing like my Chinese homework.' These findings reflected the profound influence instructors held, which could potentially steer students toward following prescriptive linguistic norms and diminish their confidence and creativity in experimenting with the language – particularly when a monolingual approach was advocated in the classroom. Mirroring the learning experiences and written texts of Students C, M, I, K, and L mentioned in Section 5.1, this setting underscored the fundamental role the learning environment played in molding power dynamics

that, in turn, influenced students' translingual practices – an influence closely intertwined with the impact of linguistic privilege.

Expanding beyond the immediate boundaries of the classroom, the broader language context, particularly when it reinforces a monolingual ideology, can amplify these power dynamics and subsequent challenges. These dynamics can generate a significant influence over students' translingual practices. For instance, Student N, who identified her roots in both the US and Japan, experienced this struggle firsthand as she sought to assert her linguistic agency amidst such power structures. Reflecting on her experiences in Taiwan, she noted, 'I wasn't really willing to interact with people then because I was really scared that I would be judged for my accent or something like that.' Student J from the US also stated, 'The environment, if you feel uncomfortable when getting things wrong, or you feel ashamed if you're speaking incorrectly, then it definitely impacts your learning negatively.' These reflections underscored the impact of broader language environments, which could engender feelings of inadequacy and marginalization, thereby influencing students' translingual practices and affecting their overall learning process. These findings showcase the power dynamics rooted in their classroom experiences while concurrently shedding light on the pervasive nature of these dynamics across varied learning contexts. Thus, comprehension of these power dynamics is integral to informing and shaping effective translingual practices in corresponding CSL writing contexts.

Power dynamics within the learning environment were also reflected in feedback mechanisms that often influenced students' perceptions and applications of their translingual practices. Consider Student K, a 400-level learner from Malaysia, who shared his experiences about feedback preferred to receive, stating, 'the feedback [that] was mainly on sentence structures and grammar mistakes.' This sentiment was echoed by all participants, regardless of their proficiency levels, which indicated a preference for such feedback to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in Chinese written communication. For example, Student B (300-level student) claimed, 'It [feedback on grammar] is the most important because that's why you need your grammar to be the most accurate.' Student G (300-level) also said, 'A very good teacher who makes a lot of comments on everything we do. She corrects all of our grammar and edits all of our essays after we turn them in and recommends we look back at them.' These findings underscore the necessity of honing students' writing skills in line with socially, culturally, and historically established Chinese norms and writing conventions. Such a process can facilitate the expansion and enrichment of students' linguistic repertoires and empower them to implement translingual practices more strategically across varied discourses. However, it is crucial to understand language norms and writing conventions as fluid, synergistic, and negotiable constructs to eschew a monolingual interpretation. Overemphasizing grammatical accuracy and strict adherence to standard norms may inadvertently strengthen power dynamics that favor 'native-like' proficiency over effective communication and personal expression. This tendency could potentially result in a constricted interpretation of students' own linguistic abilities, thereby potentially hampering their capacity to articulate personal ideas effectively. Therefore, the role of feedback mechanisms in shaping translingual practices should be considered by CSL writing instructors.

These findings underscore how various elements of the learning environment collectively contribute to the power dynamics that shape translingual practices in CSL writing. Ranging from the immediacy of the classroom, through the broader language contexts, to the feedback mechanisms, each facet scaffolds students' understanding and utilization of translingual practices. These interconnected influences echo and expand upon the observations made in Section 5.1, highlighting the nuanced interplay between linguistic privilege and the learning environment in shaping translingual practices. The findings further highlight the pervasive presence of power dynamics in language learning and emphasize the necessity of nurturing a more inclusive and diverse understanding of translingual practices in CSL writing. Through this lens, we can better comprehend the complex dynamics at play in the enactment of translingual practices and facilitate a more enriching and equitable learning environment for CSL writing students.

5.3 Identity formation

Extending the earlier discussions on linguistic privilege and learning environment, I now delve into another aspect of power dynamics that influences translingual practices in CSL writing – that is, identity formation. Intrinsically intertwined with power dynamics, identity influences students' translingual practices. This influence is particularly evident in CSL writing students who may wrestle with feelings of a diminished Chinese identity, a perception often nurtured by societal expectations, internalized power dynamics, and prevailing language ideologies. This perception directly influences students' language preferences and their engagement in CSL writing. Student C's experiences provide further illumination of this relationship. She stated, 'If I use Chinese, I know more about the culture because a lot of the terms in Chinese cannot actually be translated into English … So, I think the language we use defines us.' Similarly, Student E said, 'I feel like I have a like completely different personality when I speak another language. Even my sister, whenever she's observing me, learning Chinese or English or speaking another language, she always said that you are so different.' Their reflections highlight their understanding of languages as different cultural resources, each with its own untranslatable nuances. This perspective also suggests an awareness of the power that language has in defining cultural and personal identity. Recognizing the potential for language to empower or marginalize CSL writers is important in developing a translingual identity (Tankosić, 2022; Tankosić et al., 2022; Zheng, 2017) to appreciate the fluidity and synergy of language resources in producing unique and creative ideas.

Student M's and I's experiences provided further evidence and underscored the influential role of language in shaping personal identity and engagement with translingual practices in CSL writing. Student M said:

> I feel like when we use a specific language, we develop our own style, and we are able to explore some ideas that we don't know about before, and that creates a new part of our personality … I don't think I have a Chinese speaker personality yet, but I'm confident sooner will develop one, for example, in class.

Student I stated:

> It's not just in Chinese essays, my English is better than my Mongolian. So, like when writing anything, really, I always write in like English, and I always say it in English, it does make me feel less Mongolian. It does.

These findings showcased how languages as different communicative resources exerted effects on students' linguistic style and identity formation. Their understandings indicated an acknowledgment of the power inherent in language to both define and transform individual identities. It further highlights the importance for CSL writers to cultivate a translingual identity to challenge linguistic privilege and hierarchy.

As learners like the aforementioned students continue to nurture their unique language personalities, they may grow increasingly adept and comfortable with the application of translingual practices, akin to the demonstration by Student K and L. Consequently, identity formation emerges as a significant factor within the complex power dynamics that influence translingual practices in CSL writing. The perspective of perceiving languages as distinct powerful resources exerts an influence on shaping students' identities. This perception could potentially instill a monolingual ideology, which could then affect their approach to CSL writing. Therefore, with the objective of supporting students' understanding of the power dynamics inherent in translingual practices, it becomes crucial for educators to facilitate the development of their students' unique language identities by leveraging their full linguistic repertoires. In doing so, instructors of CSL writing can promote more adaptable translingual practices and foster a more inclusive and dynamic learning environment in the process.

To sum up, the findings highlight the complex interplay of power dynamics within CSL writing, where linguistic privilege, learning environment, and identity formation intersect to shape translingual practices. Linguistic privilege is critical in that the perceived superiority of 'native speaker' influences students' linguistic experiences and possibly marginalizes lower-proficiency learners. The learning environment, shaped by classroom dynamics and broader language contexts, either reinforces or counters these power structures, thereby influencing how students engage with translingual practices in their CSL writing. Identity formation, which is influenced by these power dynamics, is crucial to how students utilize their varied language resources to navigate the inherent power in linguistic choices. This multifaceted interplay between linguistic privilege, learning environment, and identity formation manifests the impact of power dynamics on translingual practices in CSL writing and forms the basis for the next part of the discussion, in which I will discuss the strategies for incorporating power dynamics into translingual practices in the context of CSL writing education.

6. Incorporating power dynamics into translingual practices for CSL writing education

This research illuminates the intricate ways individual language learning choices, while seemingly practical, might inadvertently perpetuate language hierarchies. Dovchin's (2021) exploration of the psychological effects of linguistic racism highlights the subtle reinforcement of power dynamics through language preferences, especially among international students. This is mirrored in Student I's preference for immersive writing – a strategy that, though helpful for increasing language proficiency, might inadvertently contribute to a cycle of linguistic privilege. This privilege often devalues the linguistic expressions of 'non-native' speakers (Flores & Rosa, 2015) and contributes to translingual discrimination (Dovchin & Dryden, 2022). This bias underlies preferences for white native English speakers in English teaching recruitment and reflects the broad impact of linguistic dominance (Ruecker & Ives, 2015). These findings signal the delicate balance between personal language learning strategies and the broader societal consequences, especially concerning linguistic privilege and dominance. This section, therefore, addresses these concerns within CSL writing education.

The findings of this research show that power dynamics exert influence over translingual practices in CSL writing. As such, a critical pedagogical priority for educators who adopt translingual pedagogies should be to raise students' awareness of the presence and effects of power dynamics in their language use and overall learning process. This active awareness is pivotal, as it forms the basis for students to critically examine the complex relationships between language, power, and ideology and how these relationships shape their translingual practices. Notably, this is an essential component in decolonizing writing education, as it challenges monolingual ideologies that may underpin language use and instruction (Canagarajah, 2024; Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Xie & Sun, 2023). By fostering such awareness, educators can help students navigate and negotiate the language ideologies and power dynamics inherent in their learning environments (Guerra, 2016). Therefore, the development of this critical awareness is an indispensable step toward an equitable and inclusive CSL writing education.

Incorporating power dynamics into translingual practices in CSL writing education hinges on an active embrace of language diversity and fluidity. This strategy confronts and challenges the embedded linguistic privilege that shapes students' language use and identity construction, which can help reinforce a decolonial agenda in language and writing education (Canagarajah, 2024; García et al., 2021). Recognizing the fluid and negotiable nature of language can help construct a translingual space (Li, 2011) that can liberate students from the confines of monolingual ideologies and encourage the development of a translingual orientation in their CSL writing practices. The findings of this study suggest that this transformation is not just instrumental but imperative in reshaping students' identities. Therefore, raising students' awareness of these power dynamics affords them the critical consciousness needed to understand how the hierarchical privileging of languages subtly yet powerfully influences their translingual practices. By fostering an appreciation for linguistic diversity, students are empowered to acknowledge the rich multiplicity of language forms (Li, 2018), confront the

prevailing linguistic status quo (Lu & Horner, 2016), and promote linguistic justice (Lee, 2016). In sum, the process of recognizing, accepting, and discussing language diversity and fluidity in the classroom serves as a catalyst in the transformation of language practices and perceptions. Through open dialogues on power dynamics inherent in students' translingual practices, educators can nurture an inclusive, dynamic learning environment. This environment, in turn, fosters linguistic empowerment and agency, which are integral to cultivating a more equitable CSL writing education.

Another strategy is the facilitation of translingual identity formation, which is closely tied to the decolonial agenda. This strategy hinges on a critical challenge to entrenched language ideologies that uphold the concept of pure, discrete languages (Otheguy et al., 2015; Sun et al., 2023; Tai & Li, 2021). Such ideologies, as noted earlier, pose a barrier to translingual practices and limit the creative and adaptive use of language resources in writing. Therefore, a translingual identity is important for students to resist monolingual ideologies. Translingual identity formation is a dynamic process that intertwines language use, learners' perception of their own language practices, and their subjective experiences in negotiating different linguistic and cultural resources (Tankosić, 2022; Zheng, 2017). Embracing this process means recognizing and nurturing each student's unique language personality, such as those embodied in Student M's experiences. Here, an educator's role is to empower students to negotiate the complex power dynamics inherent in their translingual practices, thus promoting their confidence and competence in CSL writing. This translingual identity formation, thus, aids in the deconstruction of the oppressive power structures that have long dominated language education, which reflects the core tenets of a decolonial approach. The goal is to encourage students to view themselves as translingual individuals who can utilize the linguistic diversity at their own disposal creatively, critically, and agentively. Through this strategy, educators can contribute to reshaping the landscape of CSL writing education and promoting a more inclusive, open, and empowering learning environment.

Reflective practices, as a pedagogical strategy, emerge as a fundamental means to incorporate power dynamics into translingual practices within CSL writing education. This approach, as advocated by scholars such as Guerra (2016) and Andrews and Fay (2020), presents a unique opportunity for students to critically assess and gain an understanding of how societal norms and internalized power dynamics govern their linguistic identities and utilization. This reflective introspection fosters an enhanced metacognitive awareness of their own language use (Bou Ayash, 2016), thereby challenging and prompting them to reconsider their preconceived notions surrounding language, identity, and power. As students delve into their learning experiences and beliefs via reflective practices, they begin to discern the influence of dominant monolingual ideologies on their writing processes. This insight can potentially lead to transformative alterations achievable through translingual practices. In the context of Students C and M's experiences, reflective practices (such as the interviews) have the potential to serve as a catalyst for them to identify, challenge, and ultimately transform their linguistic habits and identities. Reflective practices resonate deeply with a decolonial agenda, as they foster an environment that encourages students to actively interrogate, disrupt, and reshape the prevailing hegemonic ideologies that infuse language learning and use (Pratt, 1991). This active engagement can propel students to become agents in their own learning processes and provide them with the capacity to critically evaluate power dynamics and conceptualize their potential for innovative and empowering translingual practices.

To conclude, power dynamics play a significant role in shaping translingual practices in CSL writing education. As explored in this study, power dynamics are intricately linked to linguistic privilege, learning environment, and identity formation, all of which influence students' engagement in CSL writing. The findings of this study underscore the necessity of raising students' awareness of power dynamics, thereby helping them understand and navigate the complex realities of translingual practices and their impact on CSL writing. To incorporate power dynamics into translingual practices, three key pedagogical strategies were proposed – that is, embracing language diversity and fluidity, facilitating the formation of translingual identities, and employing reflective practices. By endorsing language diversity and fluidity, educators can help students understand the fluid and hybrid nature

of language, thus breaking away from monolingual ideologies and challenging the status quo. Facilitating the formation of translingual identities empowers students to negotiate complex power dynamics and develop unique competencies and personalities in making meanings with their full linguistic repertoires. Further, the use of reflective practices enables learners to critically evaluate their language use, challenge prevailing ideologies, and envision transformative alterations through translingual practices. Incorporating these strategies can help transform CSL writing education into a more inclusive and dynamic space. However, these efforts should not be seen as a destination but rather as part of an ongoing, iterative process toward decolonizing CSL writing education. As such, there remains much to explore and learn in this critical endeavor. With further research and practical application, we can better understand and continue to address the complexities of power dynamics in translingual practices, thus fostering a more equitable and inclusive environment for language and writing education.

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