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Teacher Training in ‘Monolingual’ Japan: Exploring the Potential of Multimodal Polyethnography for Plurilingual Literacy

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Language education in Japan remains defined by double monolingualism; the domestic language is (standardized) Japanese, and English is given primacy as the language of international communication (Oyama & Pearce, 2019). Although Japan’s actual internationalization includes many geopolitically important languages (MEXT, 2022), most learners only experience English in pre-tertiary education (Oyama & Yamamoto, 2020). While plurilingualism is gaining traction in Japan (e.g., Nishiyama, 2017; Moore et al., 2020a,b), the concept often remains understood as simply multiplying languages within a monolingual orientation (e.g., Torikai et al., 2017). Teacher training thus continues to prioritize surface-level English ability, potentially depriving pre-service teachers of opportunities to explore their own plurilingualism, and to develop the plurilingual literacy necessary to engage with learners of increasingly diverse backgrounds.

In this presentation, multimodal polyethnography (Olt & Teman, 2019) was adopted as a research method, and as a training tool for two pre-service teachers, in an attempt to understand how fostering a plurilingual stance (Marshall & Moore, 2018) might contribute to teachers’ability to give recognition and support to other-language minorities in a monolingualized context (Pearce, 2025), while also contributing to their primary role as English teachers. To this end, analyses of longitudinal discussions on plurilingualism, grounded in visual linguistic autobiographies (Kalaja & Melo-Pfeifer, 2024), and centered on the pre-service teachers’ experiences as learners, and as supporters in public school contexts, are explored.

The discussion centers on how multimodal polyethnography, which includes multiple voices and modes of data, might help to overcome the influence of a pervasive monolingual bias (May, 2014) in the fostering of plurilingual literacy, and how such explorations might contribute to pre-service teachers’ability to identify teachable aspects of their own and others’ plurilingualism that go beyond the merely lingual in promoting linguistic equity and inclusive practice in diversifying classrooms.

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Content/contenu/Inhalt 2

L'enseignement des langues au Japon reste défini par un double monolinguisme : la langue nationale est le japonais (standardisé) et l'anglais est considéré comme la langue de communication internationale (Oyama & Pearce, 2019). Bien que l'internationalisation réelle du Japon comprenne de nombreuses langues importantes sur le plan géopolitique (MEXT, 2022), la plupart des apprenants ne connaissent l'anglais que dans l'enseignement prétertiaire (Oyama & Yamamoto, 2020).

Si le plurilinguisme gagne du terrain au Japon (par exemple, Nishiyama, 2017 ; Moore et al., 2020a, 2020b), le concept reste souvent compris comme une simple multiplication des langues dans le cadre d'une orientation monolingue (par exemple, Torikai et al., 2017). La formation des enseignants continue donc à donner la priorité à la maîtrise de l'anglais en surface, privant potentiellement les enseignants en formation initiale de la possibilité d'explorer leur propre plurilinguisme et de développer la littératie plurilingue nécessaire pour s'engager auprès d'apprenants d'origines de plus en plus diverses.

Dans cette présentation, la polyethnographie multimodale (Olt & Teman, 2019) a été adoptée comme méthode de recherche, et comme outil de formation pour deux enseignants en formation, dans le but de comprendre comment la promotion d'une position plurilingue (Marshall & Moore, 2018) pourrait contribuer à la capacité des enseignants à reconnaître et à soutenir les minorités d'autres langues dans un contexte monolingue (Pearce, 2025), tout en contribuant également à leur rôle principal en tant qu'enseignants d'anglais.

Title/ titre/Titel 2

Formation des enseignants dans un Japon « monolingue » : une exploration du potentiel de la polyethnographie multimodale pour la littératie plurilingue

Only for symposia / Seulement pour symposiums / Nur für Symposien

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