

# International Linguistic Association

## *Monthly Lecture Series*

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York College, CUNY

### **Translanguaging, Performance, and the Art of Negotiation**

In this talk, I explore some ways in which students perform multilingual, multidialectal linguistic identities in a creative writing project for a World Englishes course, which I have taught several times at York College. These students occupy different stances through which they construct translingual writing voices that may or may not be authentic representations of the writers' own linguistic affiliations (Leung, Harris & Rampton, "The Idealised Native Speaker."). For these short stories, students were asked to create a "new language" in which they combine their languages and/or varieties of English in a single discourse, and then to reflect on their translanguaging strategies in the second half of the paper. The presentation will focus on four student texts. The first is written in African-American Vernacular English—a variety of English that the student explicitly excludes from her current linguistic identity. The second student writes in a hybrid of Urdu and English, explaining that she uses this meshing of codes to provide an insight into Pakistani culture, even though code-meshing feels artificial to her as a trilingual speaker. The third student writes an academic paper in Jamaican English, meshing registers rather than codes in this exhibition of vernacular language used for academic purposes. The fourth student is a bilingual English-Spanish speaker, whose work shows how the representation of syntactic variation is at the heart of successful and "deep" code-meshing, so highlighting her own experiences with speaking her two languages in New York City. These four examples of student writing, I will argue, broaden our understanding of what translanguaging can be, and foreground the performative aspects of translanguaging that instructors can overlook when we authorize only authentic expressions of students' multi-linguistic "selves." Rather, I propose, our pedagogy does better when it create spaces where multi-lingual, multidialectal students explicitly construct, negotiate and perform linguistic and academic identities, rather than creating space only for "authentic," exoticized identities.

**Saturday, February 11, 2017**  
**11 AM - 12 PM**  
**Borough of Manhattan Community College**  
**Room: N451**  
**199 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007**

*NOTE: All attendees will be asked to show some form of ID in order to enter the college.*  
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