3 Multilingual Researching, Translanguaging, and Credibility in Qualitative Research: A Reflexive Account

Lamia Nemouchi and Prue Holmes

Internationalisation in the 21st century has led to Anglophone universities receiving large cohorts of international students and staff. Relevant curriculum content, and pedagogical and academic practices are beginning to be addressed (Magyar and Robinson-Pant 2011), but the processes and policies to support multilingual doctoral researchers who may be researching in a second, third, or fourth language have been largely neglected (Ryan 2011; Singh 2017). Araújo e Sá et al. (2020) highlight the importance of multilingualism in understanding a research topic, but the little attention given to the education of doctoral researchers (and their supervisors) in using their linguistic resources in doctoral programmes, especially where many of the candidates are international students. Furthermore, whether and how researchers come to realise the significance of their linguistic resources in their research often seems to be missing in the discussion of the literature (Byrd-Clark and Dervin 2014) and in doctoral theses.

In this chapter, we draw on aspects of the first author's (Lamia's) doctoral research project – the research site in Algeria, and her plurilingual identity (her mother-tongue Algerian-Arabic, French, Modern Standard Arabic [MSA], and English) – to demonstrate how her multilingual resources were in tension with the dominance of English in the UK university where she was supervised. Following Bourdieu (1986), we show how a doctoral researcher's assumptions about Anglophone universities affected the researcher's decisions and meaning-making processes, and how linguistic agency shaped identities and power relations throughout data generation. We investigate and problematise linguistic choice: how the researcher and participants perform (Goffman, 1959) their linguistic identity in the research contexts of the supervisory institution and the multilingual research fieldsite; how they use their linguistic resources to negotiate positionality and power (Bourdieu, 1986; Chen, 2011); and the role of named languages and translanguaging (Li Wei, 2018) in these processes. We aim to show the importance of a multilingual researcher approach, including translanguaging (Li Wei 2018), to ensure the credibility, and ultimately, trustworthiness, of qualitative research. Our research questions are:

RQ1: How does a plurilingual researcher perceive an Anglophone university as influencing her approaches to the multilingual aspects of her research?

RQ2: What multilingual opportunities and challenges emerge when undertaking the research?

RQ3: How does the researcher handle these opportunities and challenges to address the credibility of the research?

First, we discuss the literature underpinning our investigation. Next, we describe Lamia's plurilingual identity, her doctoral study, and its multilingual dimensions; followed by the methodology we adopted to answer the research questions and analyse her reflexive accounts. We then present our findings. Finally, we return to our research questions and discuss implications for multilingual researchers in Anglophone and internationalising universities.

The 'Monolingual' University: Myth or reality?

Following Bourdieu (1986), we understand the Anglophone university as a *field* – a set of positions and practices within a particular social domain. Doctoral supervisors, researchers, and administrators conform to the *habitus* – the deeply ingrained habits, expectations, values, and dispositions that are created and reproduced unconsciously – which shapes and defines doctoral supervision, and constitutes the *institutionalized cultural capital*.

International students, who bring their own linguistic assets (their linguistic capital) and academic culture, undergo processes of adaptation into the academic culture of British universities (Robinson-Pant and Wolf 2017), often following pre-sessional courses in English that emphasise *academic* English and the expectation that theses should be written and presented in English (Turner and Robson 2008). These processes often ignore the linguistic and other capital that international students bring. Furthermore, supervisors receive little or no training on the academic backgrounds and linguistic resources of international students (Holmes et al. 2020).

In the research and supervision process, international doctoral researchers must negotiate the tensions and struggles that emerge between their own linguistic habitus and identity, and the taken-for-granted, supervisory practices and policies enshrined within the (potentially) 'monolingual' social structure of the university (field). These conditions may constrain their researcher possibilities.

Challenging Research Epistemologies and Methodologies

The constraints identified above have been perpetuated by coloniser researcher practices or 'ways of knowing' about 'the Other' by universities in the Global North through their vocabulary ('Western discourses'), scholarship, and even colonial bureaucratic styles (Said 1978). Thus, Smith (2012) calls for a decolonising of researcher processes: cultural protocols, values, and behaviour need to be incorporated into the methodology; and reflexively considered in writing up and presenting research in culturally appropriate ways, and in language(s) that can be understood by the subjects of the research.

The dominance of Euro-Western languages has been a fundamental part of 'imperialism, colonization and globalization in the construction of knowledge' (Chilisa 2012: 117). Phipps (2019: 1) states, 'multilingualism and its attendant language pedagogies are largely experienced as a colonial practice for many of the world's population'. In Algeria (the context of this study), the use of languages is a sensitive matter, as French (the language of the coloniser) operates alongside Arabic and the languages of multiple ethnic minority groups (Benrabah 2013).

To decolonise research methodologies Chilisa (2012: 156) advises the use of texts in different languages, including indigenous languages, in research reports. Gonzalez and Lincoln (2006) encourage the use of more than one language in research, e.g. literature reviews in local languages and data presented in the original language. And Singh (2017) argues that doctoral researchers should use their full linguistic repertoires to develop their capabilities for theorizing to construct potentially valuable theoretical tools. While some continental European universities (e.g., Germany, Luxembourg), may expect that theses are multilingual (Byram et al 2020), in English universities, where English is enshrined in everyday practices, policies about presentation of doctoral theses generally make no reference to named languages (except in modern foreign languages departments) (Holmes et al 2020).

Reflexivity, Translanguaging, and the Trustworthiness of the Research

Against this backdrop of hegemonic research practices, international doctoral researchers bring their own values, beliefs, and knowledge to the research context (Robinson-Pant and Wolf 2017). Byrd-Clark and Dervin (2014) note that researcher reflexivity – the interconnected dimensions of critical reflection and awareness – is important in accounting for these. They define reflexivity as 'a multi-faceted, complex, and on-going dialogical process, which is continually evolving' (p. 2). This dialogical process is demonstrated in the power relations among researcher and participants, the identities they avow and ascribe to others, and the codes of conduct and research protocols which govern these relationships (Holmes 2014; Smith 2012). Reflexivity also involves acknowledging linguistic agency, where certain languages are privileged over others. Through language, speakers negotiate trust, ethics, power dynamics, and face; and their assumptions about each other's cultural capital e.g. who may enter the discourse, who speaks for whom, and how, when and where (Krog 2018).

'Translanguaging' is important in the dialogical process of reflexivity (Canagarajah 2013; Li Wei 2018). Translanguaging shifts the focus from named languages to the agency of the individuals as they deploy, co-construct, and interpret linguistic signs and multimodal forms of communication. Interlocutors, through their fluid communication practices, 'transcend socially-constructed language systems and structures to engage diverse multiple meaning-making systems and subjectivities' (Li Wei 2018: 27). Ganassin endorses this position in her reflexive account of her multilingual researcher positioning in a Chinese community school. She urges researchers to be alert to the multilingual possibilities in a study and make informed decisions about how, when and why to mobilise languages throughout the research 'to ensure the trustworthiness of the research and its representation to wider audiences' (Ganassin and Holmes 2019: 23). In our study, we seek to understand how processes of meaning making, through the use of named languages and translanguaging, may affect the trustworthiness of the research.

Trustworthiness refers to the quality of data and conclusions in qualitative, interpretive research, and is based on four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba 1985). However, the concept of trustworthiness is 'open-ended'; it cannot be fully addressed to the degree that it would be unquestionable (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 329). 'Credibility', crucial to any qualitative study, concerns the 'confidence in the "truth" of the findings […] for the subjects […] and the context [of

the study]' (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 290). It also requires that researchers build a relationship of trust to elicit data that represent participants' genuine views. In this chapter, we revisit the concept of trustworthiness, and in particular, credibility. We draw on these theoretical understandings to inform our investigation of how a researcher problematizes her multilingual resources in a multilingual research context. We explore the researcher's language choices and their implications for the credibility of the emergent findings, and ultimately, the trustworthiness of the research.

Next, we describe Lamia's doctoral research, on which our chapter is based.

Lamia's Plurilingual Researcher Positioning, and the Doctoral Research

Lamia describes herself as a plurilingual rather than a multilingual speaker. Multilingual speakers recognise 'the coexistence of different languages at the social or individual level' whereas 'plurilinguals have a *single*, inter-related, repertoire that they combine with their general competences and various strategies in order to accomplish tasks' (Council of Europe 2018: 28).

Lamia grew up in a family environment where French is spoken daily, alongside Algerian-Arabic. At school, she was taught Modern Standard Arabic, the only official language of the country at that time (Tamazight became an official language in 2016). Currently, she is a doctoral researcher in a UK university. Her supervisors are native speakers of English, who can also speak French (and other languages), but neither is familiar with the terminology or rhetoric of the discipline. All supervisions and interactions are in English, reflecting the monolingual *field* of the university.

The study we report here emerged from Lamia's doctoral research, an action research project based in two Algerian universities. Drawing on social constructionism (Berger and Luckmann 1966), the study aimed to investigate teachers' and students' experiences of literary texts as a vehicle for developing intercultural communicative competence within two modules in postgraduate English language and literature programmes. Lamia designed the materials and collaborated with two other teachers to teach the modules.

The context of Lamia's research, the North-east of Algeria, is highly multilingual. The student-participants spoke Algerian-Arabic as their first language; a minority also spoke a Berber language (Shawi), although neither Lamia nor the teacher-participants spoke Shawi. The student-participants had been taught MSA as the official language, and English and French as foreign languages, but MSA is considered a formal language, and in educational contexts, used mainly officially or in meetings. One teacher (T1) describes herself as a bilingual speaker of French and Algerian-Arabic; the second (T2) describes herself as a speaker of Algerian-Arabic as her first language, and as fluent in French. Both were teachers of English as a foreign language and could express themselves in English confidently. Throughout the data collection process, these languages were used intentionally, sometimes intuitively, and for different purposes with the participants, and with different consequences.

The qualitative data for the doctoral project emerged from semi-formal audio-recorded interviews and informal personal communication with teachers and students, from observations, and from the researcher's

reflections. Semi-formal interviews with teachers (two) were in English, but included some translanguaging (a communicative norm in Algeria where words and phrases in French, Arabic, Berber, and Spanish are part of Algerian-Arabic, but it is unusual to use English words or phrases when translanguaging); personal communication also included translanguaging. Classroom discussions and interviews (22) with students were in English with occasional translanguaging. Lamia's classroom observation protocols (24) were designed in English, but she wrote her responses in English, French, and MSA. Lamia also used these languages in her reflective journal (55 pages).

When entering the research context in Algeria, Lamia discovered the importance of her linguistic resources in negotiating relationships with gatekeepers and participants. This process underpins our research questions (presented earlier) and provides the focus of our chapter, to which we now turn.

A Reflexive Account of Researching Multilingually in a Doctoral Study

Our three research questions aim to investigate how a plurilingual doctoral researcher's approaches to the multilingual aspects of her research are affected by the Anglophone university where she is studying; the opportunities and challenges that emerged from these multilingual aspects; and the choices and decisions she made, together with their consequences for the research.

To answer our research questions we followed three processes holistically. We drew on bodies of experiences (Holliday 2015) from the data collection process (what is seen and heard). We also used thick descriptions (Geertz 1993) to show the complexity of multiple languages in the fieldwork by 'giving the context of [the] experience, stat[ing] the intentions and meanings that organised the experience and reveal[ing] the experiences as a process' (Denzin, 1994: 505). Finally, using a reflexive narrative enquiry, we tried to 'consider the many facets which make up [the] full social complexity' of the research site (Holliday 2015: 83).

We retrospectively present and analyse Lamia's reflexive accounts of her researcher 'researching multilingually' experience, guided by the three dimensions (intentionality, spatiality, relationality) of the researching multilingually framework (Holmes et al. 2013). The analysis also involves Lamia's post-reflections on her decision-making about language before and during the research process, and her choices regarding the research methods employed to ensure the trustworthiness of the research. We also refer to the concept of reflexivity, which encourages researchers to question assumptions and raise awareness in their research, acknowledging that 'neither our representations (e.g. identities) nor our social and linguistic practices (as well as others') are transparent, unidimensional, entities sitting in isolation' (Byrd-Clark and Dervin 2014: 3).

Next, we present the three major themes emerging from our analysis: assumptions about languages at the outset; researcher realisation once in the field and the challenges encountered; and relationality and context (negotiating identities and power relations through language).

Researcher assumptions about language in the initial stages of the doctoral research

Before starting her doctoral programme Lamia assumed that, as an international doctoral student in a UK university, English would be the main language of the research. She assumed that she had to speak, read, and write only in English – "good English"![1.] She started learning English in school and majored in English at university, but to meet admissions criteria, she started practising the language six months before coming to the UK to attend a 6-month pre-sessional course. On entry, her assumptions were soon confirmed. During the induction week a Language Centre tutor informed all the doctoral students, most of whom were international students, about the writing courses available. She handed out a leaflet on which was written: "Academic English is no one's native language". At this point, Lamia felt that her assumptions had been confirmed: academic English was the language of the institution. She had tried to develop her academic skills and knowledge monolingually. Having studied mainly 'academic', she began to feel more confident in her academic English abilities. However, with this focus, and in prioritising English, she had overlooked the value and importance of her own multiple linguistic resources.

Researcher realisation: Linguistic opportunities and their challenges

Lamia's 'academic English' linguistic security and monolingual approach began to unravel as she developed both her study, and her awareness of the opportunities afforded by her plurilingual resources and the challenges they engendered. These realisations concerned the literature review, ethics procedures, and transcribing and translating multilingual data.

Reviewing the literature in languages other than English

Two months into her doctoral programme Lamia's two supervisors encouraged her to read literature in the other languages she knew (MSA and French) to establish her understanding of the research already undertaken on her topic. This suggestion challenged Lamia's existing assumptions about the role of English in her doctoral research. She realised the importance of consulting literature about the Algerian context in French and MSA: publications in English were limited. She found the process enjoyable because she was more confident in using French and MSA than English. In her researcher journal, Lamia wrote:

> J'aurais dû chercher des ouvrages en Français et en Arabe dès le début de mon doctorat car mon thème de recherche a été essentiellement dans ces deux langues vis-à-vis du contexte Algérien […] J'ai pu [par la suite] consulter beaucoup de publications vu leur disponibilité, et il m'a été aisé de les comprendre car ils ont été produites dans un contexte qui m'est familier et dans des langues que je maitrise mieux que l'Anglais. (January 2018)

> I should have searched literature in French and Arabic since the beginning of my PhD because my research topic is essentially in these two languages in relationship to the Algerian context[…] I have [later on] consulted many publications that were available and it was easier for me to understand because they were produced in a context I am familiar with and in languages I master better than English. (Lamia's translation)

However, acting on her assumptions about presenting the literature in English in her thesis created concerns. Lamia worried about misinterpreting the literature. She found translating from French into

English much easier than from Arabic to English. Translating terminology was also challenging when searching for literature - for example, using the term 'intercultural education'. 'Intercultural' is 'interculturel' in French; but the translation from/into Arabic is problematic because there is no exact equivalent in dictionaries and no clear consensus on the use of terminology in the literature.

Furthermore, Lamia noticed that in the Arabic literature 'cultural' and 'intercultural' are used interchangeably. For example, 'intercultural learning' in Arabic is "التعلم الثقافي" (al-taelim althaqafiu) which literally means 'cultural learning'. Usually, the term 'culture' in Arabic "الثقافة" (althaqafa) is followed by the term 'civilization' "الحضارة" (alhadara) . Understanding 'culture' in Arabic is problematic because the term did not exist in ancient times. According to Bennabi (2017/1957) the word 'culture' has been borrowed from European languages, mainly from the French language ('cultivé') which is coined more with 'science', 'knowledge', or 'education' and the development of 'culture' leads to 'civilisation' (in French). Bennabi encourages Arabic scholars to shift the conceptualisation of 'culture' to social development towards civilised nations, rather than limiting it to 'education'.

The difficulty Lamia encountered in translating these key terms led her to read literature in French rather than Arabic, because for her, it was easier to translate. Lamia also located important documents from the Algerian Ministry of Education in French. However, in considering the time and space translation would take to work these documents into her thesis, she uncritically abandoned the idea and began searching for and reading literature in English again.

In reflecting on this decision later, Lamia realised that her assumptions about university language requirements influenced her to overlook the literature in Arabic and French and privilege literature in English. This decision, she concluded, prevented her from elaborating her research context and topic. As Singh (2017) argues, by encouraging international doctoral researchers to use their full linguistic repertoire (metaphors, images, concepts, and modes of critique) to theorise and construct theoretical tools, doctoral education can be democratised.

Ethics procedures

In her induction programme Lamia encountered for the first time the ethics procedure as a policy requirement in her UK institution. Following the policy, she uncritically adapted to this 'new' methodological procedure of gaining approval before starting the data collection, and preparing consent forms in English with the university logo and a space for participants' signature. In the Algerian academic context, researchers ask for consent verbally at the different levels of the institution: if student-participants attend the researcher's interview, they tacitly agree to participate in the research.

Although initially afraid of explaining the 'new' procedure to her participants, she hoped that they would naturally accept it. However, one student-participant commented:

> Wow [silence]. Which university is this? [silence] It's a serious interview, I should be careful with what I say.

Lamia did not attribute much importance to this reaction, and explained that this institutional policy requirement aimed to ensure an ethical research process. Rather than following the Algerian research procedures (familiar to researchers and participants), Lamia had become 'the researcher accountable primarily to their institution […] where practice was shaped by institutional values and priorities' (Smith, 1999, cited in Robinson-Pant and Wolf 2017: 6). At the time, she did not think that this procedure might influence the credibility of her data, as implied by the student-participant's comment, 'I should be careful with what I say'.

Relationality and context: Negotiating identities, power, and relationships through languages

Lamia's linguistic choices in the field site were important in co-constructing and negotiating identities and power relationships with participants. We use the first person 'I' to represent Lamia's voice as she reflects on her researcher data (observational notes and researcher journal).

Lamia's post-reflections on interviews with student-participants in English

The working languages of the two Algerian universities were MSA and French. Following UK university ethics procedures, I submitted the data collection plan - interview questions and observation protocols, which I had designed in English - to the ethics committee for approval. I assumed that the two teacher-participants and the student-participants (as students of English) could communicate in English. However, as I was unfamiliar with the students' English language abilities, I had decided that I would not limit them to English. I also expected the students to translanguage between Algerian-Arabic and French, a common practice in Algeria.

On starting my fieldwork, I introduced myself to the teacher- and student-participants as a doctoral student in the UK. As I was afraid that the participants would perceive me as an 'outsider', I mentioned that I was a former student of the University of Constantine (in Algeria). I hoped that this would put them at ease and establish common ground. However, this was not the case, and had implications, which I was unaware of then.

I introduced the questions in English to the student-participants, and informed them that they could answer in their preferred language (i.e. Algerian-Arabic, MSA, French, or English). However, I did not consider that I had limited myself to one language - English - in asking the questions; nor did I consider its effect on my participants. Would they expect that they must also answer in English; or would they answer in the language in which they were most comfortable? I was not aware that it is 'through language (or linguistic practices) that people co-construct, negotiate, impose and represent their identities in […] intercultural encounters in everyday life' (Byrd-Clark and Dervin 2014: 10). I wrote my reflections and observations mostly in English and asked the interview questions in English, and received answers from my participants in English which, then, I found totally acceptable.

Simultaneously, I felt a discomfort in my participants, and that I was perceived as an 'outsider'. At that point, I made several realisations. My whole research approach had been shaped by the *field* of the Anglophone university (e.g. asking the students to sign a consent form, preparing interview questions in

English). I did not question my linguistic approach. I did not consider that asking the questions in English had affected their language choice. In the transcription process, I became aware of the importance of linguistic choices in the fieldwork as I realised that some students struggled to express their ideas in English. They used very short answers to end the interview, which lasted only 10 to 15 minutes. By comparison, the interviews of the more confident speakers lasted up to 50 minutes. On reflection, I believe that, by asking the questions in English, the students seemed to think that English was the preferred language. Using English restricted them from expressing themselves freely.

Lamia's reflections on the use of her linguistic resources to negotiate power relations with teacher participants

A methodological decision to conduct the study in two universities posed an unexpected threat to my two teacher-participants. One appeared to think that I was evaluating her understanding of the intercultural dimension. She asked me in a worried tone when she first read the consent form:

> T1: Why do you want to do the same study twice? Why do you choose two universities? Will you compare and evaluate us and our work?

Furthermore, the teacher appeared to consider me as a threat. In her eyes, it seemed, as a doctoral researcher coming from a UK university, I held institutionalised cultural capital. By asking her questions about her teaching practice, I was therefore 'evaluating' her work; by asking her to sign the consent form, I appeared to be placing myself in a superior position. I tried to reassure her by explaining that my intention was not to 'compare' or 'evaluate' the two universities or teachers' work, and the analysis from the two universities would be treated separately.

I intuitively explained this to the teacher in French to make her feel more comfortable: I had the feeling that English sounded too formal and scared her. Like Chen (2011), who argued that in ethnographic interviews, power is always negotiated and the languages spoken play a significant role, I wanted her to have the power, take over the discussion, and develop a good relationship with me in order to generate data in an ethical and trustworthy manner. I wanted her to know that my intention was not to evaluate her work or knowledge of the intercultural dimension. By using French, I thought she would understand that we did not need to have a formal relationship. Furthermore, English is considered formal, and not used outside the classroom context. French was more spontaneous and 'conversational'. I was not fully aware of the importance of languages for these different purposes, and my switch to French was intuitive. When we started speaking French, and sometimes translanguaging, it seemed like our perceptions of each other's identities were changing. Thus, through these different language strategies, we were constantly negotiating power relations.

To remove the formality I explained:

> Researcher: No, no, no [silence] c'est pas du tout mon intention euh [silence] je vais vous expliquer mmm mon but n'est pas de comparer votre travail a un autre prof c'est plutôt pour avoir une idée sur ce que vous faites maintenant, y'aura pas d'évaluation ni de comparaison.

No no no [silence] it's not my intention uh [silence] I will explain to you mmm my aim is not to compare your work with another teacher it's rather to have an idea about what you are doing now [in your teaching] there won't be any evaluation or comparison. (Lamia's translation)

At the beginning I said "No, no, no" unconsciously. Then the silent moment represented my thinking about how I could explain this to reassure her. Then, I finally chose to continue in French because I was more fluent in French, more spontaneous, and it sounded less formal. While I was unconvinced of my explanation, she seemed more comfortable. She immediately switched to French and Algerian-Arabic, translanguaging, thus lessening the tension. Relaxing, she started telling me stories about incidents that happened in her classroom. Then we both started translanguaging. I felt that she no longer perceived me as the doctoral student in a UK university, but as a younger, less experienced teacher, and she was the experienced one.

She also used French to avow the identity of the more experienced teacher who knows and understands her students well, compared to me, the outsider and less experienced one. At one point, she made this explicit:

> T1: أنت tu connais pas mes étudiants [silence] tu n'as pas eu de contact avec eux […] déjà, tu es si jeune tu n'as pas d'expérience mais tu vas apprendre tout ça avec le temps.
>
> T1: [Arabic] you [French] you don't know my students [silence] you haven't been in touch with them […] you are so young and you don't have experience, but you will learn all that through time. (Lamia's translation)

In translanguaging she seemed more confident than when we tried to communicate in English. I tried to return to the interview by asking another question in English again, following the interview protocol that I had planned in the UK. The teacher answered in English which again sounded 'too formal' but I sensed less tension after the discussion using translanguaging strategies.

Reflecting on this now, as with the student-participants, my approach seemed to influence her choice of language: by asking the questions in English (following the protocol), I was pushing my participants to think that English is the preferred language. Through linguistic choice, I was constantly negotiating power and relationality with my research participants, especially the teachers. Our linguistic resources played a major role in defining our identities and perceptions of one another. Speaking the local language (Algerian Arabic) and translanguaging between Algerian-Arabic, French, and English (English being the unusual language to speak in Algeria) outside of the formal interviews with T1 gave her more power and confidence. This linguistic strategy enabled Lamia to develop a good relationship based on trust, and therefore, she could elicit credible data to ensure the trustworthiness of the research.

Lamia's reflections on university communities as 'circles of relations'

The informal relations I established with the teacher-participant (T1) in the university context, and the languages we used, were important in gaining trust. I was able to establish a good relationship through our informal contact outside the classroom (e.g. during car rides where she shared stories about her

children). The closer and less formal our relationship became, the less we spoke English and the less formal were the interviews.

For example, on our way to the classroom, she discussed some issues they faced in their teaching practices such as the limited access to the internet. She compared the university where she was teaching (Uni1), a regional university, to the university of Constantine (Uni2) (my home university), located in a large city and considered more prestigious. In Algeria, universities are not ranked and higher education is free; however, generally, people perceive that the level of education is better in larger cities. She was addressing me as part of Uni2:

> T1: Ici, pour utiliser la salle d'internet, il faut faire une demande d'abord, et on peut pas l'avoir pour longtemps et l'internet عاطلة. ماتشوفيش كيما انتوما في قسنطينة le niveau est meilleur وعندكم بزاف les docteurs et les professeurs.

> T1: [French] Here to use the internet room, it is necessary to make a request first, and we cannot have it for long and the internet [Arabic] is slow. Don't see it as in Constantine [French] the level is better [Arabic] and you have many [French] doctors and professors. (Lamia's literal translation)

Here I introduce the literal translation because the first part in Arabic aligns with her sarcastic tone of voice (suggesting that I am not aware of the situation of universities beyond my home university). If I do not provide the literal translation, it may seem incorrect if the reader is not familiar with Algerian-Arabic, and the meaning may be affected. From her comment I realised that I was not perceived just as a doctoral student in the UK, but also as a former student at the University of Constantine. I expected that by introducing myself as a former student of Uni2 I would gain some privilege and be perceived as part of a shared Algerian university community. However, it was not so and may have created a bigger gap between myself and my teacher-participant. Chilisa (2012: 113) states that 'the researcher becomes part of circles of relations that are connected to one another and to which the researcher is also accountable'. In my doctoral study, the 'circles' are the university communities to which my participants and I belonged, or in Bourdieu's terms (1986) the 'institutionalised cultural capital', and in which we were negotiating power within our relationships. When she said 'ماتشوفيش كيما انتوما في قسنطينة' - in a tone which implied in English 'don't even compare Uni1 to Uni2' (as if Uni2 is superior), I realised that – in addition to being the 'young novice teacher' in the classroom and 'doctoral student in the UK' when conducting the formal interviews –I was also a 'graduate from a better university' in Algeria when we were outside the classroom, and therefore, worthy of her respect.

Thus, by introducing myself as a former student in Uni2 and a doctoral researcher in a UK institution, I improved my 'standing' in the eyes of my teacher-participants. T1 appeared to ascribe to me higher institutionalised cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986). Yet, while my educational experiences in Algeria enabled me to participate in the different circles of the two university communities, I felt the need to negotiate these

constantly to develop a relationship of trust with the teacher-participants. In the case of T1, the use of the local languages and translanguaging strategies helped to establish a less formal relationship.

With T2, however, an informal relationship was not possible and the classroom setting defined it. She, like T1, used translanguaging strategies and seemed more comfortable in giving me feedback on my teaching practices, which simultaneously, enabled her to demonstrate her greater experience and power inside the classroom. She avoided further communication with me outside the classroom, except for the initial formal interview, conducted in English (discussed next).

Lamia's reflections on the credibility of findings from interview data when using English and when translanguaging

In the data analysis phase, I was surprised to find a contradiction in the data generated by the teacher-participant, T1. In the formal interview (in English), she expressed satisfaction about her students' achievement in terms of intercultural competence, but in one of our personal communications (two weeks into the fieldwork) and where we translanguaged, she explicitly said the opposite:

Formal interview (at the beginning):

T1: If for example you ask Master 2 students […] they can say that they know many things about both American and British cultures. […] Knowing all these details can help them to evolve in an intercultural context […] and I am confident to say that they can now communicate and manage an intercultural communication effectively at this stage.

Informal interview (after two weeks):

Researcher: واش رايك في tes étudiants والشي لي يقراو par rapport à ça?

Researcher: [Arabic] What do you think about [French] your students [Arabic] and the things they learned [French] compared to this? (Lamia's literal translation)

T1: I don't have high expectations from them, ils ne s'intéressent qu'aux examens et à avoir de bonnes notes.

T1: I don't have high expectations of them, they are only interested in exams and having good marks. (Lamia's translation)

This contradictory finding, revealed through the use of English, and later when translanguaging, directly affects the credibility of the interpretation of the data. Through our use of translanguaging strategies, T1 had become more comfortable and we developed a relationship of trust. It seems that the data using translanguaging are more authentic. By comparing both versions of the transcripts (English and translanguaging), I noticed that the English version appears to reflect what the teacher assumed I wanted to hear; by contrast, the translanguaging transcript, recorded in an atmosphere where she was more relaxed and comfortable, exposed her real perceptions. Unfortunately, I could not apply member checking as this would have compromised the relationship of trust that we had established.

Similarly, in my communication with T2, language choice also defined our status vis-à-vis the other. In one exchange T2 tried to demonstrate her understanding of the intercultural dimension in English: she explained to me that X defined the intercultural dimension this way, and Y defined it that way, and I have also read what Z said, but she did not say what she thought herself. I tried to understand her meaning, but similar to Chen (2011), I felt like the doctoral student in a UK university. T2 wanted to display a more authoritative identity using English: first, by trying to 'show off' her knowledge in telling me how many theories in the field she knew; and then, by trying to 'check' how much I knew about them.

However, when we spoke French, Algerian-Arabic, or translanguaged, it seemed to me that, in her eyes, I had become a less experienced teacher assistant and she was trying to give me feedback on my teaching practice. For example, while observing my teaching during the action research project, she approached me and, pointing to a small group of students, remarked:

> T2: Tu vois ce groupe d'étudiants? C'est de bons éléments mais ils ne prennent pas le travail de groupe sérieusement ou je crois que tu leur donnes beaucoup plus de temps qu'il en faut.
>
> T2: Do you see this group of students? They are good students but they are not taking the small group work seriously, or I think you are giving them much more time than they need. (Lamia's translation)

The above examples illustrate that the languages we were speaking defined our position and status with one another. However, when speaking French, or Algerian-Arabic, or translanguaging between both, our roles appeared to change. T2 tried to demonstrate her own position as superior to me: a more experienced teacher and knowledgeable about her teaching content. T1 placed me as a less experienced teaching assistant who, having graduated from a more prestigious institution (in her eyes) and coming from the metropole, was not familiar with managing the students from this particular region. I realised, when going over the transcriptions, that the data examples where we translanguaged appeared to be more authentic and exposed both teachers' real beliefs and values; by contrast, the English language transcriptions of the formal interviews seemed to reflect what they thought I wanted to hear. In such educational action research studies, where the researcher is also the teacher, managing this dual identity relationally is often problematic (Merriam et al, 2001). As my communication with the teacher-participants illustrates, language choice is key in negotiating how our identities and positionalities play out.

Conclusions and Implications

In this chapter, we aimed to show how the plurilingual identity of a doctoral researcher and the multilingual aspects of her research were challenged by the monolingual field of the Anglophone supervisory institution, and the monolingual disposition she adopted to fit in. The researching multilingually framework (Holmes et al. 2013) provided a useful heuristic to guide post-data collection reflections on the importance of Lamia's use of her linguistic capital – influential in raising her awareness of the complexity of languages in her study and the unrecognised opportunities they afforded – which in turn, impacted the credibility of the research in various ways.

The first research question invited a reflection on how the Anglophone university context influenced Lamia's assumptions about the role of English in her research, prompting her to realise that, in prioritising English, she had suppressed her plurilingual identity at the outset to conform to what she perceived as 'academic English' institutional requirements. This English habitus led to problems with relationships and collecting credible data in the field site later.

The second research question encouraged Lamia to reflect on the multilingual opportunities and challenges offered by her plurilingual identity . Through this reflexive analysis and guided by the researching multilingually framework, she began to question her monolingual (English) habitus, recognising that a plurilingual /translanguaging orientation is possible, permissible, and advantageous in the different stages of her research, especially in fieldwork (e.g. when interviewing participants). However, in mobilising her full linguistic repertoire, she encountered challenges in the translation process in relation to both literature (discussed above) and data transcription (not explored in this chapter but to be addressed in future work). These experiences encouraged her to reflect on the credibility of her methods and interpretations.

The third research question invited reflection on the affordances of a researcher's plurilingualism in adopting methods that promote the credibility of the data, thereby ensuring the trustworthiness of the research (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Lamia made two realisations: first, when prompted by her supervisors to access literature in French and Arabic, she recognised this as an important step in theorising her study. However, understanding and translating key terms was crucial, as the meaning and credibility of the research may be affected. Second, by adopting translanguaging dialogic processes in the field, she could intuitively address the limitations of interview protocols prepared in English and elicit authentic responses in informal communication.

The relational aspect of the researching multilingually framework encouraged her to reflect on the importance of linguistic choice in establishing identity, constructing relationships, and negotiating power positions with her research participants. Speaking English sounded too formal and seemed to give Lamia a higher position and outsider status. By contrast, translanguaging strategies – where Lamia used her full linguistic repertoire (Algerian-Arabic, French, English) – lessened the tension and enabled participants to perceive her as an insider; she negotiated positionality, identity and status in her relationship with T1, and empowered T2 by making her feel more comfortable. Ultimately, translanguaging – including using English in addition to local languages – enabled her to develop a relationship based on trust, and thus, elicit authentic data ethically, and generate credible findings.

Although our conclusions emerge from a reflexive account of doctoral research, we believe the following implications are applicable to all researchers. To ensure the trustworthiness of their research, researchers should value their own linguistic resources throughout the research process and the languages in circulation in their study. Andrews, Fay, and White (2018: 231), following Canagarajah (2013), refer to this as a 'translingual mindset'. On this basis, researchers can then make informed linguistic choices.

Second, researchers should also constantly engage in critical reflective practice concerning their linguistic habitus. This may include challenging their own assumptions about language hierarchies and the status of other languages in monolingual universities by prioritising their own linguistic resources and those of their participants, rather than the language of the institution (Ryan 2011; Singh 2017). Further, rather than uncritically following assumptions about ethical procedures in their supervisory institution, researchers need to recognise and respect the language and ethical conventions where they are conducting their research. This may require some negotiation with procedures and policies in the supervisory institution.

Third, researchers should be critical of research processes established in the Global North that are incompatible with generating new knowledge relevant to their research context. Researchers should review literature in the languages available to them to gain a full understanding of the established knowledge, terms and concepts in the language(s) of the research context, and draw on this multilingual knowledge in theorising their data (Singh 2017). This includes generating and presenting data in the languages of the participants to ensure credibility.

Finally, we suggest that researchers recognise and reflect on their institutionalized cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986), and consider their position vis-à-vis their participants, how they perceive one another, and how they develop informal relationships. Language plays a key role here. As this study has shown, linguistic choice is crucial in managing power relations and developing trust in order to generate credible data.

Concerning universities, this study highlights the need for awareness-raising workshops for (doctoral) researchers and supervisors. Multilingualism then becomes an asset in internationalised doctoral programmes. Rather than appropriating practices and policies established in Anglophone universities in the Global North, universities undergoing internationalisation should adopt procedures that allow for the emergence of multiple voices and languages, and resist the hegemony of Global North research methodologies and 'academic English' as the sole/primary medium for research.

Finally, this reflexive analysis has been undertaken as Lamia writes up her thesis. We therefore do not explore issues around languages of publication. Institutional regulations require Lamia to present her thesis for examination in English. However, she intends to include examples of translanguaging and analyse them in the languages in which they were produced to acknowledge the complexity of the data for readers of Algerian-Arabic, MSA, and French, and provide her own translations and interpretations in English for English readers/examiners. Concerning examination of the thesis, it would be preferable to have examiners who are able to understand French and/or Arabic, or who are sensitive to the complexity of languages raised in this chapter. The outcomes of her doctoral study will have implications for intercultural programmes in universities in Algeria, suggesting the need for publication in French or Arabic, which brings its own challenges – a matter for future research.

Note

1. 'Good English' refers to the eponymous poem by Tawona Sithole (2014) where he critiques the power of English, considered a mark of educational success in Zimbabwe and residual from English colonisation.

References

Andrews, J., Fay, R. and White, R. (2017) (2018) From Linguistic Preparation to Developing a Translingual Orientation: Possible Implications of Plurilingualism for Researcher Education. In J. Choi, S Ollerhead and M. French (eds) *Plurilingualism in Learning and Teaching: Complexities Across Contexts* (pp. 220-233). London: Routledge.

Berger, P.S. and Luckmann, T. (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Doubleday.

Araújo e Sá, M.H., Hu, A., Pinto, S. and Wang, L. (2020) The Role of Language and Languages in Doctoral Education: A Transversal Perspective. In M. Byram and M. Stoicheva (eds) *The Doctorate as Experience in Europe and Beyond: Supervision, Languages, Identities* (pp. 229–252). New York: Routledge.

Bennabi, M. (2017). *Le problème de la culture*. El Borhane. Original work published 1957.

Benrabah, M. (2013) *Language Conflict in Algeria: From Colonialism to Post-Independence*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) The Forms of Capital. In J.G. Richardson (ed) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Capital* (pp. 241-258). New York: Greenwood Press.

Burns, A. (2010) *Doing Action Research in English Language Teaching: A Guide for Practitioners.* New York, Routledge.

Byram, M., Hu, A., Hofmann, S. and Mizanur, R. (2020). University of Luxembourg. In M. Byram and M. Stoicheva (eds) *The Doctorate as Experience in Europe and Beyond: Supervision, Languages, Identities* (pp. 107-141). New York: Routledge

Byrd-Clark, J. and Dervin, F. (eds) (2014) *Reflexivity in Language and Intercultural Education: Rethinking Multilingualism and Interculturality*. New York: Routledge.

Canagarajah, S. (2013) *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*. London/New York: Routledge.

Chen, S.H. (2011) Power relations between the researcher and the researched: An analysis of native and nonnative ethnographic interviews. *Field Methods* 23 (1), 119-35.

Chilisa, B. (2012) *Indigenous Research Methodologies*. London: Sage Publications.

Council of Europe (2018). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989

Ganassin, S. and Holmes, P. (2019) 'I was surprised to see you in a Chinese school': Multilingual opportunities and challenges community-based research. *Applied Linguistics.* https://academic.oup.com/applij/advance-article/doi/10.1093/applin/amz043/5583826?guestAccessKey=1cfe766f-b1db-49c6-bff6-3821dbe7ac3e

Goffman, E. (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday.

Gonzalez, G. and Lincoln, Y. (2006) Decolonizing qualitative research: Non-traditional forms in the academy. In N.K. Denzin and M.D Giadina (eds) *Qualitative Inquiry and the Conservative Challenge* (pp. 193-214). Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Holmes, P. (2014) Researching Chinese students' intercultural communication experiences in higher education: Researcher and participant reflexivity. In J. Byrd-Clark and F. Dervin (eds) *Reflexivity in Language and Intercultural Education: Rethinking Multilingualism and Interculturality (pp. 100-118).* New York: Routledge.

Holmes, P., Fay, R., Andrews, J. and Attia. M. (2013) Researching multilingually: New theoretical and methodological directions, *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 23 (3), 285–99.

Holmes, P., Reynolds, J. and Chaplin, M. (2020). Durham University. In M. Byram and M. Stoicheva (eds) *The Doctorate as Experience in Europe and Beyond: Supervision, Languages, Identities* (pp. 52-88). New York: Routledge.

Krog, A. (2018). In the name of human rights: I say (how) you (should) speak (before I listen). In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds., 5ᵗʰ ed.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 485-491). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Li, W. (2018) Translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *Applied linguistics,* 39 (1), 9-30.

Lincoln, Y.G. and Guba, E.G. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Magyar, A. and Robinson-Pant, A. (2011) Special issue on university internationalisation - towards transformative change in higher education. Internationalising doctoral research: Developing theoretical perspectives on practice. *Teachers and Teaching* 17 (6), 663–76.

Merriam, S.B., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M., Kee, Y., Ntseane, G., and Muhamad, M. (2001) Power and positionality: negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures. *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 20 (5), 405-416.

Phipps, A. (2019) *Decolonising Multilingualism: Struggles to Decreate*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Robinson-Pant, A. and Wolf, A. (2017) *Researching Across Languages and Cultures: A Guide to Doing Research Interculturally*. Oxon: Routledge.

Ryan, J. (2011). Teaching and learning for international students: Towards a transcultural approach, *Teachers and Teaching,* 17 (6), 631-648. DOI: 10.1080/13540602.2011.625138.

Said, E. (1978) *Orientalism*. London: Vintage Books.

Singh, M. (2017). Post-monolingual research methodology. Multilingual researchers democratizing theorizing and doctoral education. *Education Sciences 7*, 28. DOI:10.3390/educsci7010028.

Sithole, T. (2014) *Good English*. See http://researching-multilingually-at-borders.com/?p=393

Smith, L.T. (1999/2012) *Decolonising Methodologies*. London: Zed Books.

Turner, Y. and Robson, S. (2008) *Internationalizing the University*. London: Continuum.

Zhu Hua (2020) Making a stance: social action for language and intercultural communication research. *Language and Intercultural Communication* 20 (2), 206-212, DOI: 10.1080/14708477.2020.1730393.