



Title of Project

Plurilingual Practices in Graduate-Level Seminar Classes:
International Students Speaking English as an Additional Language

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TIRF Research Topic Investigated

Plurilingualism in Business, Industry, the Professions, and Educational Contexts

Project Summary

In today's globalized society, student diversity in various educational sectors continues to increase (Piccardo, 2016). Using multiple languages and having knowledge of diverse cultures prevails as the norm (Piccardo, 2013). However, language policies in education do not sufficiently reflect current realities of linguistic and cultural diversity (Cummins, 2014). Working with international students speaking English as an additional language (EAL) and their instructors in seminar-type classes at the graduate level, this dissertation research explores students' plurilingual experiences and practices as they participate in spoken interactions and also investigates instructors' strategies for encouraging students' use of plurilingual practices. Drawing on plurilingualism (Piccardo, 2013), community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and interactivity (Hyland, 2009), data has been collected using classroom observations, weekly reflections, end-of-course individual interviews and audio-recordings of classroom interactions. Classroom observations, verbal reflections and interviews will be analyzed using content analysis while conversation analysis of classroom interactions will be carried out using the audio-recordings. Responding to the need for more research to bridge the gap between the theory of plurilingualism and practice (Galante, 2018), this study aims to inform pedagogical approaches to supporting EAL international students. Through a close examination of seminar classes, this study also contributes to taking a step away from the traditional conception of the native speaker ideal and towards informing effective policy and practices that can aid international students, educators, policy makers and researchers whose interest lies in creating positive and diverse learning environments.