TRANSLANGUAGING IN CHILD SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: A CASE STUDY OF AN INTERCULTURAL FAMILY IN VIETNAM

by Cao Thi Quỳnh Loan
Faculty of English Linguistics and Humanities
University of Social Sciences and Humanities-VNU-HCMC
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PUMPKIN ON VIETNAMESE WOMEN’S DAY
CHILDHOOD BILINGUALISM

**Bilingual first-language acquisition**
- Two languages at the same time

**Child second-language acquisition**
- Language and a particular language

**Adult second-language acquisition**
- First language
- Additional language
PUMPKIN’S CASE

❖ First two years: Vietnamese
  ➢ 0;5 (year; month)
  ➢ 2;0 her paternal grandfather visited

❖ Since then: OPOL (one parent one language)
MULTIVOCALITY AND IDENTITY

Multivocality:

“the multiplicities of meanings of multilingual utterances.” (García and Wei, 2014: 39)

Translanguaging constructs “the social space within the multilingual user that makes it possible to go between different linguistic structures and beyond them. It is the speakers, not the space, who are in control of the language performance” (ibid).
Identity:

“should be perceived as negotiated and emergent in interpersonal communication” (Golden and Lanza, 2013: 297).

is viewed as performed rather than as prior to language, as dynamic rather than fixed, as culturally and historically located, as constructed in interaction with other people and institutional structures, as continuously remade, and as contradictory and situational. (Benwell and Stokoe 2006: 138)
PUMPKIN’S CASE

the American pole associated with the American English

varied identities negotiated as she manipulates her language(s) in varied but particular contexts

the Vietnamese pole related to the Vietnamese language (HoChiMinh City dialect)
PUMPKIN’S CASE

• “Identity construction” (Golden and Lanza 2013: 295) is not an easy process for Pumpkin since she has to negotiate her identities in relationship to both her two parents whose identities are locally situated and constructed in no less complicated ways.
REQUESTS

Reasons to study requests

➢ common and important among language learners
➢ versatile → mirror speaker’s pragmatic development
➢ well-studied → solid framework
➢ “close to being the prototype case of a social transaction” (Bruner et al. 1982: 93) → learner’s acquisition of pragmatic competence
DEFINITION OF REQUESTS

“an utterance that is intended to indicate the speaker’s desire to regulate the behaviour of the listener – that is, to get the listener to do something.” (Becker 1982: 1)

→ equivalent to the term “directives” in Searle’s (1976) speech act theory
# Working Framework

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EXAMPLES

- Meal time (4 requests identified)
- Play time (6 requests identified)
MEAL TIME

P: cho con giặt cái đồ ra đi. [M-V-230511-1]
{let me pull that out.}
(Pumpkin wants to pull a lid out of a juice box.)

M: để chút nữa mẹ đở ra cho. coi chứng.
{I will do it later. be careful.}

P: được thêm một cái nắp nữa rồi.
{I got another lid.}
(Pumpkin opens a new juice box, so that she can have the lid of the old one.)
MEAL TIME
P: ừm/ con vét cho hết luôn.

{uh/ I clean the jar.}

con hết vét được rồi đó. [M-V-230511-2]

{I cannot clean it anymore.}

M: thì thôi.

{it’s ok.}

P: ừm/ nếu mẹ vét được thì mẹ cho con nha. [M-V-230511-3-2]

{mommy/ if you can get something out of that jar, give it to me.}

M: chắc mẹ không - chưa có thời giờ vét đâu.

{maybe I don’t - haven’t got time to do that yet.}
MEAL TIME

P: *com cùng đây rồi.*
{here is hard rice.}

M: *ăn vừa vừa.* (laughing) thấy - ăn *com cùng thôi.*
{don’t eat too much. see - don’t eat too much hard rice.}

do you want the/ cranberries? (to the father)

F: huh? no thanks.

P: *don’t eat the craisins.* [F-E-230511-4]
if you eat them/ you’ll be crazy!

F: too late.

P: why?

F: I’m already crazy.

M: already ate it/ or already crazy?

P: (laughing)
PLAY TIME

P: can we play bowls/ bowling cards? [F-E-230511-1]
F: bowling cards?
M: (xxx).
P: I ask can we? [F-E-230511-2-2]
F: bowling cards?
P: trong này con có ghi nè/ đọc đi. [M-V-230511-3]
   {I wrote in this/ read it.}
F: I haven’t heard of bowling cards.
P: mẹ đọc đi. [M-V-230511-4-2]
   {mommy read it.}
bowling cards/ mẹ đọc phân bowling cards đi. [M-M-230511-5-3]
   {bowling cards/ mommy read the bowling cards part.}
M: đầu có đeo mắt kính đâu mà đọc.
   {I don’t have my glasses, can’t read.}
PLAY TIME

P: đọc cho mà nghe nha.
{I read it to you.}
mỗi người có hai lá/ người thua sẽ ném quả banh vào lá/ bài đã/ giúp mình.
{everybody has two cards/ the loser will throw the ball at the card that helped him/her.}
y quên/ giúp mình/ thua - à đúng rồi/ con hiểu rồi.
{oh I forgot/ helped us lose - ah that’s right/ I understand now.}
lá bài lớn/ chọn chỉ được/ ném một lần.
{the bigger card/ can throw only once.}
như vậy thôi/ rồi ghi date/ Thứ bảy/ ngày 12 tháng 3 năm 2011.
{that’s all/ then the date/ Saturday/ March 12, 2011.}
cái này là tờ cuối/ con lấy ra để xem có game gì hay không đó.
{this is an old sheet/ I took it out to see whether there is any game.}
M: ừ.
{yes.}
P: bây giờ chơi bowling cards không? [M-M-230511-6]
{now can we play bowling cards?}
M: đâu có biết chơi/ cũng chưa hiểu.
{don’t know how to play/ also not understand.}
CONCLUSION

➢ Translanguaging seems to be the “discursive norm” (García and Wei, 2014: 23).

➢ We translanguage “through complex communicative interactions” (García and Wei, 2014: 16).

➢ English is the language of inclusion that Pumpkin uses when she wants to address both of her parents.

➢ Related research areas: children’s intercultural perceived (im)politeness.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION
REFERENCES


