ECSPM Annual Symposium

Action for Social Justice in Multilingual Society

Some Reflections on the Role of Translation...

Loredana Polezzi
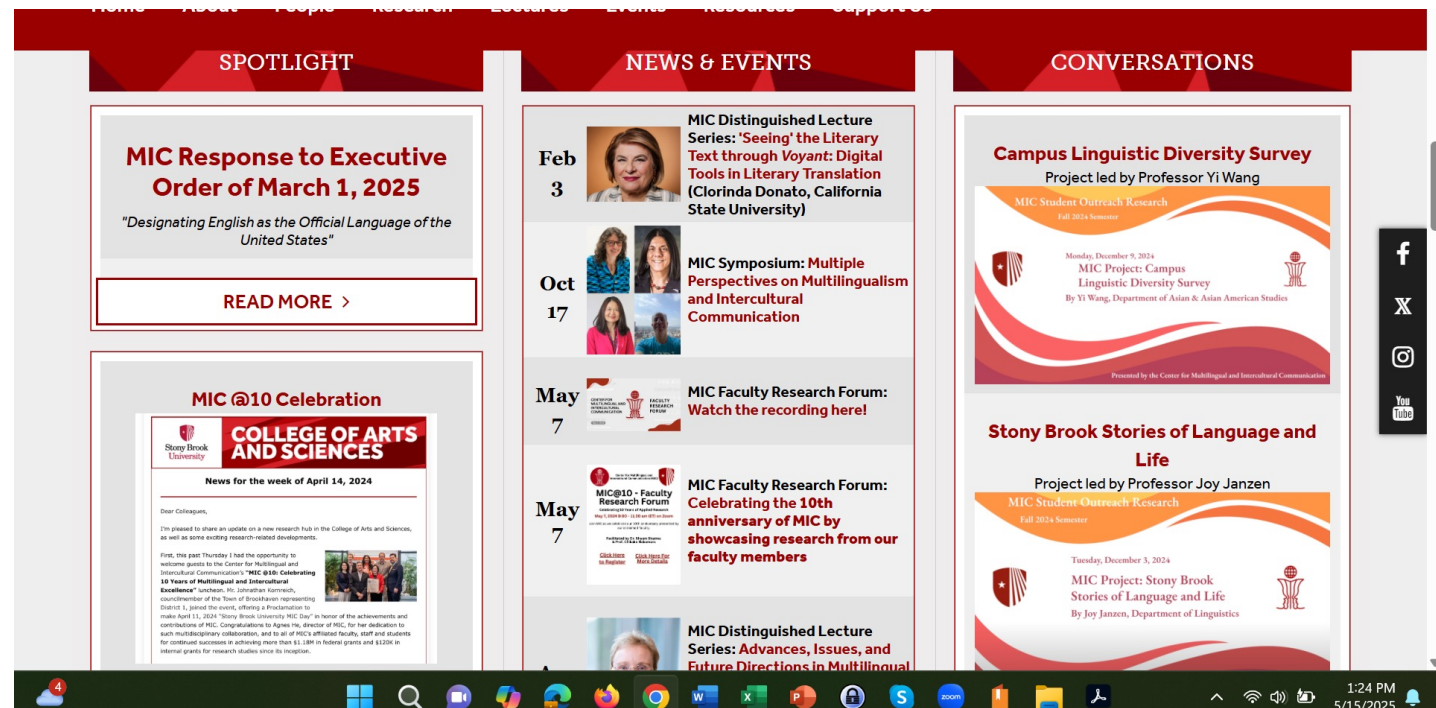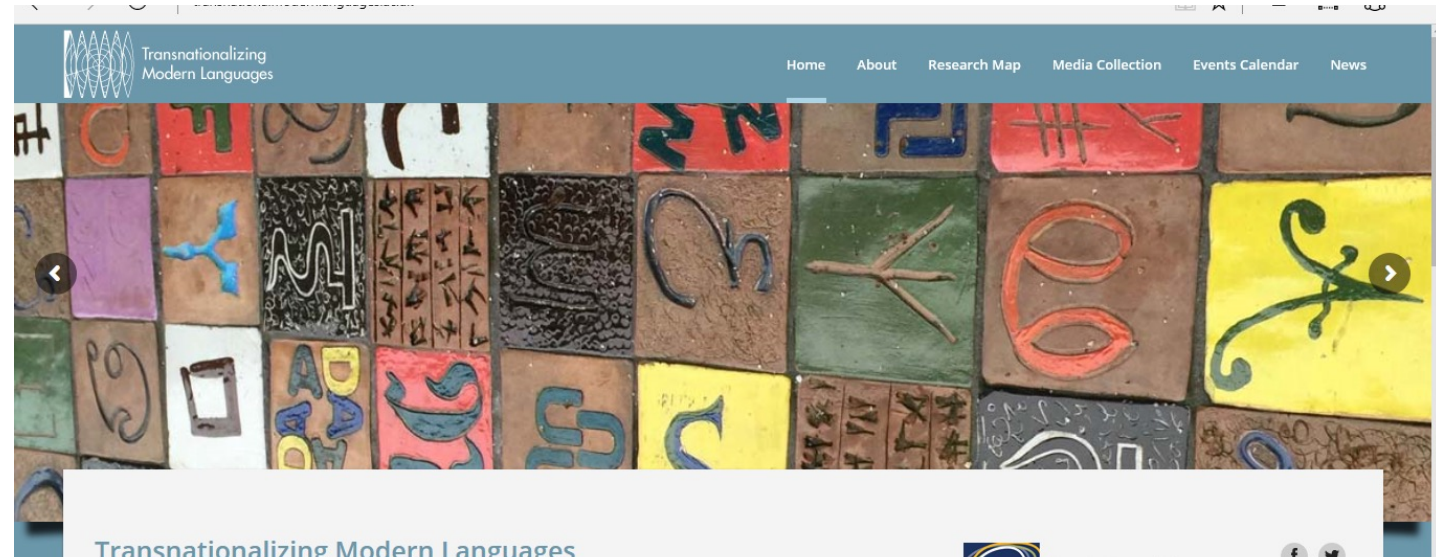
Stony Brook University

Context:

Translation & Migration Studies

Transnationalizing Modern Languages & TML: Global Challenges /Phoenix Project (Warwick/Cardiff, UK)

Center for Multilingual & Intercultural Communication: Language Justice in HR; Medical School (Stony Brook, USA)

- http://www.transnationalmodernlanguages.ac.uk/
- https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/mic/index.html

A bit more context:

- Multilingualism in the USA (visible/audible and otherwise)
- English & English variants
- Raciolinguistics (Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016)
- HE: Hispanic-serving institutions; international students; indigenous languages; DEI…
- … versus: English-Only Movement (especially 1980 onwards)
- Language penalty (e.g. 'The Duke Incident', 2019)
- Executive Order, March 1st 2025: *"Designating English as the Official Language of the United States"* (& other presidential/institutional nationalist/sovereigntist positions, e.g. SDGs)

MULTILINGUALISM &/OR TRANSLATION:
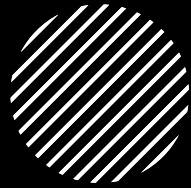
THE LABOUR OF LANGUAGE(S)

THE LABOUR OF TRANSLATION

SUSTAINABLE MULTILINGUAL PRACTICES (INCLUDING EDUCATION) REQUIRE TRANSLATION/INTERPRETATION

Translation: narrow and broad definitions

- 'Translation is an operation performed on language: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another.' (Catford, 1964: 1)

- 'Translation and interpreting are social, cultural and political acts intrinsically connected to local and global relations of power and control' (Inghilleri, 2005: 125)

Translation as movement between...
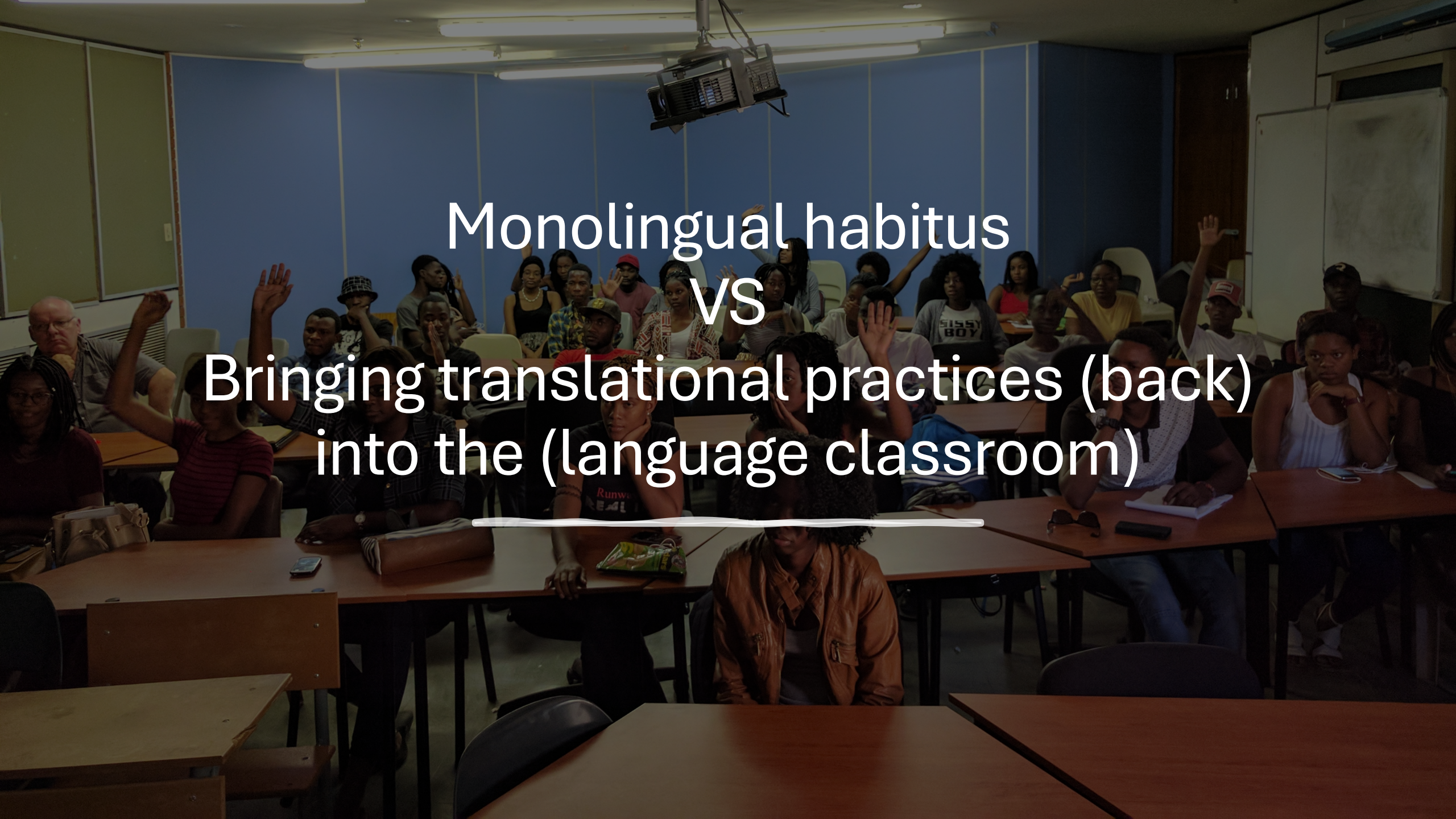**(& linked to...)**

- Languages
  - Standards (nation to nation?)
  - Variants, minoritiezed languages, ...
- Media
  - Interpretation
  - Sign languaging
- Cultural contexts
  - Intercultural Communication
  - Mediation

HE (Language) Educational Practices

- Linguistic & Methodological Nationalism
- Translanguaging, Intercomprehension

- The role of translation:
  - Silos model: reifying/fetishizing/re-instating national(ist) model; standard to standard; 'comparable' nation states…
  - Reflecting linguistic behaviour: multilingualism, translanguaging, intercomprehension; …

Monolingual habitus
VS
Bringing translational practices (back) into the (language classroom)

Training the Trainers: teachers & teacher trainers

(Modern) Languages

Across HE (see MIC resources & self-test)

Educating translators/interpreters (professionals) + Educating to translation/interpreting (users)

Resources & expectations

Sensitization, awareness, conscientization...

Policies & Politics

Plus a note on AI

Perfect & 'Imperfect' Translation

Audible/Inaudible – Visible/Invisible Translation: Beware of what you desire… (the Meta utopia – March 2022 – & Chat GPT…)

The (pre)Babelian myth

Back to the labor & the politics of languages/translation: what is the price we are prepared to pay?

SBU Expertise & Resources: MIC

- Center for Multilingual and Intercultural Communication
  https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/mic/index.html

- MIC: Workshops on Language and Social Justice:
  https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/mic/workshops/workshops-index.php

- MIC: Resources for Language Justice in Higher Education:
  https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/mic/resources/language-justice-in-higher-ed.php#Description

- MIC: Response to Executive Order of March 1st, 2025:
  https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/mic/resources/mic-response-to-executive-order-of-March-1-2025/mic-response-Executive-Order-2025.php