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The Critical Translation of Disciplines

Disciplinary boundaries allow counterevidence to belong to someone else's story.
—Susan Buck-Morss, “Hegel and Haiti” (822)

Multilingual practice and interdisciplinary inquiry share a complex difficulty in common. Since the 18th century, disciplines and (mono)languages have been structured in such a way as to control, police, and controversialize the actual crossing of their borders, while romanticizing the image of the frontier adventurer. Both languages and disciplines institute this dynamic through discourses of rectitude, expertise, and competence on the one hand, and through ascriptions of dilettantism, incomprehensibility, and irrelevance on the other. To cite Paul Kei Matsuda (2014), the recent “lure” of translingual writing—as well as the lure of transdisciplinary work—celebrates border-crossing in a way that tends to minimize or invisibilize the constraints that languages and disciplines demand from their practitioners as the entry tariff for participation. These disciplinary as well as monolingual constraints marshal access and resources through social, cultural, institutional, epistemic, and procedural means. Ignoring them yields acute and immediate disadvantage, until such time as a given practitioner achieves consecrated membership in a certain polyglot elite.

This special issue of *Critical Multilingualism Studies* explores the promising yet adverse practical territory called interdisciplinarity, and its potential value in understanding linguistic border-crossing, translanguaging, code-meshing, and other manifestations of multilingualism. Our goal is to take disciplines’ constitutive demands on their practitioners seriously, while understanding—through case studies in particular acts of critical interdisciplinary translation—how border-crossings in language, critical vocabulary, method, category of analysis, and means of inquiry can be conceived, planned, and undertaken. In parallel, we ask: to what extent can critique, advocacy, analysis, and justice be pursued multilingually, rather than solely by way of discrete monolingualisms?

The Journal of Critical Multilingualism Studies (CMS) is a peer-reviewed, transdisciplinary journal of scholarship on multilingualism, monolingualism, and their related social, cultural, historical, and literary/medial phenomena.

Contributions of 5000-8000 in any language and from any discipline or combination of disciplines welcome. Chicago citation style recommended, multimedia components encouraged.

For questions, please contact CMS Editors, Prof. Chantelle Warner or Prof. David Gramling at cms-journal@email.arizona.edu