

Laboured breathing: Running with and against
internationalizing texts of *currere*

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ABSTRACT

Two texts running a *chiasmatic* course – running with and against lines of separation. Traces of Bergamo 1999 linger in these textured doublings invoked by an invitation to Baton Rouge and a dialogue of *international* curricular provocations from which IAACS emerged. We query what happens when teachers and learners locate themselves in spaces where languages invoke a re-articulation of their pedagogic lives. Incited by such cadences of *ar/rhythmic* moments, we write out of a living pedagogy that is always already in-between movements of translation and transformation. Re-running the course – the course of running with and against our work – we have learned to read with Aoki that the same is always already – *toujours déjà* – the same and not the same. And hence our laboured breathing...running with and against internationalizing texts of *currere*.



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[chiasm(us)] Two texts running a *chiasmatic* course – running with and against lines of separation. Traces of Bergamo 1999 linger in these textured doublings invoked by an invitation to Baton Rouge and a dialogue of *international* curricular provocations from which IAACS emerged. **1.** Attentive to the double gesture of writing as inter-discursive moments of *currere* – as sender, we respond to our addressees who invited us to attend to our breathing and bring our bodies into the work. “I am experience. With each breath. Experience. Regardless of the context, I am, running a course. *Currere* is to run” (Pinar & Grumet, 1976). **2.** In our (w)rites of passage – moments of to-and-fro – at the scene of departure – a driver – *le passeur* – one who takes people across borders into ex-clusionary spaces – made reference to our going ‘up-the-way-a-bit’ – blurring the boundaries of our re-turn – and now – in the now of discourse we are ‘down-the-way-a-bit’ – re-visiting – in a re-currence of discourse. fragment from Heraclitus (Robinson, 1987) inscribes that “A road up [and] down [is] one and the same [road]” (p.41). Re-running the course – the course of running with and against our work – we have learned to read with Aoki (2003) that the same is always already – *toujours déjà* – the same and not the same. And hence our laboured breathing ...

We only ever speak one language. . .
 (yes but)
 we never speak only one language. . .
Jacques Derrida

What happens when we, as teachers and learners, locate ourselves in a space where languages provoke a re-articulation of our pedagogic lives? Engaging with/in such chiasmatic acts of languaging has opened us to the *international* as texts of *currere*. In the ‘inter’ of our work with students, we are drawn to Derrida’s double proposition of monolingual polyglossia, to Aoki’s textured hybridity of language, and to Bhabha’s in-between space, as sites that surprise and disrupt signs of difference in the classroom. And, we have become wary of the tenancy of those signs in our encounters with *currere*. Through reading elsewhere and writing otherwise, we are alert to a labouring of signs we hadn’t anticipated. Incited by such cadences of ar/rhythmic moments in the pedagon (Smith, 1999) of our teaching lives, we dwell in a living pedagogy that is always already in-between movements of translation and transformation.

For us, the *inter* is a curricular space of liminality, textured by Gil’s (1998) modulating breath as passage – a passage taking “its pulse from...difference” (Pollock, 1998,

Such a language would be
 one that grows in the middle.
Ted Aoki

‘inter’ - the cutting edge of
 translation and negotiation,
 the *in-between* space – that
 carries the burden of meaning
 of culture.
Homi Bhabha

What is a body? It is a
 speaking respiration.
 Respiration, breath, *pneuma* -
 a modulating pathway ... Any
 rhythmic expression, like
 rapid speech or hesitation,
 which reverberates there, is
 made possible, as such, by
 this property of the breath as
 a passage.

Jose Gil

[labo(u)r] A word located in a hybrid space in-between englishes [British/American] performs in tensionality beneath and beyond the sign. Brackets clattering – clamo(u)ring – as discordant aspirations. Tracking the economy of signs from Husserl to Derrida, Caputo (1987) makes reference to the labor of the sign – the anonymous productivity of the sign – a productivity performing the work of tenancy in the presence and in the absence of objects. Tracking a shift from the uselessness of the sign to the productivity of the sign, Derrida contends that the sign performs the work of tenancy – holding on to the thing as the thing slips away from the sign. And what happens when signs labour to perform the work of tenancy in curricular spaces in-between languages? In a doubling moment of pedagogy, Derrida (1998a) evokes two alternating symptoms: the first as an “*asphyxia*: a state of apparent death, a ceasing of respiration, a fainting fit, a cessation of the pulse” and the second as the pulse quickening as if “drugged, intoxicated, inebriated by the new richness” (p. 53). Could yet another language emerge from this ar/rhythmic space – from a labouring of language that grows in the middle – as an Aokian moment? Running with and against the signs of pedagogy – across borderlines in the slippery *inter* spaces of an international *currere*, how can we begin to trouble the tenancy of the sign? We attend to ar/rhythmic breathing with our neighbours across the border – taking a pulse from difference – in the running of a course – up and down the road. From one neighbour to another – *the property of a breath as passage*. Running the interval of translation as Derrida’s notion of *survivre* – living on. Each re-writing a doubling gesture – a transformative moment of discourse.



p.82). Running with and against internationalizing texts invoked in our classrooms, we trouble and are troubled by passages of colonial nostalgia; where phantoms trafficking in English take on the guise of neo-colonial inscriptions, only to remind us that the colonial “smile [still] lingers in the air” (Nandy, 1989, p. 276). Classroom rhythms disrupted, interrupted, corrupted by the willful impositions of phantoms. Surprised by ghostly remains, we are seduced into a laboured breathing of contingent and restless dialogues – of *speaking respirations* in the *cutting edge of translation and negotiation* – that move us on. We write out of the laboured breathing of our pedagogic lives enacted in translation – one shifting roles from a primary teacher to a teacher of teachers always already midst inter/national arrivals and departures, and the other a teacher of English language learners at home and elsewhere ever-dwelling in the difficulties of translation.

Entering into liminal folds of translation with our admittedly Derridean curiosities, we take from Trinh T. Minh-ha (1992) that translation as grafting is “a problem of reading and identity” (p. 244). As writers/translators, we story into hybrid spaces of persistent instability that invoke difference into our co-evolving work with students. With Jean-Luc Nancy (1993, p. 33) we track a trembling that “differentiates, defers, identity; that is how identity is

Colonialism may have vanished from the world scene but its smile lingers in the air.

Ashis Nandy

To write means to graft. It’s the same word. The saying of the thing is restored to its being-grafted. The graft is not something that happens to the properness of the thing. There is no more any thing than there is any original text.

Jacques Derrida

Translation, like identity, is a question of grafting several cultures onto a single body so hybridization is not only between but within.

Trinh T. Minh-ha

[de-tours]

A detour now with Maurice Blanchot (1982) into the space of literature. Blanchot contends that ambiguity seduces us – evoking in

us the desire for clarity – a desire that is endlessly deferred. Gasché (1999) reading Blanchot reminds us that “ordinary language seeks to remove ambiguity and to limit equivocality by putting a term to understanding” (p. 339). Blanchot turns to literary language as a slippery passage for setting it free. I re-read Ondaatje’s (1992) *The English Patient* through the Blanchotian (1995) citation of ambiguity in literary language as “in some sense abandoned to its excesses by the opportunities it finds and exhausted by the extent of the abuses it can commit” (p. 341). The Hungarian Count Ladislaus de Almásy, as the English patient, betrays and is betrayed through sly spatialities midst languages. What happens when ambiguity is halted? When an accent as acoustic hybridity is refused entry into Englishness – is this how betrayal occurs? Let us enter into the space of re-readings – the space of a hyphen where identities are de-stabilized. Re-reading Ondaatje re-works the hyphen. Alerted to *the property of a breath as passage* I become aware of the English patient’s laboured breathing with and against his languages in the tensioned hybrid space of ambiguity and uncertainty – *of promise haunted by the possibility of its perversion* – a doubling gesture of betrayal through the textual ambiguities of his languages. What happens in the *inter* of international – always already a haunted space? There are no easy in-betweens in Bhabha’s *cutting edge of translation and negotiation*. Laboured breathing – *the property of a breath as passage* – as passage to the death of the English patient. The promise of breathing haunted by the inevitability of cessation. A Derridean doubled symptom. The discourse in-between nations – a discourse of ambiguity halted. Could this be what Derrida means by performative contradictions? The occupant and the ghost – in the body of



given”. An Aokian (2003) play doubles the space of *ko-jin* as individual – as both divided and undivided – exposing some slippage in the ‘inter’ of translation. With Blanchot (1997, p. 56), we labour with the notion of “translating as the bringing into ‘work’ of difference.” Theorizing internationalizing discourse(s) of currere through hybrid graftings and de-tours keeps us open to the im/possibilities of reading and writing the *work of difference* in classroom life.

Within the gesture of a performative and hybrid genre, we graft into wounds and gaps and fissures of pedagogy – running into troubled topographies – Turner’s ‘limen’ – to interrupt our complicity with and against the globalization of English as a productive signifier. As teachers we ask, how can we enter into conversations with students and with each other, opening to the limen – the ‘inter’ – of internationalizing texts as generative sites of possibilities? Sites that call into question experiences with English and its hegemonic tendencies? Trembling with/in storied translations of curricular practices, we read with Derrida (1998a) that he no longer has to distinguish between promise and terror – “a promise...is...haunted by the possibility of its perversion” (p. 93). Laboured breathing as a dwelling with/in curricular practices of promise and terror...

Limen: a no-man’s-land betwixt-and-between a fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities, a striving after new forms and structure.

Victor Turner

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[inter-val]

The cinematic event of The English Patient returns me to the acoustics of laboured breathing – a ‘sounding’ of hybridity – the English patient’s laboured breathing as he is held [host/age] in his charred burnt body – a re-reading within the gap – the interval. Rey Chow (1995) alerts us to the generativity of detours through *translation* from novel to filmic script opening to yet another moment of pedagogy. My re-reading becomes another supplement in my writing – in my speaking – in my breathing – into the space of interval. Trinh (1999) contends that “[t]he interval, creatively maintained, allows words to set in motion dormant energies and to offer, with the impasse, a passage from one space...to another” (p. xi). In re-viewing the television documentary “The Resonance of the English Patient” that followed the filmic version of the novel, I am re-reading Trinh who envisions ongoing conversations around texts and scripts breathing life into the work – the reader invited into these circum-scriptions as supplement. Three variations on an english accent – author/producer/director – engage in performative re-readings of textual fragments and engage in complicated conversations on the making of the film – in what Trinh refers to as “the task of speaking nearby...in an interrelational space of detour” (p. xii). And viewing the documentary, I am startled by the enunciation of an ‘international’ sand club.



In an ‘inter’ space of the classroom, a complicated conversation erupts and enfolds Derrida’s double proposition; “we only ever speak one language (yes but) we never speak only one language” (1998a, p. 10). In class a student labours through her thoughtfulness – a passage unsure of itself – sharing her responsibility of a group task. A fragmented language – “one that grows in the middle” (Aoki, 1993, p. 99) – is halted to redress its impurity. Teacher impulses work to purify a language *at the cutting edge of translation and negotiation*. It was what she wanted, wasn’t it? My (un)intentional curricular practices became language games, perpetuating necessary illusions of speaking “only one language”. A close colonial encounter labours to imprison the originary language, the un/grammatical core now arrested at the borderlines and imbued with imperial ink – my unsuspecting ink is used to map another. A cartography where colonial texts work to establish and sustain the possibility of a base rhythm of English resisted and transformed by acts of translation. Learning (in) English proffers a place where the interdiction of English is the indisputable incursion of its own law – at once there is both obedience and a failure to obey. A Jabèsian “cadence of subversion” (1996, p. 5) always already there destabilizes the colonial encounter with a language that grows in the middle – an Aokian Metonymic moment (Aoki, 2003) that locates itself in the terror of a promise of “only one language”.

Another stopped by my office visibly upset. Broken words midst ar/rhythmic pulses alerted me to what was for this international student from Japan a troubled translation. Living language in the abyss of a moment in exile, she had spoken Japanese in an ‘English only’ classroom – a classroom invested with the ideals of linguistic purity and enforced by students outlawing the use of Japanese, their originary language from which they sought leave. In front of her Japanese classmates, she stood to take her curricular turn, speaking only in the unity of one language, English. The in-struct(ur)ed

[currere]

A sand club – a group of hash harriers – ex-patriates – running a course in desert lands – a *currere* in the desert – mapping a course for the other – in the Jabèsian desert spaces beneath the words. But...running where? Footprints disappear in desert sands that refuse our imaginary cartographies. In a radical reading of the cinematic version of The English Patient, Hanley (1998) critiques the romanticism of the film and calls for attentiveness to the “abrasiveness” of sand – the “maddening intrusiveness” of sand (p. 23). How can we work with abrasion as a tensioned space of generative possibilities? Currere always already under erasure through *maddening intrusiveness*. And Hanley draws our attention to the torment of Kirpal Singh as he hears news of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I am citing Singh’s words from Ondaatje’s work: “Never turn your back on Europe. The deal makers. The contract makers. The map drawers” and blurring the boundaries of national distinction: “American, French, I don’t care. When you start bombing the brown races of the world, you’re an Englishman” (p. 25). Troubling the sly spatialities of Englishness in a slippery passage of globalization. Commenting on the circulation of religion like an English word *comme un mot anglais* Derrida (1998b) inscribes a globalization that is “running out of breath *essoufflee*, however irresistible and imperial it still may be” (p. 30). We listen deeply as Derrida asks “What are we to think of this running out of breath?” (p. 30). Laboured breathing as abrasive text(ure). De-stabilizing English.



base rhythms of English reverberated discordantly. The passage of English only was impassable; instead, she sought a hybrid place nearby. Living a moment of terror of my mis-informed obligations as an English teacher disrupted my commonplace. I, too, had been seduced and become complicit in the colonial act of insisting on the (im)possibility of English only. Disruptive discursive excursions. I found myself now wanting to risk opening to the possibility of never speaking only one language.

Her traces of Japanese in a moment of translation troubled the English ear. What am I asking of her in an ‘English-only classroom’? What does ‘English only’ want? Sutured by the geneology of graftings between and within one language, how can any language be pure? Differing social and structural forms from language contact seep, spill, spin into and out of the other. Living languages always already running with and against a course of translation, at once altering and maintaining their forms in fluid and fragmented (pre)tension – *speaking only one language (yes but) never speaking only one language*. The burden of purity of a language becomes its untenable demise. The enunciatory space of English in translation caught her by surprise. Languaging in cultural uncertainty, her Japanese slippage exposed itself in the summons of another language. An ambiguous space of speaking in-between languages – midst Aoki’s (2003) vertical and horizontal signification and Bhabha’s (1994) ‘inter’ – “the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *in-between* space of limen that carries the burden of meaning of culture” (p. 38). A text emerges not as this language or that but as this language *and* that – a “Third Space” wherein the textured “others of ourselves” (p. 39) work to dissolve the weightiness of textual polarity – of this language or that. Base rhythms of only one language troubled this student – she turned to intertextual moments – texts that invoked Turner’s “storehouse of possibilities” within unwanted remnants of one language nested in another.

[translation

It was in a class with Ted Aoki in the summer of ‘96 that we first heard of Derridean *différance* – a neologism of difference and deferral – and we began to seek out readings on deconstruction. And now I’m reading Derrida’s letter to Izutsu. In Derrida’s “Letter to a Japanese Friend” on the difficulty of translating his notion of deconstruction – he writes on the chance of ‘deconstruction’ – “the chance of ‘deconstruction’ would be that another word (the same and an other) can be found in Japanese to say the same thing (the same and an other) to speak of deconstruction and to lead elsewhere to its being written and transcribed.... I understand translation as involving the same risk and chance as the poem. How to translate ‘poem’? a ‘poem’?...” (Kamuf, 1991, p. 275-6). Derrida in his letter to Izutsu contends that the sign of deconstruction interests him only when replacing other words “as ‘écriture,’ ‘trace,’ ‘différance,’ ‘supplement,’ ‘hymen,’ entame,’...etc.” – an open listing – translating the sign is a movement – a moment – a rhythm of aspiration. Derrida punctuates his ending with an ellipsis that continues to breathe life into the work. And listen to Aoki (2003) on the sign of *ko-jin* – the doubling of labour in the productivity of the sign – translating *ko-jin* as individual – as both divided and undivided – “an admission perhaps that in translation there is some slippage, something left untranslated, and thus incomplete” (p. 6). We learn with Aoki that to be attentive to the ‘re’ is to dwell in the silence and the excess of the hyphen. Grafting and being-grafted as a labour of language(s).



A singular definite article questions the possibility of English being at one with itself – questioning the risk in wanting to speak the pure language of the master, a language that Derrida (1998a) contends,

is a system whose unity is always reconstituted. But this unity is not comparable to any other. It is open to the most radical grafting, open to deformations, transformations, expropriation, to a certain a-nomie and de-regulation. (p.65)

I reassured her of the double bind of translation – those de-regulated (ar)hythmic movements of (in)alienated graftings where we never speak only one language. Risking my desire to remain open to language-in-translation as a generative space within tensions of ambiguity and uncertainty, my words were quickly silenced as the Western phantasms of unity, of purity, of clarity worked to motivate a re-constitution of the master's language. English was only one language. Wanting to re-work this site with her, I shared Michel de Certeau's (1988) iteration of clarity as a betrayal of the richness of ambiguity. She did not want to hear these words. She had broken a promise – an illusory promise of speaking only one language – a promised sentence undelivered. The phantoms of the promise's perversion did not rest.

The student, a Japanese writer of English living in the chiasmatic two-fold of translation midst the departure and arrival of languages, does not speak in only one language – can never speak in only one language. A reversal transverses the faltering terrain as she begins to question the im/possibility of English-only. Yet, Japanese is alienated in the English only classroom – a “sweet dream of reason” (Doll, 1999) now implicated in Derrida's (1998a) “irremediable suffering” of the speaker when the double

[re-turns]

And now returning from the Blanchotian space of literature – two narratives – two storied memoirs – two students – dis/located through live(d) experiences midst sly spatialities. Two hyphenated identities dwelling in hybrid spaces – spaces of promise haunted always already by the possible perversion of promise. A young Algerian-Jewish student expelled from school – an experience that Derrida contends “leaves nothing intact, something you can never again cease to feel” (Derrida in interview with Wood & Bernasconi, 1988, p.74). A Japanese-Canadian university graduate dis/located from mainstream society – displaced and relocated – an experience of pain that Aoki felt bone deep (in conversation with Ted Aoki, 07/96). What does the hyphen want? Who desires to limit the ambiguity of the hyphen? How does the violence of language and the law come to inhabit the space of the hyphen? And here I draw on a citation from Cixous (1993): “Why?...Because. As you know this is the secret of the law: ‘because’,.... This is the law's logic. Logic. It is this terrible ‘because,’ this senseless fatal ‘because’ that has decided people's fate It is this because that rules our lives. It pervades everything. It can even touch the fragile world of translation” (p.117). As graftings are halted. As bodies are excluded. As the colonial smile *lingers in the air* ...



fold of languages-within-languages is not assumed – when alienation “institutes every language as a language of the other” (p. 63). Leaning on Derrida’s notion of desistance as a rupture always already there, her trembling translation is at once a problem and not a problem. Messy texts of translation (Low & Palulis, 2000) emerge, entangle, fragment, and create anew. Speaking with a faulty tongue, estrangement breathes life (and death) into English. A living language she seeks to master, locates itself in the spaces between mastery and non-mastery. What English does she want? Her “sweet dream” slips away as alienation lingers in her troubled aspirations. She pauses momentarily, disquieted yet intrigued by her unique ways with words. Life in the abyss runs with and against such alienation and yet lives on in a language she can now bear to live with.

Is *English only* Ashis Nandy’s (1989) warning of the colonial smile that *lingers in the air*? Is it a veiled assertion of colonial sovereignty in classrooms that enact languaging as a mastery of the other? Faint traces work to preserve the ‘gift’ of an imperial passage – illusory tropes of a pure, unified English and its mastery – endemic with/in sites now engaged in internationalizing curriculum. The limits of speaking/writing English only become the limits of one’s world. A world labeled by English becomes limited only by the perversion of its mastery in the otherwise promise of an unlimited world. Re-writing *English only* as Derrida’s double proposition unveils a colonial smile and exposes a scandalous myth of translatable transparency. The colonial desire to deliver a limiting, perfunctory English narrative of the world is obliterated, no longer resting on assumptions of illusory clarity in the possibility of translating one language/one world as a passage into *the other* (English). Borderlines always already crossing borderlands of foreign tongues – Anzaldua’s (1999) new *mestiza* – indwelling midst texts in-between, texts always already in a constant flux of translation...laboured breathing.

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[trafficking

A teacher trafficking in English. My Canadian “I” was once an expatriate working in the Oil Company’s School in Libya, North Africa, when the time-was-out-of-joint. A moment surprised by difference in an early morning bombing attack. My identity – de-stabilized through border crossings – living with the terror of being mistakenly identified as the enemy ‘other.’ A few words in Arabic – a passage – *a modulating pathway* through another language – the stranger in my ‘self’ speaking in the tongue of another – to mark my borders – frame my boundaries. A desire to clarify the ambiguity of the hyphen in expatriate. The words labo(u)ring to frame my difference from those who dropped the enemy bombs. Working and worked by a double vowel. An experience, as Cixous (1993) would say, of “[c]rossing the frontier...at the stroke of a signifier” (p.81). A displaced body seeking replacement – relocation – through the labo(u)r of the sign – the productivity of the sign – the productivity of an appropriated sign – the brackets clamo(u)ring in terror. Cixous (1993) contends that “[t]he person who doesn’t tremble when crossing a border doesn’t know there is a border and doesn’t cast doubt on their own definition” (p.131). Labo(u)ring across borders, I trembled. Returning to Libya, my English books are removed by airport security and hurled across the floor – Bhabha (1994) makes reference to “the presence of the English book....*surface* that stabilizes the agonistic colonial space” (p. 110) – the *surface* of the English book as a sign of labour while the thing has already departed. The English teacher is passed through the gates – the body as *a speaking respiration ... a modulating pathway...the breath as a passage*. But the English books are held in house arrest. Trafficking in English – confiscated typographies – the English text as contraband. The body as a token of this exchange – a counterfeit economy – a space surprised by difference – complicity interrupted and disturbed. Passing through security ... *a modulating pathway* ...



Discursive spaces of internationalizing curriculum, accentuated as sites of translation, constantly traffick in the presumption that practices can be translated from one cultural localism to another – from *a* curricular practice to *the* curricular practice – an imperial passage that constantly brushes against the conceit of its own discursive formations. I read internationalizing texts of currere as liminal, un/translatable spaces, spaces troubled within multiple and complex losses and gains of languages-in-flux. I am wary of dis-eased sites of colonial desire that seduce me into a cartography already mapped – a pilgrimage tainted by the residuals of social memory, a foreign tongue that threatens to alter the state of the language of the translator, and the symbolic loading of language games that become re-routed by scandals of translation. Guarding against the scandals of translation is an imperial task of the translator (Benjamin, 1968). Yet, what happens when translation by scandals is refused?

One, in a graduate class of students, labours in a language not his own. In his desire to participate with the other, he told me he couldn't speak – at the threshold of an utterance his breath agonized in troubled perplexity – left with “a fertile nothingness” – constantly running with and against the *sayable* expectations of a graduate student. The silently oral enactment of a grafting not-yet-taken enacts a distortion of an initial self-promise to the sayable now caught up in a network of texts living in the moment. His text – perhaps a Derridian *sur-vive* – a ‘living on’ in words that are both at once translatable and untranslatable – becomes a text toiling to survive. A student, engages in Benjamin's (1968) task of the translator and, in the pause of a moment indebted to the search for words in English to prolong the textual life of his originary – was deferred by the voice of an other insisting to be heard. An other graduate wanting to speak. An act working un/intentionally to silence the promise of survival.

[*internationalization*]

For a moment, we were ‘down-the-way-a-bit’ in Baton Rouge engaged in complicated conversations conducted in cross-border english(es). Running with and against *internationalizing* curriculum, we were hash harriers running the course in Jabèsian desert spaces. A desert under erasure offers infinite hospitality – an opening to grafting multiple identities into a writing that always already doubles its gesture of deliverance. Where are we? Peggy Phelan (1997) contends that, “[p]erformative writing enacts the death of the ‘we’ that we think we are before we begin to write” (p.17). And so we continue to write with and against – this Englishness. We write toward what Phelan terms “the radicality of unknowing who we are becoming” (p. 17) – our writing pushing against the hegemonic ideologies of knowledge – our writing pushing against this Englishness that shifts with some degrees of separation. In the space of the ‘inter’ one imagines a coming and a going – a to-and-fro movement in in-between spaces – an ex-change of messages. Translation as reading – iterability of the mark – translation always already adrift – language itself as a Babelian event in the im/possibility of translation. How to write as/in a complicated conversation? Reading Giorgio Agamben (1999), we are mindful of his call for a restoration of the difficulty of writing as “the task of the coming philosophy” (p.38). As a task for the coming community. Translation is always already – *toujours déjà* – what marks and re-marks the “detour of language in languages” as drift (Leavey, 1987, p. 36). We are crossing oceans now in drifting conversations – fragments in virtual space ... *detour of language in languages* ...



Derrida's (1998a) reference to a double proposition of monolingualism is a reminder of how the double-fold of language works to blur the boundaries of a text's speakable passage – the internationalization of a curricular translation frays at the edges, finding trouble in the asymmetry of one language in another, “always for *the other*, from the other, kept by the other” (p.40). In the extended silence, was he seeking a form of survival that reproduced his original text in the language of arrival? The base rhythms of an imperial passage into English disrupted by a foreign tongue – English only as/in a colonial silencing of translation? The “sweet dreams of reason” return hauntingly with their “dark underside” (Doll Jr., 1999, p. 88) – their desire to absorb the other into one – one language appropriated by another. In the moment of a laboured pause, a colonial tendency to pre-empt the other was enacted – the cadence of English was not to be disrupted. An international graduate student signing his own desistance in hybrid pulsations – one language ar/rhythmically conversing with the other – experiences the double bind of translation. What do I say to this student, caught in the silence of his pronouncement – his desire to speak overcome by the sweet dream of reason? How does one live in spaces of laboured breathing, running with and against the internationalization of *currere*?

I read with Derrida (1985) that translation is not representation and reproduction of the ordinary but is an act of “transforming the original as well as the translation” (p. 122). The obligation of the translator is to both sustain textual life and survive beyond – a kind of hospitality that becomes a symbolic alliance between languages – *a language that grows from the middle*, extending each language beyond itself – in grafting, a reconciliation of languages where the whole becomes greater than either the original or the translation. Running with and against the colonial desire for an English only, translation as transformation welcomes the impurity of language and its multiple tongues.

[hospitality]

Edmond Jabès makes reference to an infinite hospitality. A generous hospitality was extended toward the participants in Louisiana in the founding of a new association (IAACS)

– welcoming the stranger in conversation. Stamelman (1991) in his introductory essay to *The Jabès Reader* evokes the Jabèsian notion of hospitality as “a form of dialogue and sharing offered to the other, to the stranger in his or her radical difference” (p. xxi). A Jabèsian hospitality welcomes “the unknown person who suddenly appears from nowhere” (p. xxii). We responded to an invitation extended at Bergamo to work on our breathing and to bring our work to Louisiana. Rosmarie Waldrop (1991) translating Jabès comments on a writing that does not seek to “master language” – a Jabèsian writing opens language to silence...and “lets it breathe a larger air...listens to it, listens to language thinking and breathing...” (p. xxvi). Could this be a *modulating pathway* for international dialogue? Learning to listen to *language thinking and breathing*. What happens when listening invokes a modulating pathway for hospitality? Derrida (1998a) writes of a generous hospitality in Louisiana in April '92 at LSU – as an invitation to Francophones and to hyphenated Francophones. This Derridean text that so entices us began as a presentation – as a labour of signs at an international/bilingual conference in Louisiana entitled “Echoes from Elsewhere”/ “*Renvois d'ailleurs*.” And it is from the space of hyphenated identities that Derrida asks what the hyphen wants, contending that the hyphen is never enough – “never enough to conceal protests, cries of anger or suffering, the noise of weapons, airplanes, and bombs” (p. 11). We have learned to listen to the performative contradictions of hospitality and hostility.



If curricular traces of internationalization are understood as sites of intertextual translation – of Benjamin’s kinship of languages, of Derrida’s double proposition – would this graduate student’s task of speaking in an other language continue to be deferred, his tongues silenced in the imperialist’s desire for ‘pure’ English? His breath labours in attempting the im/possibility of a transparent translatability? Was he living in the borderline – running with and against base rhythms of English – dwelling in a Derridian paradoxical agreement (in the abyss between translatability *and* untranslatability)? How can we, as teachers and learners – *only ever speak one language (yes, but) never speak only one language* – dwell in a moment of language reconciliation – in a complicated conversation of *currere* and its internationalization – in this practised place of classroom life?

[re-articulating...] A text moves on ... responding to calls – transporting words and transported by words from conference to conference – (e)migrating, mutating, translating, transformed and transforming. A text renews itself in a postscriptive labouring with words... after China. Seated in the audience at The First World Curriculum Studies Conference in Shanghai, I heard through my earphones, the laboured breathing of a translator as *a speaking respiration*. A translator gasping for air. Languages-gasping-in-transport. I heard the acoustic hybridity of translation-in-labour. One translator near asphyxia passes the work to an other ... *a pulse quickening* ...to pick up the laboured breathing *of breath as passage* and move it on. Laboured breathing through translation□transported through language(s)□ words and worlds of a complicated *currere* – a breathing, gasping pulse of difference. And at year end I am drawn to a headline: “China ... exhales ...” A reference to China’s extraordinary year and future possibilities. As one exhales an other inhales in *modulating pathways* ... reverberations ... *of the breath as a passage*. Noel Gough (2003) at the First World Curriculum Conference in Shanghai calls for “rearticulations of the languages in which curriculum work is performed and represented” (p. 296-7). We listen for the resonance of the *detour of language in languages*. Gough encourages us in building “transnational solidarities in curriculum work based on shared responsibilities rather than shared identities” (p.296). We struggle with the im/possibility of separating identity from responsibility. We work with and against Gough: the ‘re’ of our re-articulation(s) labours to dis/mantle the language of solidarity. Does not the language of solidarity require some tension to keep the work-in-motion? Some *abrasiveness* as a *maddening intrusion* to radicalize an international sand club. We draw Phelan into conversation as *performative writing enacts the death of the ‘we’ that we think we are before we begin to write*. What might happen to the tenancy of the identity ‘we’ in solidarity if it were a performative act? We read Phelan’s notion of the *radicality of unknowing who we are becoming* with Derrida’s contention that promise and terror are inextricable. A dis/articulation in a moment of curriculum theorizing – an Aokian moment – as productive instability. Our labo(u)ring signatures adrift as host(age) welcoming *the unknown stranger who appears from nowhere* to share in a discourse that grows in the middle – a grafting that begins in the ‘inter’ spaces of international curricula – that traveled from North America to China – that carried curriculum across the Pacific where it was interrupted in conversation and transformed in its return. We welcome the reader to the text as *stranger in his or her radical difference* ... to run with and against our words ...



[rhuthmos

Two texts running
with and against
languages of *currere*

–vestiges of Bergamo ‘99 and now IAACS
resonate as we attend to the *rhuthmos* of our
bodies and our breathing in this work – breathing
that labours in complicated conversations
inspired by a Louisiana invitation **1.** ar/rhythmic
interdictions dwelling in living spaces of
internationalizing discourses as textured in-
betweens **2.** unsuspected cadences that disrupt the
base rhythms of the colonial project in curricular
practices and enter the space of the ‘inter’ – a
space now rhythmized into the re/percussive double
folds of Lacoue-Labarthe’s (1989) typography of
the subject – of Derrida’s (1989) rhythmic
desistance–[rhythmic ruptures] – destabilizing
stances “set spinning from within” (p. 23) – where
“there is no subject without the signature of this
rhythm” (p. 31) – rhythms that are neither
perceptible nor discernible, remaining outside of
the sens(ible) – residing in the echoes of *no sense*.
We attend to the inscriptive forces of an
ar/rhythmic rupture – a ‘pedagon’ of
un/translatability in the ‘inter’ of
internationalization – a non-sensible disposition of
unique ar/rhythms – opening to the possibility of
an intelligible sense midst *no sense* – opening to
the space of the double fold as a generative site.
Laboured breathing. Could this be the *frisson* – a
vibrant tensionality – of textured in-betweens in
internationalizing discourses of *currere*? Could
this be an Aokian moment of living pedagogy?

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