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Translanguaging: A review of flexible language use on students' learning of additional languages

BY: TINA GUNNARSSON



Outline

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- My experience using translanguaging
- Questions



Who am I ?



- Certified teacher of English and Spanish
- Liljeborgsskolan, Trelleborg
- FRAM (Post-graduate education in Language Education)
- Licentiate student – 80/20
- Lund University, SOL (Centre for Languages and Literature)
- Supervisor: Marie Källkvist (Associate Professor, Lund University)
- Co-supervisor: Alex Housen (Professor, Vrije University, Brussels)



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My research

- English Language Education
- Multilingual students writing in English
- Language of thought during the writing of an essay in English, categorized in five different thought processes
- Triangulation study (quantitative & qualitative):
 - Questionnaire data
 - *Think-aloud protocols* (online tasks, verbal protocols)
 - Retrospective interviews



The purpose of my research



- Swedish Schools Inspectorate (2010)
- National Agency for Education (2012)
- Tholin (2012)
- Fladvad (2013)
- Lindberg & Hyltenstam (2013)



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Translanguaging: a definition

A term first coined by Cen Williams (1994)

“the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system”

(Canagarajah 2011:401)



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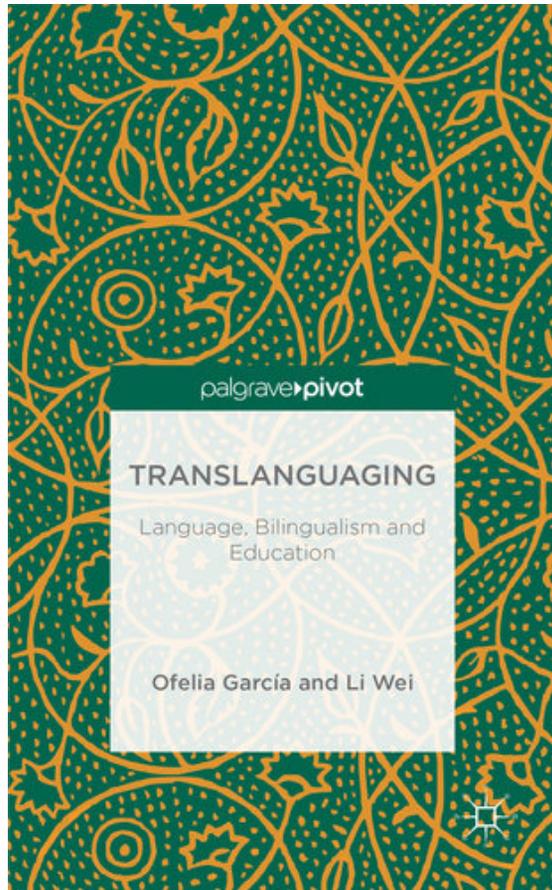
What does it mean to translanguauge?

Using your complete language repertoire in order to:

- Make yourself understood
- Convey a certain nuance of meaning
– **creativity, criticality** (Wei 2011)
- Make sure you have understood
- Contrast and compare different language phenomena
- Mix all your languages freely according to the situation and your current needs
- Cultural hybridity
- Create a “*new whole*” – Bach!



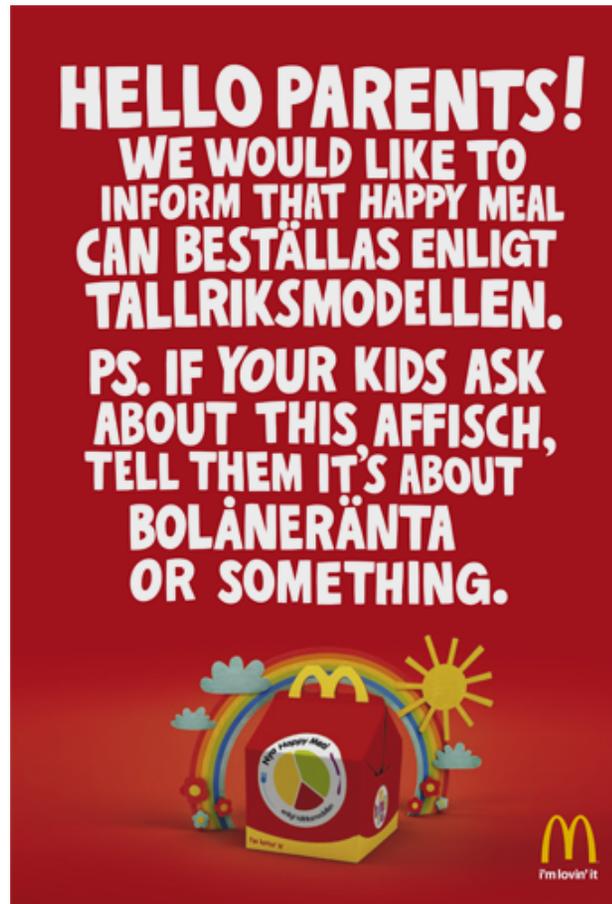
Translanguaging and code-switching



“ Translanguaging differs from the notion of code-switching in that it refers not simply to a shift or a shuttle between two languages, but to the speakers’ construction and use of original and complex interrelated discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of language, but that make up the speakers’ complete language repertoire.” (García & Wei 2014)



Translanguaging in Sweden...



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Recent research on translanguaging



Photo taken from:
<http://voxy.com/blog>

- Lesson accomplishment
(Lin & Martin 2008; Arthur & Martin 2006)
- Balance the power-relations
among languages in the classroom
(Canagarajah 2011)
- Participant confidence and
motivation
(Creese & Blackledge 2010; Lin 1999)
- Learning is maximized
(Hornberger 2005)



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Lesson accomplishment:

- the message of the instructor is more easily conveyed
- the message is more easily comprehended by students
- increased understanding of class content
- students can communicate in any language in order to get their point across or collaborate with other students
- a focus on function rather than form
- increase student motivation
- increase student participation in class discussions



An example of translanguaging...



Laura translanguages while teaching VERY HIGH Nuevo



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How to use translanguaging in Swedish classrooms?

- Teach students to draw on their complete language repertoires when learning (not just language learning!)
- Let students collaborate with other students speaking the same language/s when this can help them learn
- Create a classroom atmosphere where translanguaging is accepted as the norm – **translanguaging space** (Wei 2011)
- Be open to using different language tools (dictionaries etc)
- Invite students to participate in metalinguistic discussions by, for instance, contrasting and comparing to other languages



How monolingual teachers can translanguauge...

1. Let go of the traditional authoritative role!

- “It is one thing for a monolingual teacher to encourage students to take risks, and quite another for a teacher to model what taking these risks might look like”.

(Flores & Garcia 2013)

2. Group the students in homogenous/heterogeneous groups

3. Learn key terms (if possible) in the students’ native languages - **Be a co-learner!**

4. Allow students to discuss tasks and to confirm their comprehension through collaboration



Translanguaging and the four skills...

Reading:

- bilingual reading partners,
- give time to discuss difficult passages,
- multilingual books,
- multilingual language tools (dictionaries),
- interactive word walls (content areas)



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Translanguaging and the four skills...

Writing:

- bilingual writing partners,
- pre-write using all their languages, then ask them to select one language in which to publish,
- practice writing for a bilingual audience,
- make connections between words, for example cognates,
- brainstorm on the board using different languages



Translanguaging and the four skills...

Speaking:

- Group students so that they can use the same language resources,
- Model translanguaging for the students, by using it in class discussions,
- Have individual/group conferences using translanguaging to check comprehension, to ensure understanding, to make language connections



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Translanguaging and the four skills...

Listening:

- Allow students to discuss what they heard together,
- Allow students to use their complete language repertoire when speaking,
- Use translation when appropriate



My experience using translanguaging...

- Oral exercises with turn-taking and time-taking
- Drawing on students' existing knowledge of language/s (mainly English)
- Metalinguistic discussions comparing different language phenomena

So far this has led to:

- Increased oral participation
- Fewer words in other languages spoken
- Increased fluency
- (Metalinguistic awareness)



Concluding remarks...

“A translanguaging pedagogy is important for language-minoritized students, whether they are emergent bilingual or not, because it builds on students’ linguistic strengths”.
(García & Wei 2014)

We need to:

- Acknowledge the students existing skills
- Take their background into account when teaching – language, culture and history
- Teach students how to use their complete language repertoires as a resource for learning



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Tack so much!

tina.gunnarsson@englund.lu.se



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