17th Annual Symposium | August 12-13, 2021 | Virtual

Pedagogical Translanguaging in Adult Basic Education[1]

Ingrid Rodrick Beiler
Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

Joke Dewilde
University of Oslo, Norway

Abstract

Pedagogical translanguaging has gained prominence as a critical and inclusive approach to education across various ages and contexts, but its potential has been less explored in adult basic education (ABE). In this article, we report on a study conducted at an ABE center in Norway in three linguistically diverse classes, in order to explore the dynamics of pedagogical translanguaging among adult students with limited formal education from a variety of national, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The study followed an ethnographic monitoring design, involving collaboration with five teachers, including one multilingual teacher. Our analysis focuses on the teachers' roles within translanguaging pedagogy (see García, 2017). First, we analyze teachers' mapping of students' resources, as they took on the role of detectives. Second, we examine the teachers' roles as builders of an environment where translanguaging could occur, particularly through grouping students strategically. While in some studies in more linguistically homogenous settings, affordances for translanguaging seem to vary according to the teacher's proficiency in a widely shared language, in our case, differences in opportunities varied by students' language background and how widespread this was in the student group and in the wider immigrant population. We argue that pedagogical translanguaging may surface tensions related to such differences, at the same time that it may provide adult students with better opportunities to engage in learning.

Keywords: translanguaging, linguistically diverse classrooms, adult basic education, teacher roles, participatory research, Norway

---

[1] This paper is based on an invited plenary presentation at the 2021 LESLLA Symposium on August 22, 2021.

Introduction

Adult immigrants with little formal schooling bring a wealth of linguistic resources and a variety of literacy practices to the classroom. There is an increased awareness of these individuals' resourcefulness among researchers and teachers, reflected in the revision of the LESLLA acronym in 2017 from "Low Educated Second Language and Literacy Acquisition for Adults" to "Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults". Nonetheless, many immigrants report feeling underestimated and expected to learn trivial things in formal education in their new homes (van Lier, 2004; Walqui, 2000). Pedagogical translanguaging has been suggested as a way for teachers to build on the communicative resources learners bring with them to the classroom (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; García & Kleyn, 2016; Paulsrud et al., 2017). This approach breaks with monolingual approaches that favor exclusive use of the target language for teaching and learning purposes, widely used in many classrooms (Wedin et al., 2018). Canagarajah (2013) has noted that teachers may feel insecure when expected to make the transition from monolingual to translingual pedagogies.[2] However, pedagogical translanguaging invites teachers to tap into their students' existing practices rather than inventing new ones.

In this article, we draw on a study conducted at an adult basic education (ABE) center in Norway in three highly diverse classes, in order to explore some of the potential offered by pedagogical translanguaging (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021; García, 2017; García & Li Wei, 2014; Juvonen & Källkvist, 2021). In particular, we focus on teachers' roles as detectives and builders within translanguaging pedagogy (García, 2017). We begin by reviewing research on pedagogical translanguaging in ABE. Then, we present our study in greater detail. In the remainder of the article, we analyze how teachers in our study explored and facilitated translanguaging, through mapping of resources and noticing and organizing instruction to allow communication in and across various languages. Finally, we offer with some pedagogical implications for those working in the LESLLA field.

Translanguaging in Adult Basic Education

García et al. (2017) structure translanguaging pedagogy into three interrelated dimensions: translanguaging stance, design, and shifts. Stance refers to the philosophies, ideologies, or belief systems teachers draw on to develop their pedagogical framework. More specifically, teachers adopting a translanguaging stance assume that learners' communicative resources comprise a single repertoire, rather than reflecting separate languages, and that this repertoire is a resource and never a deficit. In their classrooms, teachers construct safe spaces for teaching and learning by building connections across content, languages, and people, as well as home, school and community (García, 2017). In turn, designing translanguaging instruction and assessment requires careful planning (e.g., grouping students) and great flexibility to respond to different learners' needs. Hearing students' voices may also require assistance from other people and resources. Finally, translanguaging shifts refer to all the moment-by-moment decisions and changes a teacher needs to make to support learners' voices. These shifts are very much related to the translanguaging stance, as meaning-making is centered in all instruction and assessment. García (2017) argues that translanguaging pedagogy requires language teachers to take up new roles, including the detective, co-learner, builder, and transformer. For the purposes of this paper, we focus on the detective and the builder. Taking on the *detective* role involves posing the

---

[2] The concepts 'translingual practice' and 'translanguaging' have slightly different origins. In this article, we use them interchangeably. For a discussion, see García and Li Wei (2014, p. 40).

following four questions: 1) What does this adult know; 2) Why does this adult want to invest in using new features; 3) What are this adult's preferred ways of meaning-making; and 4) How does this adult use language? Teachers should be able to assess an adult's ability to "express complex thoughts, explain, persuade, argue, compare and contrast, give directions, recount events," as well as "make inferences, identify key ideas, and associate ideas from multiple texts when reading" and "produce written texts of opinion, information, explanation and narration" (García, 2017, p. 22). Importantly, the detective role differentiates between what adults know and can do with language by drawing on their holistic communicative repertoire versus what they can do in a target language (García et al., 2017). As the *builder*, teachers ask themselves the following questions: 1) How can I build an affinity space (Gee, 2004) that bridges differences among learners, and in which they can participate based on their interests and abilities; 2) How do I build a space where power differences are acknowledged and that is flexible enough to accommodate differences; and 3) How do I provide language affordances in line with the learners' interests and engagements? However, a teacher is not expected to find answers to the questions presented above by herself, but rather by collaborating with others – such as multilingual staff, peers, and people in the adult's extended network outside of the classroom – and by means of other resources, including multilingual texts and digital tools.

Even though translanguaging has gained prominence as a critical and inclusive approach to education across various ages and contexts (e.g., García & Kleyn, 2016; Moore et al., 2020; Paulsrud et al., 2017; Prinsloo, 2019), we have found only a handful of studies in ABE applying this lens. In Canada, Burgess and Rowsell (2020) explored the potential of translanguaging and creative approaches in a class of refugees and newcomers with diverse national backgrounds, including from Burundi, China, Colombia, Iraq, Syria, and Venezuela, attending English language classes at a community centre. The study found that these approaches created greater opportunities for students to invest emotionally in their learning and resettlement process. Similarly, two studies in the United States have documented pedagogical translanguaging in bilingual adult basic education settings. Park and Valdez (2018) found that translanguaging and creative methods supported older Nepali-Bhutanese adults' vocabulary learning and writing development. Emerick et al. (2020) documented naturally occurring translanguaging in classes for Spanish-speaking restaurant and industrial workers in an English for Work and Life program at a community-based adult English as a Second Language (ESL) centre. They found translanguaging to be widespread among students as a means of language learning. However, teachers varied in their support for translanguaging, despite an overall commitment to educational equity, which the authors linked to a traditional emphasis on monolingual teaching in adult education. Similarly, studies from Sweden have pointed to struggles with a dominant monolingual norm when teachers try out translanguaging pedagogies (Norlund Shaswar, 2020; Rosén & Lundgren, 2021).

In addition, a few studies on translanguaging outside of classroom settings discuss implications for adult education. Brownlie (2021) found that a translingual creative writing group with three Congolese refugee women in the United Kingdom afforded these women opportunities for agency and empowerment, including through a public performance resulting from the collaboration, which contrasted with their marginalised social position. Another study from the United Kingdom argues for incorporating translanguaging practices into adult education by drawing on ethnographic data that demonstrate the use of translanguaging to accomplish communication in legal aid consultations (Simpson, 2019). Finally, Helm and Dabre (2018) demonstrated that translanguaging contributed to creating a more democratic 'contact zone'

between adult immigrants and other members of the community in volunteer-run English language workshops in Italy. The workshop participants used translanguaging to challenge negative societal discourses about migrants and refugees and to create the possibility of more equitable encounters, by choosing an approach that explicitly valued all participants' existing forms of language and knowledge.

In sum, there is emergent evidence that translanguaging can support adult students' learning and expression in both relatively linguistically homogenous (Brownlie, 2021; Emerick et al., 2020; Park & Valdez, 2018) and linguistically diverse groups (Burgess & Rowsell, 2020; Norlund Shaswar, 2020; Rosén & Lundgren, 2021). The aforementioned studies also vary in the degree of formalization of the educational offers studied, from entirely volunteer-run (e.g., Brownlie, 2021; Helm & Dabre, 2018) to locally supported (e.g., Emerick et al., 2020; Park & Valdez, 2018) to government-funded (e.g., Burgess & Rowsell, 2020; Norlund Shaswar, 2020; Rosén & Lundgren, 2021). The context of our own study was comprehensive government-funded education, leading to recognized lower secondary school completion (tenth grade), in highly diverse classrooms. Apart from one bilingual teacher, the teachers did not share any of the students' language background. These characteristics are common to ABE in Scandinavia and differ, for instance, from community-based offers in the United States, where most students may share a common minoritized language, which teachers may also understand (e.g., Spanish in Emerick et al., 2020; Nepali in Park & Valdez, 2018). Nonetheless, students' needs and learning processes have much in common across these contexts. They often have limited or interrupted schooling histories and face the daunting task of simultaneously learning how to 'do school', learn the dominant language of their new country, develop literacy skills in a language they do not yet understand well, and acquire content in a wide variety of subjects.

The study

The study we report on followed a year-long ethnographic monitoring design and was commissioned by Skills Norway. The study was approved by the Norwegian Center for Research Data. In this section, we describe our researcher positionality, methodological approach, setting and participants, and instructional activities, which we developed with the teachers, in line with a translanguaging design. We are both teacher educators in programs that qualify teachers to work in adult education, but in which adult education has traditionally received less attention than primary or secondary schools. We both identify as multilingual and have transnational backgrounds. Joke grew up in Belgium and moved to Norway early in adulthood, and she has taught sheltered classes for newly arrived immigrant students in Norway. Ingrid grew up between Norway and the United States, and she taught English in Palestine for several years, where she also partnered with refugee organizations in her work. Despite some similarities of transnational experience, we occupy more privileged social and economic positions than the students in this project, as we are white, have Western European language backgrounds, and generally enjoy economic stability. We see such positionalities and experiences as significant frames for engagement and analysis in ethnographic monitoring, the methodological approach we have used, as we will describe next.

Ethnographic monitoring is a form of action research that builds on ethnographic methods of data collection and analysis (De Korne & Hornberger, 2017; Van der Aa & Blommaert, 2017). It is a democratic method of research and evaluation that involves close collaboration between practitioners and researchers throughout the process, from setting goals to

planning interventions to evaluation and reporting. The method is based on extended collaboration between researchers at the University of Pennsylvania and schools in marginalized neighborhoods of Philadelphia, where a common goal was to identify sources of linguistic inequality and to improve the educational offer for bilingual and racialized students (Hymes, 1980). In this process, school leaders, teachers and students share responsibility for defining goals and measures of success. The method is particularly suitable for highlighting the voices of various stakeholders, which are crucial for generating a holistic and credible perspective on issues and solutions, as well as developing local ownership of the continuing pedagogical work that occurs after the completion of intervention and evaluation.

　　Ethnographic monitoring consists of three phases (Van der Aa & Blommaert, 2017). Here, we describe the phases and how we interpreted them in our study (see also Table 1 below):

1. Defining issues and possible solutions with teachers, language helpers and school leaders;
2. Observing teaching practices, with a focus on language use, including what language resources teachers, language helpers, and students use and need to achieve objectives;
3. Sharing the results of the evaluation with school leaders and teachers.

Phase No	Phase Description	Phase Duration	Data Collection and Analysis
1.	Defining issues and possible interventions with teachers, language helpers and school leaders	Sept. 20–Oct. 20	Interviews with leader and 4 teachers; 2 days of ethnographic observation at school; workshop 1
2.	Observing teaching practices, with a focus on language use, including which language resources teachers, language helpers, and students use and need to achieve objectives	Nov. 20–May 21	Workshops 2–6; 3 days of ethnographic observation in school with video recording; 2 days of ethnographic observation on Teams with screen recording; interviews with 5 teachers, 2 language helpers, and 9 students
3.	Sharing the results of the evaluation with school leaders and teachers	Feb. 21; Sept. 21	Analysis of all data; preliminary report written and shared with teachers and leader; feedback session with teachers

Table 1. Overview of project phases, data collection, and data analysis

The setting of our study was a state-funded adult education center with some experience drawing on multilingual strategies and resources. Although monolingual approaches have dominated the teaching of Norwegian to adult immigrants (Monsen & Pájaro, 2021), the teachers articulated at the outset of the project their belief in the usefulness of students' first languages as a resource for learning and building rapport (see King & Bigelow, 2020). The center was situated in a medium-sized city in the South-East of Norway, an area where the immigrant population is around the national average of 18%. Most students at the center are adults with little or no documented formal schooling, many of them from refugee backgrounds.

The participants included five teachers and two language helpers. In Norway, the term language helper refers to an assistant who shares certain linguistic resources with the students but has not received formal pedagogical training. The term bilingual teacher is a professional title for a support teacher who teaches in Norwegian and a minoritized language, not a description of linguistic competence. One teacher was employed as a bilingual teacher and taught in Arabic, Kurdish, and Assyrian in addition to Norwegian. Four of the teachers were regular classroom teachers. These all identified Norwegian as their first language and also spoke English, in addition to having studied other foreign languages as required in school.

The students were divided into three classes, an introductory module, a vocational track called Module 1A, and an academic track called Module 1B. There was a considerable range of experience with documented formal schooling amongst the participants, though the introductory module was conceived for students without print literacy. In total, 36 students participated in the research project. These were aged between 17 and 57 and came from many different corners of the world. Together, they reported proficiency in the following languages, in addition to the target language Norwegian: Arabic, Assyrian, Dari, English, Filipino, German, Kurmanji Kurdish, Pashto, Polish, Russian, Somali, Sorani Kurdish, Thai, Tigre, Tigrinya, and Vietnamese.

We collaborated with the teachers to design instructional activities through cycles that involved ethnographic observation, a workshop where activities were jointly designed, classroom implementation, and evaluation. The data for this article draws on the first instructional activities, where teachers mapped the students' resources, worked with different ways of grouping students, and worked on noticing students' forms of communication. Our analysis draws on field notes (43,413 words), recordings from interviews (204 min.) and workshops (609 min.) with the teachers, teachers' classroom notes (14 texts), recordings from interviews with the students (204 min.), and students' work (60 pieces), combining content analysis with discourse analysis (Copland & Creese, 2015).

Findings

We organize the findings according to the teachers' enactment of two of García's (2017) teacher roles. First, we examine teachers' mapping of students' resources, as they took on the role of detectives. Second, we shed light on how teachers acted as builders of an environment where translanguaging could occur, particularly through grouping students strategically.

Mapping of Resources
In Phase 1 of the project, the teachers mapped the students' linguistic resources and networks, giving the teachers the opportunity to take on García's (2017) role of detective by exploring the basis for translanguaging in their own classrooms. As an initial mapping activity, the students drew a language portrait (Busch, 2012; see

Figure 1). The teachers themselves first gained experience in making their own language portraits in Workshop 1, as preparation for explaining the activity to the students. Students were provided with a sheet of paper with a body silhouette and colored pencils and asked to illustrate their language resources, for example languages they speak well or understand a little or that have personal significance. In the introductory module, the bilingual teacher and language helpers explained the nature of the task to the students and facilitated group discussion of the

portraits. Some students in Module 1B also received assistance from a language helper, which the teacher found useful for facilitating the students' understanding of the task. An example of a language portrait from Module 1B is shown below, drawn by a student called Saifon (pseudonym) (see

Figure 1). Saifon had attended primary school for six years in Thailand and subsequently taken a lower secondary exam without attending school at this level.
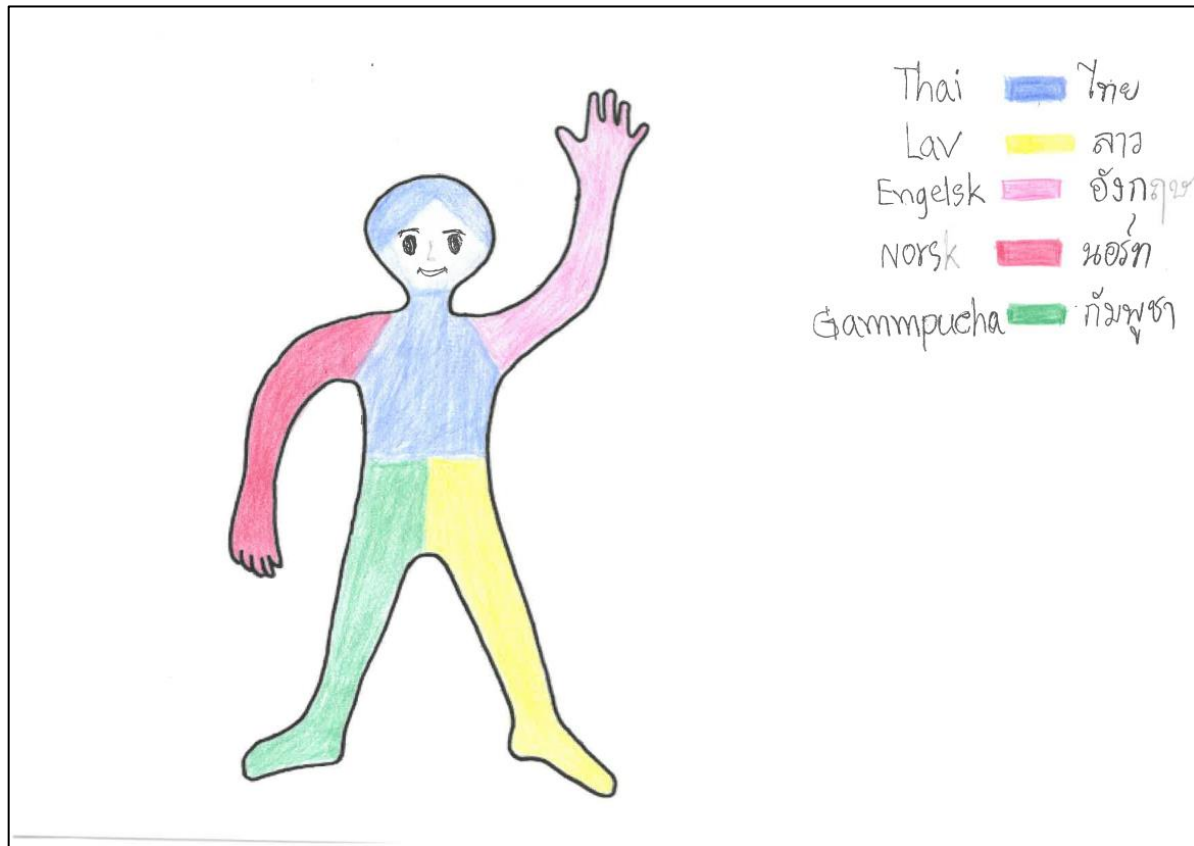

Figure 1. Saifon's Language Portrait

In Figure 1, Saifon has illustrated her linguistic repertoire as including Thai (blue), Lao (yellow), English (pink), Norwegian (red), and Khmer (green). She has named these languages in Norwegian on the left, using inventive spelling for Lao and Khmer, and in Thai on the right. In an interview with a Thai research assistant, Saifon explained that she comes from a region of Eastern Thailand where a dialect of Lao, referred to as Thai Isaan, is widespread. Both she and the interviewer could speak this dialect in addition to Thai. In addition, Saifon noted that, due to the proximity of her home region to Cambodia, she could understand Khmer, though she could not speak the language. Indeed, Saifon explained that there are four different linguistic communities in her region of Thailand, such that many people in this area understand multiple regional languages. Furthermore, Saifon stated that she regularly uses both English and Norwegian in and outside of school in Norway, tending toward Norwegian as she is able and drawing on English when she feels uncertain about her Norwegian. She specifically noted that

English was important for her to communicate with her teachers before she knew Norwegian and that she continues to experience it as an important support for learning Norwegian.

At the start of the project, the teachers tended to think in terms of activating students' (single) first language as a learning resource, whereby Saifon was conceived of as a Thai-speaker who was learning Norwegian. However, her language portrait showed that Thai was only one of several languages she used before beginning to learn Norwegian, such that her repertoire in fact included many more points of connection than this one language. In her interview, Saifon further described experiences of the everyday translanguaging that characterizes multilingual communities in many parts of the world, notably in the Global South, which tend to be obscured by monolingual national language ideologies (Canagarajah, 2013; García, 2009). Thus, Saifon had expertise not only in specific languages but in translingual communication strategies, such as using receptive knowledge of a language (Khmer) and drawing flexibly on bilingual resources (Norwegian and English) to communicate with teachers, friends, and other community members.

Although this language portrait describes one particular student's biography and linguistic trajectory, it also illustrates some commonalities among students' experiences of language and multilingualism. First, the language portrait demonstrates the fact that many participants had more to draw on than a singly conceived first language. Instead, most had a complex repertoire of resources that they had acquired in different contexts for different purposes. Secondly, this language portrait illustrates the presence of certain widely shared languages in the classroom, here English, which several students knew to varying degrees. English was a language that some students had started learning after they came to Norway, while for others it was already a well-developed resource that they experienced as a useful support for learning Norwegian and other subjects. The latter was especially the case for some students from Thailand, including Saifon, and the Philippines, who otherwise had few classmates or staff with similar language backgrounds to communicate with. Arabic was the other language that students with a variety of linguistic and national backgrounds knew to some extent. In addition to ethnically Arab, Assyrian, and Kurdish students from Middle Eastern countries with an Arabic-speaking majority, there were students from Somalia and Eritrea who were fluent in Arabic. Others had familiarity with Arabic due to its religious significance, even though they did not actively use the language for other purposes. We discuss the importance of Arabic for organizing classroom translanguaging below.

The second mapping activity focused on gathering information about the participants' language practices and networks of support outside of school, with a view to linking these practices and networks to classroom instruction. While the language portraits were implemented relatively similarly in all three classes, the network mapping was somewhat different in each class. In the introductory module, the students used the language portraits as a starting point to describe where and with whom they used the language resources they had represented in the portraits. In Module 1A and 1B, there was a greater time delay between the two activities, and the teachers in these modules felt that they did not gain as much insight into how students used their whole linguistic repertoires as a result. Instead, the network mapping became more narrowly focused on how students use Norwegian outside of the classroom, perhaps because students were more accustomed to discussing this in a formal educational setting (Monsen & Pájaro, 2021).

As noted earlier, the teacher in the introductory module emphasized the importance of help from multilingual staff to engage in complex conversations with students about their linguistic practices. Nevertheless, the teacher discovered useful information about students who

did not have access to a bilingual teacher or language helper, with the language portrait as a material support to the conversation. For example, based on a conversation with Ruth, an introductory module student from Congo (DRC), the teacher wrote the following in a mapping note:

> *A brother and sister-in-law with two children. Live in [another city]. They speak Swahili, English, Norwegian.*
> *Two friends (man and woman from Uganda with four children). Live in [same city]. They speak a lot of Norwegian. 20 years in Norway. Man speaks Swahili and woman speaks a lot of Norwegian.*
> *[Name] speaks a lot of Norwegian and Swahili. [3 names]*
> *I know 4 people in [the same city] who speak Swahili and a lot of Norwegian.*
> (Teacher's mapping note, introductory module, 17.11.2020, our translation from Norwegian)

Through this conversation with Ruth, the teacher discovered that this student had resource persons outside of the classroom, beyond her husband, who could help her in both Norwegian and Swahili. The student also described this personal network in an interview with a Swahili-speaking research assistant: "I have close friends from Congo [DRC] and Rwanda, and they do assist me when I want to buy stuff here in Norway or with doctor appointments" (translated from Swahili). This network seemed all the more significant because this student was one of few who did not share any language other than Norwegian with either classmates or multilingual staff. In addition, she was among those who had the least amount of previous formal schooling. In the interview, the student confirmed that being the only person with her language background was challenging: "Using my language is a good thing, although I am the only one in class who speaks Swahili, and I face challenges when I try to speak Norwegian, so I tend to keep quiet most times when I actually need help" (translated from Swahili). The student's statement points to one of the most significant challenges for translanguaging pedagogy in linguistically diverse settings: the fact that some students may not have access to others who share similar repertoires. This student's greater opportunities for translanguaging outside of school represents a resource that her teacher could draw on, for instance in designing assignments with follow-up tasks outside of school, even if doing so would not fully compensate for a lack of multilingual support in the classroom. However, this possibility did not materialize during the project period.

In summary, the teachers in our study took on the role of detectives (García, 2017) by means of mapping activities introduced in the project. Our findings illustrate how these activities have the potential to raise teachers' awareness of students' complex multilingual repertoires and their personal networks. We argue that such awareness is fundamental to adopting a translanguaging stance.

Communication in and across languages

At the start of the project, the teachers already had some strategies for activating students' spontaneous translanguaging when they knew that students had a common language. An important strategy had been and continued to be to group students according to language background or linguistic repertoire, so they could help each other without being restricted to Norwegian. The teachers referred to these as language groups, that is, groups with a shared language of communication. Through this seemingly simple act, the teachers built opportunities

for communication in minoritized languages into classroom practices, even as Norwegian remained the language of instruction. An early observation of group work (Phase 1) in the introductory module illustrated some of the advantages of language groups:

> The class is working on describing body parts and pain. The teacher asks two of the Arabic-speaking students, «Kan dere være med [to andre deltakere]? De forstår kanskje ikke. Kan dere forklare litt, snakke arabisk?» [Norwegian: Can you be with [two other students]? They might not understand. Can you explain a bit, speak Arabic?] One of the male students explains that he has attended classes at the center since the spring, about half a year, while the other man says he started yesterday. The man who has attended longer models and explains in Arabic to the other students. For example, he says, "Jeg har vondt i kneet" [Norwegian: literally, I have pain in my knee; i.e., my knee hurts], stressing the preposition. Then he touches his head and says, "hodet, rasak" [Norwegian: the head, Arabic: your head]. He also says the name of other body parts in Norwegian and Arabic, as he touches each body part. The man who started more recently writes down Arabic translations in Showbie [an educational app]. He also touches the body parts that they name in Norwegian and Arabic. The two female students in the group also write down some translations in Arabic, despite having said that they do not know how to write very much. (Field note, 13.10.2020)

As described in this field note, the teacher placed four Arabic-speaking students together in a group because she expected that some of the students had understood the lesson in Norwegian better than others. A student who had been attending classes for about half a year took on the role of expert by modeling, translating and explaining key words to the other students. Another student who had enrolled very recently also participated actively by writing down translations in Arabic and touching the relevant body parts that the more experienced student indicated. In this way, the teacher used grouping by common language to ensure better understanding of new content than she could achieve on her own by speaking Norwegian to the students. Although she could not herself participate fully in this translanguaging, she built an environment that facilitated translanguaging among students in the classroom, acting as a builder of a multilingual classroom environment (García, 2017).

During the project, language groups became a common routine, to the extent permitted under public health measures at any given time. For most of the project, students were able to meet in-person but had to maintain a distance of one meter to each other, which constrained opportunities for collaboration around material artifacts, but which did allow for conversing at a short distance. Teachers also limited the length of group work in order to reduce students' exposure to each other, such that more discrete tasks, like translation of vocabulary items, may have been a more prominent task than the teachers would have preferred under other circumstances. When the teachers had access to a bilingual teacher or language helper, the latter provided extra support and structure to the work in language groups, explaining tasks, commenting on students' work, and acting as intermediaries between students and classroom teachers.

Nonetheless, an important challenge was how to meet the needs of students who did not share a common language with classmates, apart from Norwegian. The teachers attempted to mitigate this challenge by seating such students toward the front of the class, attempting to compensate through closer contact for these students' more limited opportunities to

communicate freely among themselves. Thus, building a supportive environment extended to the very physical layout of the classroom (see the role of builder, García, 2017). Still, both teachers and students experienced this as an insufficient solution. Another challenge was that students who did not have many in the class with the same language background sometimes experienced more well-represented languages as somewhat domineering or irritating. These reactions were especially true in the case of Arabic. Some of these students, for instance a student from Eritrea, commented that she was afraid of annoying other students if she asked the teacher too many questions about something the others had already managed to construct an understanding of together in Arabic. Thus, she felt somewhat constrained by others' use of Arabic.

In light of this unequal distribution of shared resources among students, English functioned as a means of bridging understanding among speakers of less represented languages (as compared to languages such as Arabic, Kurdish, or Somali). Some of the teachers used English to facilitate dialogue and understanding with students who already knew some English, especially those from Thailand and the Philippines. The students from Thailand, including Saifon, shared in interviews that they wanted the teachers to use English even more actively in their teaching of Norwegian. For these students, drawing on English provided greater affordances for communicating with their teachers, which they felt was especially important in view of their lack of access to many peers or a bilingual teacher with a common language, as was the case for Arabic-speakers. In this way, English contributed somewhat to balancing out opportunities for communication among students.

Though we did not observe efforts by students to constrain others' translanguaging, the teacher in the introductory module did describe a student who did not speak Arabic telling others to stop speaking so much Arabic and to instead speak Norwegian, before the start of our observations. Nonetheless, rather than constraining opportunities for using Arabic, the teachers and we felt that the more important implication was to make explicit efforts also to extend the best opportunities possible for communicating and learning to students with less represented language backgrounds. The teachers found they could do so, for instance, through additional contact with the teacher or drawing on English when possible.

Furthermore, the teachers gradually increased their awareness of the possibility of translanguaging beyond shared languages. Indeed, many students communicated across language boundaries, employing translanguaging spontaneously both for learning and general communication. For example, a student from Afghanistan who spoke Dari commented that she could also understand a little Kurdish because of similarities between the languages. Similarly, two students speaking Sorani Kurdish and Kurmanji Kurdish, respectively, compared translations when learning new vocabulary in Norwegian relating to the home. Over the course of the project, we noticed a greater awareness among the regular classroom teachers of such translanguaging as everyday communication among students.

As noted above, teachers initially described multilingual pedagogy in terms of activating a single first language per student. However, in response to our question as to whether they had started to notice multilingual ways of working or multilingual communication that already exists in the classroom, the teacher in Module 1A described the following:

> An example is someone in the class who speaks Sorani Kurdish, and only one person does so. She wanted to tell me something about her daughter, and she doesn't know much Norwegian, and then she started, but then she couldn't find the words. Then she looks at the woman sitting at her other side, and then they start talking. She has told me that they

don't understand each other, because this woman speaks Kurmanji [Kurdish] and comes from an area that means she has not been exposed to Sorani. So she is not familiar with that [Sorani], but then they communicate anyway and arrive at something. But then there is a third woman who also comes in, and she also knows Kurmanji, but she also speaks Arabic [as does the woman who speaks Sorani Kurdish]. Together, these three women manage to explain what had happened to this child, and I think that was very nice, that together they managed to explain what she didn't have the words for. (Workshop recording, 10.12.2020, our translation from Norwegian)

In other words, the teacher increasingly noticed that translanguaging was a common part of classroom communication, not only to understand the content of teaching, but also to facilitate general communication among teachers and students. The teachers reported that the project had increased their awareness of such communication among students and of the fact that this practice could provide an important support to relationship-building and learning. This discovery came through teachers taking on the role of detective in the classroom, both through deliberate activities and through incidental noticing (García, 2017).

Discussion of Pedagogical Implications

In our project, teachers began to explore pedagogical translanguaging through taking on the roles of detective and builder in adult basic education classrooms (García, 2017). The detective role was enacted both through a deliberate mapping phase, involving language portraits (Busch, 2012) and conversations about students' out-of-school networks, and through an increased inquisitiveness about how students communicated in the classroom. The formal mapping and ongoing curiosity also fed into each other. As the teachers gave students the opportunity to represent their own communicative repertoires in a visual format, the teachers increasingly noticed that students might be drawing on multiple different resources in their work and communication with each other. Thus, the Module 1A teacher could observe seeming contradictions between self-described competence and practice among students, such as the students who had said they could not understand each other's languages or dialects nonetheless communicating with each other. We as researchers could similarly observe that two women who stated they could not write much in Arabic nonetheless wrote down vocabulary items in Arabic as part of group work that their teacher had instigated. At one point, García (2009) describes translanguaging as "an approach to bilingualism that is centred not on languages […] but on the practices of bilinguals *that are readily observable*" (p. 44, emphasis added). In this sense, taking on the observational stance of a detective was a prerequisite for the teachers to discover the translanguaging that was already occurring in their classrooms, which they could then use as input for developing contextualized translanguaging pedagogies later in the project. For instance, toward the end of Phase 2, the teachers designed a unit on health, which started with work in 'language groups,' where students were given the opportunity to first discuss ideas of good health in their countries of origin, before reporting back to the teacher for comparison across contexts in Norwegian.

An important characteristic of our study setting was linguistic diversity among students, with uneven representation of various languages and unequal availability of pedagogical resources in different languages, including materials, interlocutors and teachers. While in some studies in more linguistically homogenous settings, teachers' varying proficiency in a language

shared among students accounted for differences in opportunities for classroom translanguaging (e.g., the use of Spanish in a study by Emerick et al., 2020), in our case, differences in opportunities related to the particular language background of students and how widespread this was in the student group and in the wider immigrant population. Those who spoke widely shared languages (e.g., Arabic, Kurdish, or Somali) could use these with each other, and they were also more likely to have access to a bilingual teacher or language helper who also knew these languages. Those who had previously learned some English experienced some of the same benefits in their communication with the classroom teachers, who all spoke English in addition to Norwegian. These differences of opportunity were experienced as unfair by some students who shared a language background with few or no other students. Such tensions may also arise in similar settings.

We believe that implementing translanguaging pedagogy in classrooms characterized by such tensions and inequalities involves taking advantage of current possibilities, while also advocating for more ideal conditions for pedagogical translanguaging. On the one hand, taking advantage of current possibilities for translanguaging can mean giving certain students access to follow-up tasks with multilingual staff or facilitating preparatory group work in linguistically homogenous groups, even when not all students have this opportunity. In this way, teachers can build spaces for translanguaging (García, 2017), even when they themselves are not fully able to participate in these spaces. Seizing current possibilities may also mean finding digital resources in various languages that students can learn to use, if they do not do so already, or designing tasks that have a component to be conducted outside of school, where more students might have access to others who share their linguistic repertoires. On the other hand, advocating for greater access to multilingual staff for more students represents an important long-term investment in translanguaging pedagogies. In some contexts, adjusting organizational arrangements might also permit more students to use their full linguistic repertoires, for example by organizing tutoring or collaborative work across classes. García (2017) refers to this aspect of the teacher's work as taking on the role of transformer, within schools but also in the wider realm of political decisions about funding priorities.

As our findings illustrate, teachers working with adult students who have had limited opportunities for formal schooling may discover resources for translanguaging pedagogy through activities that surface students' broader linguistic repertoires and networks and through attentiveness to students' everyday communication. Using these insights to design translanguaging instruction, for example through strategic grouping, would provide students with greater opportunities to express complex thoughts in and across familiar languages first, before doing so in a new language. Working together with bilingual teachers, language helpers or others in the wider community would further foster teachers' opportunities to support students' voices. Adults in our project who had relatively little experience with the practices of schooling benefited from the self-directed forms of communication entailed in translanguaging, despite the relative newness of formal educational routines (see also Burgess & Rowsell, 2020; Norlund Shaswar, 2020; Rosén & Lundgren, 2021).

In conclusion, pedagogical translanguaging can serve as a powerful means of noticing and activating students' language and literacy resources in adult basic education, as in other educational contexts (e.g., García & Kleyn, 2016; Paulsrud et al., 2017). Shifting toward translanguaging in the classroom does not immediately resolve all difficulties that teachers or students may experience due to limited overlap among their linguistic repertoires. In fact, some tensions may become more visible than in a monolingual approach, but translanguaging creates

space for acknowledging such tensions and for supporting students' right to sustain and use different forms of meaning-making. By taking on new roles, including those of detective, builder, and transformer (García, 2017), teachers can develop their own awareness of the complexity of their students' resources and then design classroom tasks and arrangements that allow students to use their resources maximally, while continuing to advocate for better resources and conditions for students' translanguaging and learning.

Acknowledgement

Funding

References

Brownlie, S. (2021). Congolese women speak: Languaging, translanguaging and discursive cross-culturing as resources for empowerment. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 21*(2), 207–222. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2020.1865391

Busch, B. (2012). The linguistic repertoire revisited. *Applied Linguistics*, *33*(5), 503–523. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ams056

Burgess, J., & Rowsell, J. (2020). Transcultural-affective flows and multimodal engagements: Reimagining pedagogy and assessment with adult language learners. *Language and education, 34*(2), 173–191. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2020.1720226

Canagarajah, A. S. (2013). Introduction. In A. S. Canagarajah (Ed.), *Literacy as translingual practice: Between communities and classrooms* (pp. 1–10). New York: Routledge.

Copland, F., & Creese, A. (2015). *Linguistic ethnography: Collecting, analysing and presenting data.* Sage.

Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? *The Modern Language Journal, 94*(i), 103–115. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x

Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2021). *Pedagogical translanguaging*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009029384

De Korne, H., & Hornberger, N. H. (2017). Countering unequal multilingualism through ethnographic monitoring. In M. Martin-Jones & D. Martin (Eds.), *Researching multilingualism: Critical and ethnographic perspectives* (pp. 247–258). Oxon: Routledge.

Emerick, M. R., Hoffman, B. Y., & Kanno, Y. (2020). Teaching Hispanic restaurant workers: Translanguaging as culturally sustaining pedagogy. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 51*(3), 304–321. https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12340

García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

García, O. (2017). Problematizing linguistic integration of migrants: The role of translanguaging and language teachers. In J.-C. Beacco, H.-J. Krumm, D. Little, & P. Thalgott (Eds.), *The linguistic integration of adult migrants* (pp. 11−26). Berlin: De Gruyter.

García, O., Johnson, S. I., & Seltzer, K. (2017). *The translanguaging classroom: Leveraging student bilingualism for learning*. Philadelphia: Caslon.

García, O., & Kleyn, T. (Eds.). (2016). *Translanguaging with multilingual students: Learning from classroom moments*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315695242.

García, O., & Li Wei. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gee, J. P. (2004). *Situated language and learning: A critique of traditional schooling*. Routledge.

Helm, F., & Dabre, T. (2018). Engineering a 'contact zone' through translanguaging. *Language and Intercultural Communication, 18*(1), 144–156. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2017.1400509

Hymes, D. (1980). Ethnographic monitoring. In *Language in Education: Ethnolinguistic Essays* (pp. 104–118). Center for Applied Linguistics. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED198745.pdf

Juvonen, P., & Källkvist, M. (Eds.). (2021). *Pedagogical translanguaging: Theoretical, methodological and empirical perspectives*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

King, K. A., & Bigelow, M. (2020). Translanguaging as transformation: The collaborative construction of new linguistic realities. In E. Moore, J. Bradley, & J. Simpson (Eds.), *Translanguaging as transformation: The collaborative construction of new linguistic realities* (pp. 199–215). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Monsen, M., & Pájaro, V. (Eds.). (2021). *Andrespråkslæring hos voksne: Vitenskapelige innsikter og didaktiske refleksjoner [Second language education for adults: Scientific insights and didactic reflections]*. Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Moore, E., Bradley, J., & Simpson, J. (2020). *Translanguaging as transformation: The collaborative construction of new linguistic realities*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Norlund Shaswar, A. (2020). Verbaliserade och praktiserade språknormer inom Svenska för invandrare [Verbalised and practiced language norms in Swedish for immigrants]. *Humanetten, 45*, 156–184. https://doi.org/10.15626/hn.20204507

Park, K., & Valdez, V. E. (2018). Translanguaging pedagogy to support the language learning of older Nepali-Bhutanese Adults. In M. J. Curry, R. Farrelly, & S. Shapiro (Eds.), *Educating refugee-background students: Critical issues and dynamic contexts* (pp. 49–65). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Paulsrud, B., Rosén, J., Straszer, B., & Wedin, Å. (Eds.). (2017). *New perspectives on translanguaging and education*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Prinsloo, M. (2019). Introduction to Special Issue: Translingual and transmodal complexity and innovation in English-language-dominant Southern schooling. *Language and Education, 33*(2), 103–105. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2019.1559504

Rosén, J., & Lundgren, B. (2021). Challenging monolingual norms through pedagogical translanguaging in adult education for immigrants in Sweden? In P. Juvonen & M. Källkvist (Eds.), *Pedagogical translanguaging: Theoretical, methodological and empirical perspectives*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/https://doi-org.ezproxy.uio.no/10.21832/9781788927383

Simpson, J. (2019). Navigating immigration law in a "hostile environment": Implications for adult migrant language education. *TESOL Quarterly, 54*(2), 488–511. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.558

Van der Aa, J., & Blommaert, J. (2017). Ethnographic monitoring and the study of complexity. In M. Martin-Jones & D. Martin (Eds.), *Researching multilingualism: Critical and ethnographic perspectives* (pp. 259–271). Oxon: Routledge.

Wedin, Å., Rosén, J., & Hennius, S. (2018). Transspråkande och multimodalitet i grundläggande skriftspråksundervisning inom sfi [Translanguaging and multimodality in basic literacy teaching in Swedish for immigrants]. *Pedagogisk Forskning i Sverige, 23*(1–2), 15–38.