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## Pedagogical Translanguaging

### Theoretical, Methodological and Empirical Perspectives. An Introduction

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# 1 Pedagogical Translanguaging: Theoretical, Methodological and Empirical Perspectives – An Introduction

Päivi Juvonen and Marie Källkvist

## **Pedagogical Translanguaging**

Pedagogical translanguaging is a construct that refers to teaching approaches that involve the intentional and planned use of student multilingual resources in language and content subjects. We take it up from recent translanguaging research (Cenoz, 2017; Cenoz & Gorter, 2020a, 2020b; Ganuza & Hedman, 2017; Probyn, 2015, 2019) as it clearly signals education as the locus of the translanguaging research presented in this volume. Although teaching approaches that use more than one language have a long history in language education (Cook, 2010), pedagogical translanguaging research gained currency as part of the multilingual turn in language learning and language education scholarship (Conteh & Meier, 2014; May, 2014, 2019; Ortega, 2019). This shift in ideology and research focus mirrors the rapidly changing multilingual ecologies worldwide due to technology-assisted globalization and the mobility of people (Blommaert, 2010). Importantly, pedagogical translanguaging research positions students' pre-existing knowledge, such as their prior linguistic and multisemiotic repertoires, as resources and is therefore often underpinned by a social justice agenda, attending to language-minoritized students' needs to gain equitable education and social inclusion in mainstream society.

The concept of translanguaging stems from a school context in Wales, first advanced by Williams (1996), then taken up and translated by Baker

(2001/2011) and subsequently García (2009) and others. García, in particular, has taken the lead in the continued promotion and theorizing of translanguaging. Her early work characterized the act of translanguaging as ‘engaging in bilingual or multilingual discourse practices’ (García, 2009: 44), later describing it as a ‘movement in language education’ (García & Kleyn, 2016: 10). It is indeed in education that most translanguaging research to date has been carried out (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020b), using context-sensitive research methodology such as ethnography (Menken & García, 2010).

By now a vibrant field of research worldwide, a profusion of terms in the scholarly literature refers to intentional bi- and multilingual teaching practices. We list some here, without claiming that they denote exactly the same phenomenon. Cummins (2019) uses a total of 10 terms that refer to the same activity, at least on the surface: ‘crosslinguistic pedagogy’, ‘multilingual teaching strategies’, ‘bilingual teaching strategies’, ‘teaching through a multilingual lens’, ‘translanguaging instructional practices’, ‘translanguaging approaches to teaching’, ‘crosslingual instructional practice’, ‘translanguaging pedagogies’, ‘crosslingual practice’ and ‘heteroglossic instructional practice’. Further terms used by other researchers include ‘the pedagogy of translanguaging’ and ‘translanguaging pedagogical strategies’ (García & Kleyn, 2016), ‘dynamic plurilingual pedagogies’ (García & Flores, 2012), ‘translanguaging as a pedagogy’, ‘translanguaging for the classroom’ and ‘translanguaging as pedagogy’ (Paulsrud *et al.*, 2017), ‘bilingual instructional strategies’ and ‘bilingual pedagogy’ (Creese & Blackledge, 2010), ‘translanguaging practice’ (Lin, 2020), ‘translanguaging practices’ (Cenoz & Santos, 2020), ‘translanguaging pedagogy’ (Seltzer & García, 2020; Tian *et al.*, 2020), ‘translanguaging-oriented pedagogy’ (Leung & Valdés, 2019) and ‘heteroglossic pedagogies’ and ‘translanguaging approaches’ (Probyn, 2019). No doubt there are more that have escaped our eyes.

In a recent Special Issue on Pedagogical Translanguaging, when reflecting backwards in time while planning for future research, Byrnes (2020: 1) calls attention to pedagogical translanguaging and ‘the extraordinary situatedness of the kinds of educational practices that it can recommend confidently on the basis of empirical evidence’. In another recent overview of pedagogical translanguaging, Leung and Valdés (2019: 365) conclude that ‘we need to develop an ongoing research agenda focusing on translanguaging that can inform instruction for different groups of students’. The work presented in this book, to which we now turn, is one of the many responses needed for this research agenda.

### **Book Contents: Theoretical, Methodological and Empirical Perspectives**

All chapter authors presented their work at The Third Swedish Translanguaging Conference entitled *Translanguaging in the Individual*,

*at School and in Society*, held at Linnæus University, Sweden, in April 2019. As the title suggests, the conference invited presenters to address translanguaging on the scales of the individual, school and society. As in the two prior translanguaging conferences (see Adinolfi *et al.*, 2018; Paulsrud *et al.*, 2017), the majority presented research in pedagogical translanguaging. In this volume, we bring together papers that focus on advancing translanguaging theory, education research methodology and empirical work in multilingual contexts. The educational settings included reflect the location of the conference, i.e. Sweden, and also include research conducted in Italy, Finland and the United States.

This introductory chapter is followed by a chapter on translanguaging theory, Chapter 2, where Jim Cummins critically examines the legitimacy of the theoretical constructs within two alternative theoretical orientations to translanguaging, referred to as *Unitary Translanguaging Theory* (UTT) and *Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory* (CTT). He addresses questions about organization, psychological/cognitive reality and the socially constructed nature of languages, additive versus subtractive bilingualism and their ideological underpinnings and (academic) language education – questions that often confound educators and researchers when learning about translanguaging (Adinolfi *et al.*, 2018).

The two chapters that follow, Chapters 3 and 4, address research methodology to do with collecting data involving teachers. In Chapter 3, Marie Källkvist and Päivi Juvonen discuss the practicalities and complexities of initiating and maintaining teacher–researcher collaboration over an extended period of time – a matter that is at the heart of the ethnographic approaches needed to gain an in-depth, context-specific understanding of pedagogical translanguaging. Chapter 4 turns our attention to the gathering of primarily *quantitative* data using an online questionnaire to reach large numbers of teachers. In this chapter, Pia Sundqvist, Henrik Gyllstad, Marie Källkvist and Erica Sandlund present the development of a questionnaire instrument specifically designed to tap teachers' beliefs about multilingualism and their self-reported classroom and school practices.

Sustainable changes in classroom practices require the involvement of different stakeholders, from policymakers to school principals, teachers, other staff, students and parents (see, e.g. Cummins & Early, 2011; García *et al.*, 2017). In Chapters 5 and 6, two school development projects involving teacher–researcher collaboration at the primary school level are presented. In Chapter 5, Gudrun Svensson describes a school-wide, long-term study of the implementation of pedagogical translanguaging in a school that was facing challenges of low goal fulfilment among its students. Chapter 6 takes us to Italy, where Valentina Carbonara and Andrea Scibetta identify tensions between 'emergency approaches' to teaching plurilingual students based on monolingual language ideologies versus pluralistic language ideologies supported by Italian school curricula. Empirically, they focus on several different interactional and multilingual

strategies employed in primary-school classrooms, including translation, peer-to-peer mediation, word recall and metalinguistic and cross-linguistic comparison.

Sweden has a long tradition of supporting newly arrived students' learning by offering temporary support in their mother tongues or another prior school language. Chapters 7 and 8 present studies of the upper-secondary school transitional reception education in Sweden for recently arrived students, which is known as the Language Introduction Programme. In Chapter 7, Anne Reath Warren broadens the scope of pedagogical translanguaging beyond language to study the fluid use of different modes of meaning-making, experienced by different sensory modalities. In the analyzed interactions, pedagogical translanguaging in the form of multimodal semiotic assemblages is taken to contribute to the development of the students' academic literacies. In Chapter 8, Åsa Wedin presents a study of the negotiation of meaning in two multilingual mathematics classrooms taught by a teacher speaking Farsi, Swedish and English, most of the time in the presence of a Somali-, Arabic- and Swedish-speaking tutor.

The next two chapters relate to Richard Ruiz's (1984) work on language planning, which has had a profound influence on scholars discussing ideological underpinnings as well as implementation of language policy in the school context (Hornberger, 2017). His orientations to language (language-as-problem, language-as-right and language-as-resource) function as the backdrop of analyses of language ideologies in educational contexts in Chapters 9 and 10. In Chapter 9, Jessica Sierk discusses the symbolic function of language while examining how two New Latinx Diaspora high schools in the Midwestern United States reacted to their communities' changing demographics using Ruiz's (1984) orientations. In Chapter 10, Jenny Rosén and Berit Lundgren report a study of in-service teacher training in Swedish as a second language education for adult migrants in seven schools. This study problematizes pedagogical translanguaging practices on grounds that they would never be fair to everyone present, therefore being indexed with the risk of exclusion and inequity.

In Chapter 11, we stay in Swedish adult immigrant language education. Oliver St John analyses the what, the how and to what end of multilingual language assistants' (MLAs) classroom practices in teacher-initiated action-research collaboration with a researcher. This chapter also closes on a critical note, identifying a number of avenues for further developing MLA and teacher collaboration, including educational provisions for MLAs.

In Chapter 12, Anne Pitkänen-Huhta takes us to Finland. She reflects on the past, present and the future by applying concepts of bi- and multilingualism to Finnish society, closing with a discussion of 'new multilingualism' in present-day classrooms in Finland, where there is little pedagogical translanguaging, although there is frequent spontaneous translanguaging.

All in all, this volume responds to the need and the call to study and shape efficient and effective educational practices in specific language-diverse contexts for different groups of students. We bring together theoretical, methodological and empirical perspectives on pedagogical translanguaging, aiming to leverage research in schools and scholarly discussion of inclusive language practices with a view to enhancing social justice in schools and in society at large.

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