

TRANSLANGUAGING – PRACTICES, SKILLS AND PEDAGOGY
20 – 22. April 2015, Dalarna University, Falun, Sweden

Symposium:

Spaces for translanguaging in diverse language learning situations

20 April, 13:30 – 15:00

While translanguaging has been described as a natural practice amongst multilinguals in our globalized world, it is uncommon in formal and informal educational institutions (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García, 2009). Translanguaging capitalizes on the learners' diverse resources and encourages them to draw on their entire semiotic repertoire thereby promoting deep level learning. It is transformative in that it contributes to cognitive and personal development, and develops language and literacy practices that challenge traditional teaching which tends to reproduce social inequalities (García & Wei, 2014).

Our presentations focus on data from research projects in three countries that show how learning is mediated when practitioners (e.g. teachers, teacher assistants, educators, parents) adopt child-centred teaching models, implement a “funds of knowledge” theoretical perspective (Gonzalez, Moll & Armanti, 2005), create bridges between the home and school languages, and encourage translanguaging, including gestures and other body language. This view is particularly relevant to young children. We argue that translanguaging harmonizes with models of early years pedagogy which foreground the co-construction of learning between child and adult.

We will present four qualitative, small-scale studies, three of them longitudinal. Research was undertaken in a community class in England, a nursery class in France, nursery and primary schools in Luxembourg and crèches and day care centres in Luxembourg. The researchers used a mix method approach comprising video and audio recordings, interviews, field notes and documents to collect data on regular intervals.

The presentations will situate the studies within the local and national contexts that mediate the pedagogical practices and present interactions between the practitioners and the children aged between 3 and 11. The key discussion points are the need to create “safe spaces” (Conteh & Brock, 2011) in order to “activate” children's and practitioners' translanguaging abilities, the particular challenges practitioners face, and implications for policies and practice.

Jean Conteh: Translanguaging as pedagogy in multilingual primary classrooms in England- from the margins to the mainstream

Using data from small-scale, longitudinal, ethnographic research in a complementary class situated in a multilingual community in a city in the north of England, this presentation will analyse the interactions between multilingual teachers and their pupils, using a “funds of knowledge” theoretical perspective. It will consider the implications for policy and practice for both teaching and learning.

Latisha Mary and Andrea Young: Supporting very young learners in transition from home to school: Translanguaging in a French nursery school class with emergent bilingual children.

This paper focuses on the translanguaging practices of a teacher in France with three-year old children and their families. It illustrates how she harnesses the children's language repertoires as resources and how she creates 'safe spaces'. Her inclusive linguistic approach appears to facilitate the children's learning and adjustment to their first year in formal education.

Claudine Kirsch, Gérard Gretsche and Roberto Gomez: Translanguaging of children and teachers during storytelling activities with iTEO in nursery and primary schools in Luxembourg

The project addresses the need for innovative didactic methods to manage the diversity and heterogeneity in Luxembourg's trilingual schools. The paper shows how learning takes place when teachers and emergent bilinguals translanguaged during storytelling activities on the iPad App iTEO.

Katja Andersen and Claudine Kirsch: Multilingual oracies in formal and informal settings in Luxembourg

The empirical qualitative study, based on visual ethnography, structured interviews and a survey, is situated at the transition from formal to informal education sectors in Luxembourg. The aim is to study explicit and implicit forms of multilingual oracies in the interactions between 3 to 6 year-olds and their educators within practices of using pictures and rhymes.

References

Conteh, J. and Brock, A. (2011) "Safe spaces"? Sites of bilingualism for young learners in home, school and community, *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 14:3, 347-360.

Creese, A. and Blackledge, A. (2010) Translanguaging in the Bilingual Classroom: A Pedagogy for Learning and Teaching? *The Modern Language Journal*, 94, i.

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

García, O. and Wei, L. (2014) *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

González, N., Moll, L. and Amanti, C. (eds) (2005) *Funds of Knowledge: Theorising Practices in Households, Communities and Classrooms*. New York: Routledge.