

TRANSLANGUAGING AND ORACY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

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Développement des compétences orales des enfants multilingues
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Trans-languaging and oracy in early childhood

City University of New York

What does Gabo speak at 16 months?

- Árbol
- Car
- Truck
- Leche
- Más
- Agua
- Bottle
- Tete
- Duck
- No
- Guagua

Two perspectives on Gabo's language

<p>HIS words The Internal Perspective One language system</p>	<p>Two "named" languages The external perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Spanish
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What does Gabo speak at 16 months?

- **External perspective**
 - Gabo "has" "English" words and "Spanish" words
- **Internal perspective**
 - Gabo is developing (through social interaction with a bilingual family) a unitary system of language features with which he "does" language (he languages) to communicate and make meaning.

What is Gabo doing linguistically at 16 months?

- Gabo is translanguaging

Translanguaging is the use of the full linguistic repertoire "without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named languages" (Otheguy, García & Reid, 2015, p. 281).

Translanguaging as the internal perspective

External Perspective	Internal Perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 languages with language- specific features • Bilingualism as double monolingualism – Additive bilingualism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 complex language system from which speakers select features • Dynamic bilingualism
L1 F1, F1, F1, F1	L2 F2, F2, F2,F2
Fn, Fn, Fn, Fn, Fn, Fn, Fn, Fn,	

What can we say about Gabo and other young bilingual children?

- Most are simultaneous bilinguals
Bilingual First Language Acquisition (BFLA, De Houwer, 2009)
- They develop a unitary language system of linguistic features to communicate.
- They have to learn to select linguistic features that are appropriate for different audiences.
 - They have to learn to perform in "named languages"
- Their receptive performances (listening and understanding) are more developed than their productive performances (speaking and communicating)

How do young bilingual children use language?

- **They want to communicate**
- **To communicate, they translanguage.** They use **ALL** the resources in their **semiotic** (meaning-making) repertoire to make meaning.
 - They do not separate "named languages"
 - They do not separate speech from other semiotic meaning-making systems: gestures, acting, pitch (screaming, screeching), singing, drawing (multimodal resources)
- Once they enter **school**, schools validate some meaning-making practices and not others.

How do early childhood education institutions use language?

- Monolingually and monomodal
 - Dominant language only
 - Print superior to other multimodal resources
- Bilingually/Multilingually
 - Two/+2 separate "named" languages
 - Negate "his/her" language
 - Force children to suppress more than half of their linguistic features



How can early childhood education institutions develop the language performances of young multilingual children?

Starting with what they use and know, their strengths:

- Building on the use of their full repertoire of meaning-making resources. Nurturing their **translanguaging potential to**
 - Use their full linguistic repertoire
 - Use other multimodal meaning-making resources
- Carefully assessing their use of ALL their meaning-making resources.

How can early childhood education institutions develop the literacy of young multilingual children?

Literacy refers to *any communication* that takes place around text (print and multimodal) to make meaning.

What does it mean to engage in literacy practices for young children?


- **Listening actively** to what others say about a text.
- **Representing text** through play, gestures, drawing
- **Participating in oral discussions** to make meaning of text.

Oracy/Literacy Interconnection

What are the components of a translanguaging pedagogy to nurture bilingual children's language/literacy performances


1. The teacher's stance/beliefs/ideologies
2. **The teacher's design**
 - The classroom detective
 - The classroom architect
 - The classroom lifeguard & transformer

Classroom detective



- Close observation/ assessment of young children's performances to distinguish between
 - General semiotic performances
 - Language specific performances


Differentiate between Language specific performances General semiotic performances



RENATA

- Does not speak "Luxembourgish" at home
- Performance in oral "Luxembourgish" at school is insufficient


Differentiate between General semiotic performances & Language specific performances



RENATA

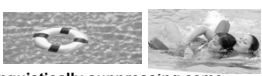
- Listens to stories
- Represents experience, feelings, ideas through play, gestures, drawing.
- Is comfortable with books & pretends "reads"
- Plays with crayons & pencils

Classroom architect




- **Classroom space** to allow ample opportunities for children to engage in authentic talk and multimodal play, art work, and rehearsal.
- **Print and pictures/art** reflect children's home language practices and cultures.
- **Collaborative structures/grouping.**
- **Multilingual & multimodal** instructional material (audio, video, realia, manipulatives, ex: ITEO)

Classroom lifeguard & transformer

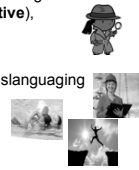


- Opportunities to perform linguistically suppressing some linguistic features when one "named" language is expected
 - WITH TRANSLANGUAGING RINGS for scaffold when needed (German teacher in Argyro's presentation)
- Opportunities to perform linguistically freely as young bilinguals
 - TRANSLANGUAGING SPACES spaces where students use their full semiotic repertoire to make meaning (ITEO, Claudine's presentation)



Conclusion

- Young bilingual children **come into school with their own language & translanguaging ability (internal perspective)**, and not two named languages (external social perspective).
- **Schools only recognize external** social perspective of "named languages."
- For educators to leverage young bilingual children's potential, they must **acknowledge and use their natural translanguaging** by
 - Separating their ability to use language & meaning-making resources from using appropriate linguistic features (**the detective**),
 - designing classroom spaces for collaboration & use of multilingual/multimodal material (**the architect**)
 - Providing translanguaging rings when needed & translanguaging spaces (**the lifeguard/transformer**).



From Translanguaging in Canada to...

“Semilingualism” in Germany

Educators’ attitudes in institutions of early childhood education and care

Université du Luxembourg, 18.02.2016

Prof. Dr. Argyro Panagiotopoulou
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Social Inequalities and Intercultural Education



The Question is...

... to what extent do professionals in a German Kindergarten in francophone Canada and in Germany interpret “fluid language practices” (Ofelia Garcia & Li Wei 2014, p. 15) of young children differently?

... to what extent do they perceive multilingual children as “translinguals” in one context and as “semilinguals” in the other context?



Attitudes towards multilingual children in Canada

Interview with an Educator in the Kindergarten of the German School Montreal (April 2014)

Project: Educational Professionalism, Migration and Multilingualism in Canada, Germany and Greece.

Principal investigators: Prof. Argyro Panagiotopoulou, University of Cologne & Prof. Lisa Rosen, Osnabrück University



“... Je parle anglais!”

1/3

“The children who are born or raised here in Canada in most cases speak two languages, often times [German] is the mother tongue, but it can also be Spanish, Arabic in addition to English or French or in part all three languages where the children then learn the fourth language [German] at school.”



“... Je parle anglais!”

2/3

“We accept all languages, it is not forbidden, during daily interaction as part of free-play they are able to use the language they want to though they should, where possible, speak German when speaking to the educators; [...] since later on in elementary school the language of instruction is German, and so that it is normal for them to speak German to an instructor; but everything that is within the class, whether in the yard outside, they may speak English, French, Spanish, Arabic; they may speak all languages they want to.”



“... Je parle anglais!”

3/3

“Automatically, they speak German with me, turn around and speak French with their mother and English with their friend; but there are also children who are not aware at a given moment which language they are currently speaking; there I might say ‚Könntest du mal sagen, welche Sprache sprichst du denn zu Hause‘ and the answer is ‘Je parle anglais’.”



Using complex language practices

"In fact, students and teachers in all bilingual education programs use complex language practices, and build on complex resources for meaning-making in order to learn and teach; that is, they use what we are calling here translinguaging."

Ofelia García and Li Wei (2014, p. 59):



Using complex language practices

"I had a child approach me 'Frau Esser ich habe zu Hause deep deep, was heißt deep', and then I said 'tief'. 'Frau Esser ich habe zu Hause ein tiefes, tiefes', [...] and 'what is a hole'; so I say 'ein Loch', and then it started again from the beginning and the child asked for a third word and all this in one sentence; so we do not sit down and tell them 'You have to do it like this and this'".



Attitudes towards multilingual children in Germany

Interview with an Educator in the Kindergarten of the German School Montreal (April 2014)

... about her experiences in a Kindergarten in Germany



From translinguaging to... "Semilingualism"?

"We had in Germany, I worked at a kindergarden and we had two colleagues from Turkey who grew up in Germany but had Turkish origin families, and at some point we noticed that some children had big difficulties learning German; following this we asked, or the two Turkish colleagues offered, to read (meaning to look at) picture books in Turkish and as a result of this we learned that those children also did not know Turkish very well.



From "translinguaging" to... "semilingualism"?

"We had in Germany, I worked at a kindergarden and we had two colleagues from Turkey who grew up in Germany but had Turkish origin families, and at some point we noticed that some children had big difficulties learning German; following this we asked, or the two Turkish colleagues offered, to read [meaning to look at] picture books in Turkish and as a result of this we learned that those children also did not know Turkish very well.

[...] we noticed, when someone does not know his/her own language very well then he/she can also not learn the foreign language, in this case German, well."



Initial Comparing Findings

- **Translinguaging in the German kindergarden in Canada:** defined as a family norm and reality of young children, and as a legitimate practice "in order to learn and teach" multilingually.
- **Translinguaging in the German kindergarden in Germany:** defined as an incompetence of young children who don't speak their "own" language (L1), have learning difficulties with the German language (L2) and, hence, became semilingual.

Conclusion: Diametrically opposed interpretations of comparable language practices of young children. Professionals observe translingually acting children using widely differing theoretical concepts about bilingualism and multilingualism.





**iTEO: a translanguaging space
for collaborative language learning
in Luxembourg**


Assistant-Prof. Dr. Claudine Kirsch



The iPad App iTEO



- Purpose: to develop children's oral skills
- Proven relationship between the development of oracy, literacy and general attainment (Alexander 2012, Mercer 2002, Resnick et al. 2010, Wells 1992)
- Capitalizing on the children's entire linguistic repertoire in a multilingual context
- Promote innovative teaching methods

<http://storying.bsce.uni.lu>




The iPad App iTEO (cont.)

- The iPad App iTEO
 - Records and edits oral language
 - Automatic replay: materializes language and encourages reflection
 - Endless possibilities for listening to and transforming speech
 - Opportunities to add pictures to structure the recording process
- Working with iTEO fosters the development of language and metalinguistic skills
(Gretsch 1994, 2014; Kirsch 2014; Kirsch & Gretsch 2015, Kirsch, forthcoming)


Collaborative storytelling on iTEO

- Language learning is a dynamic, active, social process which happens when individuals interact in meaningful, activity-based and culturally specific activities
- Collaborative storytelling on iTEO: encourages authorship, dialogue, autonomy, control and reflection
- Collaboration: shared goal, mutual engagement, jointly created and maintained space, co-construction of knowledge
- iTEO as a translanguaging space: children mobilize their verbal and non-verbal resources to produce an oral text and to develop language skills






Examples of translanguaging and learning on iTEO

Cycle 2.1




Cycle 1.1






Excerpt 1: collaborative language learning in a primary school class (C2.1)




First recording

Komm mir schwätzen op Franséisch.


Moi, je m'appelle Aaron et toi tu t'appelles Lina.



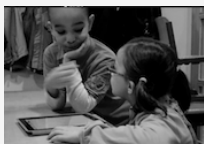




iTEO: Moi je m'appelle Aaron. Moi se, je 'appelle Lina.

Nee ech kann guer net gudd. Nee komm mir maachen an d'Poubelle.



Instruction and second recording


<p><u>Appelle Lina</u></p> <p><u>Je</u></p> <p><u>Moi</u></p> <p><u>Je</u></p> <p><u>Je</u></p>	<p><u>M'appelle</u></p> <p><u>Je m'appelle</u></p> <p>Lina</p> <p>Lina.</p> <p>Jo, richtig, gut.</p> <p>Lo kannst du dat.</p> 
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<p><u>Je m'appelle Aaron.</u></p> <p><u>Je m'appelle Lina.</u></p> <p><u>iTEO: Je m'appelle</u></p> <p><u>Aaron. Je m'appelle</u></p> <p><u>Lina.</u></p>	 
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Excerpt 2: Collaborative language learning in a nursery school class (C1.1)


- Invitation to translanguage in the C1
- Asking for clarification
- Emphasising “garçon”
- Asking for a replay of “garçon”
- Using “garçon”



Linguistic repertoire of the nursery school children during the iTEO performances

	Ariana	Hanad	Benjamin	Diego	Mariana
Luxembourgish	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
English	✓		✓✓	✓	✓
French		✓	✓	✓✓	✓
German		✓	✓		
Portuguese	✓✓		✓		✓✓
Spanish	✓				
Arabic				✓	✓
Unknown	✓		✓	✓	✓

✓✓ Home language



Collaboration

The “experts”

- Elaborating
- Checking comprehension
- Breaking down phrases
- Identifying a mistake
- Offering a translation, a synonym or the missing word
- Rephrasing and repeating
- Emphasizing the correct article, phoneme, morpheme
- Offering explanations and rules
- Assessing and praising

All children:

- Listening
- Active participation
- Risk-taking
- Offering ideas
- Asking for help
- Echoing, repeating
- Subvocalising, co-vocalising

Translanguaging situations in C1 and C2

- To communicate
 - All: multimodality – use of gestures, tone of voice
 - Individual differences: lack of vocabulary
- To provide differentiated input and to ease communication
 - Organization of the situation
 - Co-construction of a story
- To position themselves, to express their voice and to develop an identity as a multilingual
 - "You cannot speak French. It is different." (C1)
 - "I have to speak Luxembourgish because I cannot speak English well." (C1)
 - Creation of multimodal and transglossic texts
 - Adding familiar, meaningful words & phrases (e.g. "amigos para sempre") (C1)



Translanguaging situations (cont.)

- To construct knowledge and to develop skills in other languages
 - Paraphrasing: "les bagages valises"
 - Translating
 - Ask for clarification, for translations
 - Repetitions for the purpose of memorization
 - Transformations of text previously used
 - Reflecting on language use
 - "Le tapis, den Teppech" – "I have chosen the wrong word" (C1)
 - Checking comprehension, explaining, (self-) assessment of language use, praise



ITEO: a space for translanguaging and learning

- Role of the learning context:
 - voice, authorship, autonomy, control, dialogue, reflection
 - motivation to produce texts for an audience
- Range of linguistic features used and developed by children
- Pleasure in trying out new languages
- Effort in order to master the languages
- Translanguaging as the safety ring
 - Safe space in which to communicate, try out and perform in new languages
 - Vehicle that moves the child towards competence



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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