

Translanguaging as a powerful perspective for addressing diversity in bi/multilingual contexts

Marisol Patricia Saucedo **LAGE***
Susan Ann Rangel **CLEMESHA****

*PhD in Applied Linguistics from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo - PUC/SP (2023).
Institutional Educational Support Specialist at Colégio Miguel de Cervantes. marisolsaucedolage@gmail.com
** Master's in Applied Linguistics from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo - PUC/SP (2019).
Academic Director at Sphere International Schools. susan.clemesha@gmail.com

Abstract:

This article explores translanguaging as both a conceptual lens and a pedagogical practice in bi/multilingual contexts, highlighting its role in fostering inclusivity and embracing student diversity. It also presents learning experiences shaped by this perspective. The study follows the methodology of Critical Collaborative Research (PCCol) and is theoretically grounded in translanguaging, diversity, and interculturality. With this foundation, it seeks to answer the question: “Can translanguaging serve as a teaching and learning resource to address learner diversity in bi/multilingual contexts?” The data, analyzed through this lens, suggest that translanguaging not only enhances learning but also serves as an effective approach for creating more inclusive and engaging educational environments. By challenging traditional language hierarchies, and intentionally incorporating student voice and choice, as well as multilingual and multimodal teaching and learning practices, it encourages learners to use their full linguistic repertoires, fostering deeper understanding and participation. These findings reinforce translanguaging as a powerful approach to supporting diverse learners and expanding meaning-making in multilingual education.

Keywords: Translanguaging; diversity; interculturality.

Resumo:

Este artigo explora a translanguagem como uma lente conceitual e uma prática

pedagógica em contextos bi/multilíngues, destacando seu papel na promoção da inclusão e no acolhimento à diversidade dos alunos. Também apresenta experiências de aprendizagem constituídas com base nessa perspectiva. O estudo segue a metodologia da Pesquisa Crítica de Colaboração (PCCol) e é teoricamente fundamentado na translinguagem, na diversidade e na interculturalidade. A partir dessa base, buscou-se responder à pergunta: “A translinguagem pode servir como um recurso de ensino e aprendizagem para abordar a diversidade do estudante em contextos bi/multilíngues?” Os dados, analisados por meio dessa lente, sugerem que a translinguagem não apenas promove aprendizagem, mas também serve como uma abordagem eficaz para criar ambientes educacionais mais inclusivos e participativos. Ao desafiar as hierarquias linguísticas tradicionais, e incorporar intencionalmente a voz e as escolhas dos estudantes, por meio de práticas multilíngues e multimodais, a translinguagem mobiliza de modo mais amplo o repertório linguístico do aluno, possibilitando uma compreensão e participação mais profundas. Essas descobertas reforçam a translinguagem como uma abordagem potente para apoiar a diversidade e expandir a construção de saberes na educação multilíngue

Palavras-chave: Translinguagem; diversidade; interculturalidade.

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Marisol Patricia Saucedo Lage
Susan Ann Rangel Clemesha

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalized world, contact with diversity is a given - a tangible reality, as noted by Vertovec (2007) and Blommaert (2010). Superdiversity is present in all spheres, whether social, cultural, or linguistic. Along these lines, Cortesão and Stoer (1999) illustrate diversity as a "rainbow of cultures" but suggest that many people suffer from cultural color blindness, referring to those who fail to "see" diversity. In this way, institutions also risk overlooking the diversity present in classrooms, consequently depriving students of powerful learning opportunities.

Given the importance and richness of diversity, international agreements such as the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) emphasize the relevance of a paradigm shift toward inclusive educational practices, discourses, and environments. Moreover, in pursuit of equality in education, according to the United Nations (2015) one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4) of the 2030 Agenda is to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", aligning with the ideal of a more just society. With this broad perspective, diversity - including cognitive, social, gender, and variability aspects - is conceived as both cognitive and social justice.

Thus, with policies and objectives aimed at embracing student heterogeneity, institutions face the challenge of meeting educational and social demands. However, not all teacher education programs adequately equip educators for this necessary and crucial reality. Additionally, other challenges emerge, such as the linguistic diversity of learners in bi/multilingual education (Garcia; Wei, 2014).

This text is situated in the context of elite bilingual education in countries such as Brazil, which have seen a surge in the numbers of this model of education, driven by factors such as opportunities to study abroad, preparation for the job market, access to a multicultural education, and the academic excellence associated with learning in an international language.

Beyond the elite bi/multilingual context, Brazilian public schools receive a diverse range of students, including migrants, refugees, indigenous language speakers, sign language users, and border communities. This linguistic diversity enriches the educational environment but also presents unique challenges for teaching and learning.

UNESCO's (Stenou, 2002) *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* states that linguistic diversity and multilingualism are essential for sustainable development. In Brazil, multilingualism can be seen as a complex societal tapestry, where languages serve as threads intertwining cultures, histories, and unique worldviews. According to the National Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN, 2010), approximately 250 languages are spoken in Brazil, including Indigenous, immigrant, sign, and Afro-Brazilian languages. However, this linguistic diversity is at risk, as many of these languages face the threat of extinction.

Therefore, the presence of multiple languages is an undeniable fact. What differs are the specific contexts and the value assigned to each language, yet a common point remains: the need for additional language learning that fully considers diversity in all its dimensions. Given the

¹ Reviewed by: Susan Ann Rangel Clemesha.

complexity of this issue, this study proposes translanguaging as a teaching and learning perspective capable of addressing these diverse contexts.

The primary objective of this text² is to explore and demonstrate how translanguaging can be effectively integrated into teaching and learning practices to meet the diverse linguistic and cultural needs of students in bi/multilingual educational environments. To this end, the article presents the methodological and theoretical foundations that support our proposal, grounded in translanguaging, diversity, and interculturality. Subsequently, we describe a specific teaching scenario and provide an interpretation and analysis of an elementary school action project. Finally, we conclude with reflections and considerations on the critical question: "Can translanguaging serve as a teaching and learning tool to address learner diversity in bi/multilingual contexts?"

DIVERSITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

The relationship between education and diversity is a central theme in contemporary discussions. Diversity encompasses a wide range of human characteristics, such as ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, abilities, and socioeconomic background. However, this diversity is not always adequately considered within the school environment during the teaching and learning process. Often, students are expected to be homogeneous in their learning, knowledge expression, and assessment, reflecting residuals of a colonial perspective. Consequently, debates on diversity gained significant strength in the last decades of the 20th century, aiming to overcome the idea of homogenization and propose more inclusive approaches.

The current homogeneous vision of schools is a result of a historical construct dating back to the 19th century. During the period of nation-state formation, schools played a crucial role in integrating individuals from rural areas or different countries into the national culture. The primary goal was to create a sense of belonging through common symbols that unified diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds, aiming to shape citizens capable of participating in the political and economic life of emerging states. In this context, schools were tasked with contributing to the homogenization of people, evident in criteria such as age and grade-level for separating student groups or the use of school uniforms. For a long time, homogenization was considered a means of providing equal opportunities and a common foundation for education. However, students inevitably arrived at schools with diverse cultural capital, meaning that this context of equality did not necessarily translate into equity (Anijovich, 2014).

Diversity is inherent to the human experience, yet it often leads to inequality, as noted by Gimeno Sacristán (1995). While differences among individuals and groups should be respected in a tolerant, liberal, and democratic society, they frequently result in disparities that hinder opportunities both inside and outside school, influencing access to social, economic, and cultural resources. This complexity of diversity requires a multifaceted approach. Gimeno Sacristán (2002) invites us to consider diversity in its multiple dimensions - individual, social, cultural, and historical - manifested in different forms and contexts. Education, therefore, must be attentive to this complexity to provide appropriate responses.

In light of this, multiculturalism and intercultural approaches are essential for discussions on multilingualism in schools. Maher (2007) argues that simply recognizing cultural differences is insufficient; intentional action is required. She critiques the narrow focus on material culture, which often overlooks deeper aspects like worldviews, ways of thinking, and lived experiences. The ecology of knowledges, proposed by Santos (2006) and applied by Candau (2018), values diverse forms of knowledge - scientific, traditional, popular, ancestral, and artistic - without establishing a hierarchy among them. This approach fosters dialogue and interconnection rather than

² The authors used ChatGPT- 4 (OpenAI) to assist with language revision and translation refinement. All outputs were reviewed and edited by the authors to ensure academic integrity and accuracy.

homogenization, creating spaces for meaningful exchange. As a foundation for critical intercultural education, this perspective promotes respect for cultural diversity and advocates for a more inclusive curriculum. Tied to social justice, it challenges the exclusion of marginalized knowledge, working toward a more equitable society. This vision aligns with and supports translanguaging as an approach that offers a new perspective on diversity in bi/multilingual contexts, challenging traditional views and opening new possibilities for inclusive and intercultural education.

TRANSLANGUAGING

The term translanguaging was originally coined in Welsh (*trawsieithu*) by Cen Williams (1994), whose research with high school students suggested that both language and content learning could be enhanced through an approach that embraces the fluid use of multiple languages in bilingual settings. In contrast to traditional programs that separate language use, Williams designed learning experiences that allowed students to move flexibly between Welsh and English. For example, students were asked to read in one language and write in another, fostering deeper engagement and connections across languages.

In the field of bilingualism, Cummins (1979) had already proposed the existence of a common underlying linguistic competence among bilinguals, which enabled transfer and highlighted how learning academic content in two or more languages could enrich students' overall understanding and development. Building on these ideas, while moving beyond the traditional view of language as a fixed structure, translanguaging emerged as a significant area of inquiry, explored from various perspectives by multiple scholars.

García (2009) stands out for deepening and differentiating the understanding of traditional bilingualism in education, focusing on multilingualism. Creese and Blackledge (2015) studied students' multilingual practices in UK schools. Li Wei (2011) also contributed studies on the potential of translanguaging for fostering creativity and critical thinking in bilingual settings. According to Li Wei (2011), translanguaging creates a social space for the multilingual user, encompassing different dimensions of their personal history, experience, and environment, their attitude, beliefs, and ideology, as well as their cognitive and physical abilities in a coordinated and meaningful performance. This perspective highlights how translanguaging enables individuals to draw upon their entire linguistic and semiotic repertoire to navigate and make meaning in complex social contexts, thereby valuing the full scope of their linguistic and cultural background.

Currently, based on the concept of linguistic heteroglossia, translanguaging is defined by Vogel and García (2017, p. 1) as:

a theoretical lens that offers a different perspective on bilingual and multilingual individuals, recognizing that students, in using language, select and utilize particular aspects of a single linguistic repertoire to construct meaning and negotiate within specific communicative contexts.

Pedagogically, translanguaging can be seen as an approach in which linguistic practices serve as essential resources for knowledge construction. It is intrinsically linked to the multiple discursive practices individuals engage in. This concept extends beyond simple code-switching or hybrid language use. According to García (2009), translanguaging facilitates communication, enhances comprehension, fosters interaction, and helps individuals make sense of the world. Recognizing its potential to develop multilingualism and interculturality, regardless of the terminology adopted by institutions, it can promote equality and social justice by embracing cultural, linguistic, and social differences. Under this understanding, translanguaging has been viewed as a transformative social element, particularly in challenging the barriers faced by marginalized communities.

Translanguaging is not just a scaffold for learning dominant language practices, nor merely a pedagogy for disadvantaged learners. Instead, it is a means of allowing linguistically marginalized communities, often overlooked in schools and society, to finally be seen (and heard) for who they truly are - as bilinguals with the right to use their linguistic practices freely, without the judgment of the monolingual listener, and with the power to expand understandings through their own linguistic practices. It is important to emphasize that translanguaging is at once a linguistic theory and a discursive practice. García (2009) conceptualizes this as the way in which individuals make use of their linguistic resources more dynamically. The author (García, 2009) points out that translanguaging arises from a purpose, rather than from a lack of vocabulary that individuals need to express themselves in a monolingual setting.

García (2021) explains that language teaching theories and understandings continue to be dictated by those on the dominant side of the line, shaping educational policies and programs imposed on those on the other side (the South) - ultimately leading to academic failure. From this perspective, García (2021) suggests that translanguaging can transform colonial thinking, which is still deeply embedded in practices and discourses, fostering an understanding that bridges the two sides. For García, how language is used cannot be an abstract concept detached from society - instead, it must function as a theory/practice that can either empower or hinder bilingual and minority individuals.

Translanguaging practices in environments where students have contact with multiple languages contribute significantly to linguistic development, as suggested by Menken, Pérez Rosario, and Valerio (2018). The authors emphasize linguistic landscapes as tools that promote translanguaging. Menken, Pérez Rosario, and Valerio (2018) found in their research that educators who incorporated students' home languages, both visually and orally, into their school landscapes supported students' translanguaging. They also observed that, alongside these actions, other changes were emerging in terms of pragmatic structures and language education policies. These changes, in turn, led to further developments, fostering multilingual approaches and translanguaging perspectives. They concluded that transforming the physical linguistic landscape by making students' languages visible served as a starting point for broader transformations.

Thus, Menken, Pérez Rosario and Valerio (2018) suggest that the changes began with the visual linguistic landscape, then extended to language pedagogy and ideologies, and ultimately led to more structural transformations, such as the implementation of a formal bilingual education program that embraced a heteroglossic translanguaging approach. Grounded in this perspective, García (2009) emphasizes that critical literacy is closely linked to social justice, and therefore, educators must ensure that, throughout their work, students have opportunities to reflect, explore, and question different worlds. Given the discussion on translanguaging as a key element, it is believed that schools should provide and design spaces where students can use more than one language and access a variety of linguistic resources, thereby legitimizing their knowledge.

METHODOLOGY

This study is situated within Applied Linguistics, an interdisciplinary field that produces knowledge, reshapes language practices, and promotes social inclusion by examining human action across diverse contexts (Bygate, 2004). Landulfo and Matos (2022) reinforce this understanding, describing Applied Linguistics as an “interdisciplinary discipline” committed to breaking boundaries, incorporating diverse forms of knowledge, and combating social exclusion. From this perspective, the field opens up possibilities for reconstructing discourses, practices, and identities. Building on this view, Ferreira (2022) advocates for the integration of broader concepts into language use, arguing that linguistic education should cultivate respect for life and foster critically engaged citizenship.

Grounded in this understanding of Applied Linguistics, the research is based on the methodology of Critical Collaborative Research (PCCol), as discussed by Magalhães (2009, 2010,

2011) and Liberali (2012). This methodology is both theoretical-activist and interventionist, a fundamental concept for research conducted in school contexts. It seeks the transformation of all school community actors, as well as the researchers themselves, who engage in an effort to bridge the gap between academia and schools for a more equitable education.

Drawing from Vygotsky (1978), Critical Collaborative Research (PCCol) is an interventionist methodology based on the dialectics of human action, which transforms the socio-historical-cultural context in which it is embedded. In the Vygotskian perspective, development is not restricted to a single plane, but unfolds into two distinct levels. The first, called the level of actual development, encompasses the mental functions that the child already masters independently. The second, corresponding to potential development, refers to the abilities the student can acquire and problems they can solve with the support of a mediator. The ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development), in this sense, represents the gap between what the student can already do alone and what they can achieve with guidance or collaboration. Vygotsky (1978, p. 86), describes it as "the distance between the level of actual development, which is usually determined by independently solving problems, and the level of potential development, determined by solving problems under the guidance of an adult or in collaboration with peers".

According to Vygotsky (2003), the individual constructs knowledge through interaction with the environment and with other subjects. Interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships are fundamental in this process, culminating in the internalization of knowledge, which is mediated by language. Thus, higher mental functions are socially shaped and culturally mediated by language, making the ZPD a space of latency and potential for becoming.

The context for this research is an exploratory single case study conducted at a Portuguese - English bilingual international school³ located in the State of São Paulo. This school was selected for its bilingual curriculum and international framework, which emphasize student agency and transdisciplinary learning. In 2024, two classes of approximately twenty-five Year 5 students (ages 10 - 11) participated in an action project, called the PYP Exhibition⁴. In small groups, students were invited to identify causes they cared about and, based on their interests, engaged in research, experiences, and activities designed to promote new understandings, skills development and problem solving. Their work was presented orally and through texts in both Portuguese and English, along with charts, diagrams, models, illustrations, photos, and videos. These materials were shared with family members and the school community at the PYP Exhibition event, marking the culmination of the process and the moment when data for this research was collected.

To capture the multimodal forms of expression used by the learners, the authors included photographs and video excerpts from interviews conducted on the day of the students' presentations. As a focused study, independent from a broader research project, its aim was to explore translanguaging pedagogy in action. The following section examines how multilingual and multimodal interactions unfolded during the PYP Exhibition, analyzing the collected data in light of the guiding research question: "Can translanguaging serve as a teaching and learning resource to address learner diversity in bi/multilingual contexts?"

ANALYSIS

In this case study, both Portuguese and English hold similar status at the school: Portuguese is the home language for most students, while English is viewed as a prestigious international language. The student group comes from a privileged socioeconomic background, with many

³ Located in São José dos Campos/SP, the school is an IB continuum school, authorized to offer the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP). The study was conducted in Year 5 of the PYP section.

⁴ The PYP Exhibition is a culminating project carried out in the final year of the Primary Years Programme (PYP) of IB schools.

having been exposed to travel and diverse cultural experiences. Even so, their heterogeneity was evident. Some students were new to the bilingual environment, others had attended the school since early childhood. There were also students with distinct interests and needs, as in all educational contexts.

The Year 5 PYP Exhibition project⁵ was carried out throughout the school year, going through different implementation stages:

Project stages:

- Launch, with presentations from students and educators from previous years;
- Family and mentor teacher involvement;
- Initial engagement and identification of students' interests (social, environmental, scientific advancements, etc.);
- Connection with UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Group organization and criteria for project development;
- Essential questions and research pathways;
- Meeting schedule, including classroom sessions with specialists and mentors, as well as field trips outside school;
- Exploration, experimentation, and organization of new learnings;
- Documentation of student learning, assessment and reflections through the use of portfolios;
- Implementation of an action project, applying the acquired knowledge;
- Final communication and presentation to the school community.

With its broad scope and focus on promoting student agency⁶, implementing a project of this nature can seem especially challenging in bilingual schools, particularly when learning experiences are proposed in an additional language. However, this challenge became an opportunity for growth. Once introduced to the concept of translanguaging and engaged in ongoing dialogue and exploration, the educators⁷ leading the Year 5 Exhibition project in 2024 embraced the use of diverse semiotic resources to design learning engagements that expanded students' opportunities for meaning making. As a result, the school adopted a dynamic bilingualism perspective, purposefully integrating the languages of instruction (Portuguese and English) and incorporating multiple modalities throughout the project.

On the day of the students' final presentation, a wide range of productions in Portuguese and English was showcased through posters, graphs, artwork and digital media. The students expressed their thinking visually through panels and delivered oral presentations to explain the research process, main findings and understandings, and proposed solutions for the issues explored in each group.

To complement this overview, photographs of the exhibition panels and student productions are presented below, along with contextual information provided by the Year 5 teachers. An interview excerpt with one of the students also sheds light on how Portuguese and English were integrated and dynamically used throughout the project.

Year 5 Exhibition photos and student interview

⁵ At this school, the PYP Exhibition is the result of the collaboration between two head teachers (one in English and one in Portuguese), teaching assistants, specialist teachers and two pedagogical coordinators.

⁶ The concept of agency is grounded in the belief that individuals can break away from pre-established patterns to reframe, create, and transform, drawing from their repertoire and lived experiences (Engeström, 2005).

⁷ The school principal, head teachers, and coordinators voluntarily agreed to participate in the research presented in this article, in accordance with institutional ethical guidelines.

1. **Demonstration of the process in English**, displayed on exhibition panels, with support and guidance from the English homeroom teacher.

Image 1 - Year 5 - PYP Exhibition display



Source: Author (2024).

2. **Presentation to families in English**, with distribution of specific parts for each learner. Support and guidance from mentors and the English homeroom teacher. Use of scaffolding strategies to support oral production.

Examples:

- I chose this theme because...
- Our central idea is...
- Our lines of inquiry are...
- My biggest challenge was...
- I learned that...

3. **Implementation of the "action"** with guidance from the Portuguese homeroom teacher.

Image 2 - Magic Box – book donations



Source: Author (2024).

4. **Models, diagrams, and games** in connection with the art specialist teacher.

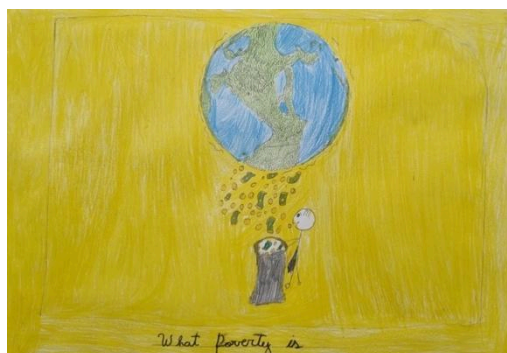
Image 3 - Deforestation model



Source: Author (2024).

5. **Sculptures, drawings, posters, and visual representations** for the synthesis of understandings and inquiries, with support from the Portuguese, English, and art teachers.

Image 4 - Poverty illustration



Source: Author (2024).

6. **Use of technology for collecting information and communicating results**, in connection with the technology specialist teacher.

Images 5 and 6 - Use of technology in the Year 5 project



Source: Author (2024).

7. **Use of graphs for analysis and communication of results**, with support from the English and Portuguese homeroom teachers.

Image 7: Project display



Source: Author (2024).

8. Student interview

The following excerpts were taken from a series of video interviews with students, recorded during the PYP Exhibition event, which was open to the school community. The transcript below features one selected interview with a Year 5 student⁸.

Excerpts

The first excerpt highlights the student's explanation of how the school's languages of instruction were integrated throughout the inquiry process. The question was posed in English and the student's exact words were transcribed, thus demonstrating his bilingual identity and lexical choices.

At the Portuguese part, we made these drawings (pointing to a poster). And we made these drawings to represent our lines of inquiry. And we researched a little bit in the Portuguese part. In English, we mostly made the slides, our information, what we learned and we put some pictures... In the arts class, we made a model that represents what impacts animals' lives: pollution and deforestation.

When asked whether he thought it was a good idea to do the project using Portuguese and English flexibly, the student responded:

I think yes, because we can learn different things in English and in Portuguese. [...] different sites in English and in Portuguese have different information. [...] sometimes we research on sites that have the same information, but in different languages.

Regarding classmates who are not yet fluent in both languages or are new to the school, the student said:

When our friend was new at school, she was a little bit shy. She didn't know her new friends. Now she says a lot of things... she's happier. And we can help.... If you come from another country that speaks English, the teachers can help you with the Portuguese part. Or if you don't know English, the English teacher can help you. Or your group can help you by making this research or the drawings.

The excerpts above, in line with García's view (2009, 2021), highlight that translanguaging

⁸ The use of the transcription of the student's interview was authorized by his legal guardian, in accordance with ethical guidelines.

assumes the position that language is action and practice, rather than simply a system of structures and a discrete set of skills. It involves the flexible use of linguistic resources to make sense of life and the complex world. Furthermore, according to the author's perspective, translanguaging allows individuals to appropriate all linguistic practices as their own, thereby breaking linguistic hierarchies.

Expanding on this notion, we revisit the idea that a decolonial perspective implies understanding that society is marked by superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007). Thus, it is possible to validate intentional actions to engage all members of the community.

From this same perspective, Candau (2018) points to the need for a critical intercultural approach in education, promoting the recognition of the other. In this regard, following Candau's discussions (2018), it is assumed that differences should be seen as a pedagogical advantage, highlighting the urgency of valuing the cultural differences of those involved in the educational process.

We can argue, based on Menken, Pérez Rosário, and Valerio (2018), that not only exposure to different languages and cultures, but intentional instructional design, fosters the development of multilingual and translanguaging mindsets. When students feel valued in their linguistic identities, they become more open and flexible regarding language, in terms of use and comprehension, as well as in the construction of knowledge.

In the excerpts, the student reported how bilingual learners used different languages and modalities throughout the process. Furthermore, he demonstrated empathy and intercultural sensitivity by describing how new students were supported during their adaptation to the bilingual/multilingual environment.

His account highlighted the expansion of meaning-making opportunities enabled by the flexibility available in bilingual contexts, having access to different information sources in multiple languages or accessing the same information in different languages, which supports comprehension for emergent bilingual learners.

Through this case study, translanguaging pedagogy could be observed in the fluid and dynamic ways in which students used their language repertoires in the learning experiences. Teachers designed different opportunities for meaning making, allowing for a more inclusive learning environment, considering that not all students share the same previous experiences, interests, or ways of knowing. Oral, visual, and written language(s) were accessed and deployed throughout the project, making room for collaborative and expansive meaning-making. As a result, translanguaging can be viewed as a powerful approach for promoting diversity and equity in education.

CONCLUSION

In Brazil, linguistic diversity is evident in both elite bilingual schools and public schools, which accommodate students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. While this diversity is enriching, it also brings unique challenges to teaching and learning. Motivated by this context, our objective was to analyze how translanguaging can be used as a teaching and learning tool to meet the needs of diverse students in bilingual and multilingual contexts. We started with the guiding question: "Can translanguaging serve as a teaching and learning resource to address student diversity in bi/multilingual contexts?"

To explore this, we analyzed pedagogical practices experienced by a group of students at a Portuguese - English bilingual international school in the State of São Paulo. These Year 5 students (ages 10 - 11) engaged in planned and intentional activities that allowed for the integration of various forms of expression, including home and additional languages, through a multidisciplinary approach across different areas of knowledge. This served as a way of allowing for the learners'

different identities and lived experiences to be validated and used as resources for deepening the understanding of a given issue or problem.

From our analysis, we saw that creating space for the use of multiple languages can challenge traditional language hierarchies and, in turn, encourage all students to participate more actively. This was evident in the case study, where translanguaging enabled more dynamic and flexible forms of communication, making interaction, expression, and meaning-making more accessible and inclusive. In this light, languages became a bridge to diverse narratives and perspectives.

Furthermore, the analysis of pedagogical practices supports this finding by showing that intentionally fostering multilingual and multimodal communication promotes active student engagement. The interviewed student's testimony, along with images of the learners' productions, illustrates the fluid use of languages (Portuguese and English) and modalities (drawings, slides, models), highlighting how translanguaging can enrich classroom interactions. Additionally, the student expressed that doing the project in both languages was a valuable approach because "[...] we can learn different things in English and in Portuguese." and that "Different sites in English and in Portuguese have different information." This perception supports the idea that translanguaging expands access to knowledge and new perspectives. The empathy demonstrated by the student when describing support for newly arrived colleagues or those with less fluency ("If one person doesn't know English, the teacher can help you. Or if the person doesn't know Portuguese, the other teacher can help you. Or the students... we can help when we do the research or the drawings.") reinforces translanguaging's capacity to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for learner diversity.

Therefore, the observational data and participants' accounts demonstrate how the flexibility promoted by multilingual practices not only enriches the learning process but also fosters an educational environment that values and integrates students' linguistic and cultural diversity. Our findings indicate that translanguaging supports inclusion by encouraging engagement and deeper learning in multilingual classrooms. We hope this perspective can inspire its adoption not only in bilingual education involving prestige languages, but also in less privileged contexts, such as public schools serving migrants, refugees, indigenous language speakers, sign language users, and border communities.

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