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ELF and Translanguaging



ELF stands for English as a Lingua Franca, which means English is a common means of communication for speakers of other languages. In brief, English language could be considered the first vehicle of communication for speakers from all over the world, being also a marker of intercultural communication.

That is to say, we can find different native speakers (let's say an Italian, an English, a Swedish, a German and a Serbian...and it's not the starting of a joke!) sitting in a pub and talking about music or sports using English as the vehicle of communication.

Translanguaging is a dynamic process whereby different multilingual speakers (let's use the same protagonists we used above) utilize their languages as an integrated communication system. It is more connected to communication rather than to language itself.

“Translanguaging and transnational literacies in multilingual classrooms: A bilingual lens”.

- International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism 15(3), pp: 261- 278



Why translanguaging?

- Promotes deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter.
- Helps the development of the weaker language
- Facilitate home-school links
- (Baker, 2001, 2006, 2011)



“Translanguaging is the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential.”

Ofelia García (2009: 140)

What is Translanguaging?

A useful concept for scholars and teachers?!

Code - Mixing Vs. Code - Switching

NEW!

Cons:
* Teachers should separate the languages all the time rather than mixing the different

Pros:
* Students feel free from undergoing

“Multiple discursive practice.” (García, 2009)
- Systematic, strategic way that assist multilingual speakers in making meaning, shaping experiences, and gaining deeper understanding and knowledge of the languages in use and the content being taught. (Cenoz ' Gorter, 2011)

Example of Translanguaging in a classroom (w/ English ' Spanish)

Yan Ming Huang
Natalia Restrepo
Li Fang Zheng

What is really interesting about Translanguaging is that it is deeply connected to the history of bilingualism and it promotes a deeper understanding of the topic as well as it helps the development of the weaker language.



In my experience as a bilingual teacher I had the chance of experiencing both ELF and Translanguaging.

My students usually speak both with each other (in class) and with peers of foreign schools (thanks to eTwinning projects).

Sometimes, especially in the first years, it was funny to see how something happened naturally.

There were experiences of Translanguaging and code switching too.

One funny example is by Lorenzo (now in class 5 A), who, in year 2, while studying and talking about the countryside and farm life, said “Pigsty is *maialaio*”. Of course, he had the specific word and its meaning, yet it was funny how he used the correct word (*pigsty*) for English and a wrong one for Italian (which, of course, is his native language).

Translanguaging in this study

“Flexibility of [bilingual] learners to take control of their own learning, to self-regulate when and how to language, depending on the context in which they’re being asked to perform” (Garcia & Li, 2014, p. 80).

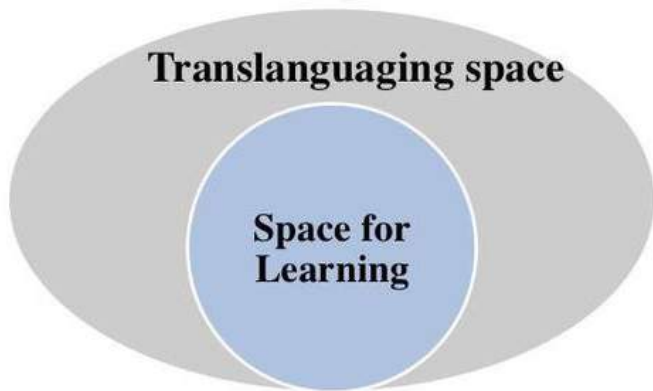
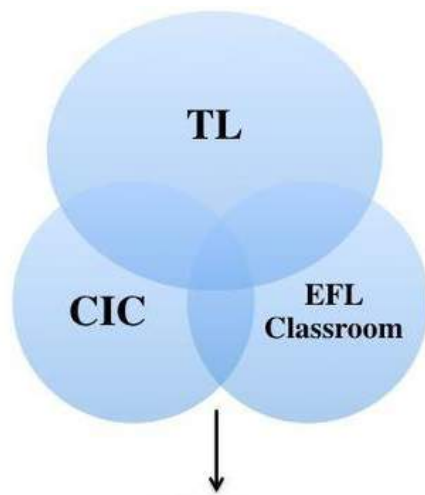
“The meaning of the message is not clear without both languages” (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p.108). Translanguaging can be used both as a pedagogic strategy and as a resource for identity performance.

Canagarajah (2013) labels performative competence the ability of translingual speakers—and in particular learners—of using strategically their language resources. Being practice based, performative competence requires creativity, strategic thinking, alertness and learners’ ability to respond to the context.

Benefits of Code-switching and Translanguaging

- Balances the sense of “power” created in English-only classrooms which infer that English is the dominant and more important language. (Palmer & Martinez, 2016).
- When given the opportunity to use translanguaging in meaningful ways, bilinguals increase their comprehension and understanding of the text. (Hopewell, n.d.).





What is translanguaging?

Translanguaging allows children to connect their previous life experience to new learning.



A complex diagram showing the etymology of the word 'Britain' and the word 'flood' from a quote in 'The Times'. The quote is: "Britain can't be expected to take in a flood of displaced people that will alter the cultural balance of the country for ever".

- 'Britain' is annotated with: Roman word for the island, Apostrophes borrowed from French usage, Latin origin.
- 'flood' is annotated with: Germanic/Dutch origin.
- 'country' is annotated with: French name.
- 'Lions' is annotated with: Lions come from Africa.
- 'ever' is annotated with: Family came from Russia/Poland.
- 'More Latin/French' is annotated with: More Latin/French.
- 'Mela...' is annotated with: Mela... (likely a reference to a specific source).
- 'symbol' is annotated with: symbol taken from: Swastika/Portuguese.
- 'Unicorn??' is annotated with: Unicorn??.

The diagram also includes a portrait of a woman and the logo for 'THE TIMES'.