



TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES IN TRANSLANGUAGING CLASSROOMS

**ANAMARIA WELP &
RUBERVAL FRANCO MACIEL (EDS)**

editora
**ZO
UK**

**ANAMARIA WELP
RUBERVAL FRANCO MACIEL
(EDS)**

TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES IN TRANSLANGUAGING CLASSROOMS

Porto Alegre • 2024 • 1ª edição

editora
**ZO
UK**

2024 © Anamaria Welp and Ruberval Franco Maciel

Projeto gráfico e edição: Editora Zouk
Imagem capa: Pawel Czerwinski @ Unplash

International Cataloging Data in Publication (CIP) according ISBD
Prepared by Vagner Rodolfo da Silva - CRB-8/9410

T722

Transformative Practices in Translanguaging Classrooms [electronic resource]
/ organized by Anamaria Welp, Ruberval Franco Maciel. - Porto Alegre, RS :
Zouk, 2024.
EPUB ; 2,5 MB

ISBN: 978-65-5778-143-2 (EBOOK)

1. English language. 2. Learning. I. Welp, Anamaria. II. Maciel, Ruberval
Franco. III. Title.

2024-1753

CDD 420
CDU 811.111



direitos desta edição reservados à
Editora Zouk
Av. Cristóvão Colombo, 1343 sl. 203
90560-004 – Floresta – Porto Alegre – RS – Brasil
f. 51. 3024.7554

www.editorazouk.com.br

Translanguaging pedagogy in linguistically diverse school contexts: suggested guidelines for the design of an instructional unit

Fernanda Rubbo Kalil (UFRGS)

Nathália Oliveira da Silva Menezes (UFRR)

Anamaria Welp (UFRGS)

Brazil's continental dimensions (it concentrates 50% of South America's population) reflect the country's linguistic diversity. Besides the named languages learned in schools (mostly English and Spanish) and the immigration languages, there are approximately 180 indigenous languages spoken in the country. However, Portuguese is the predominant language in all Brazilian territories. As it borders ten South American countries, multilingualism is out in the open in its border states. For this reason, it is common for children and youth from bordering countries to attend schools in Brazil.

Recently, Venezuela's aggravated economic, political, and social crisis has contributed to an increase in the number of Venezuelan migrants to Brazil. From 2013 to mid-2019, 176,136 regularizations of the entry of Venezuelans into Brazil were registered through Roraima, of this total, 69.7% were requested through the refugee modality and 30.3% through the permanent resident modality (FGV DAPP, 2020). This intense migratory movement has resulted in the increasing presence of Venezuelan students in Brazilian schools in the last few years, especially in border states, such as Roraima, located in northern Brazil bordering Venezuela to the north and northwest and Guyana to the east.

Data from the Municipal Education Department of Boa Vista, the capital city of Roraima, a northern Brazilian state, shows that the number of Venezuelan students enrolled in municipal schools in the city went from 2,033 in 2017 to 4,403 in 2019. These children face several challenges when arriving at Brazilian schools. To begin with, they encounter an unknown universe to which they need to adapt since there is already an established school routine. This adaptation involves cultural, social, and normative issues and, above all, language adjustments to prevent discrimination from Brazilian students.

Therefore, translanguaging presents itself as an important critical pedagogical proposal in this setting since it is grounded on linguistically marginalized students. As a practical theory of language (Li Wei, 2017), translanguaging

is concerned with speakers' creative and dynamic language practices. It rejects hegemonic political and educational ideologies (Beiler, 2020) and welcomes students' full linguistic repertoires (García, 2019) into the classroom.

The instructional unit (IU) presented here was designed for the public school context typical of the city of Boa Vista. Roraima shares borders with Venezuela to the north and northwest, and English Guiana to the east, making it a region historically conducive to international immigration. With this geographical backdrop in mind, the instructional unit presented here has been tailored for the public school environment typical of Boa Vista city.

In this context, this chapter presents suggestions for the design of an instructional unit (IU) intended for Spanish classes in Boa Vista public schools that receive Brazilian local Portuguese speakers and Venezuelan immigrant Spanish speakers. It should be noted that the IU may also be adapted to places where students have a similar profile to the ones in Roraima, where schools also have Brazilian and immigrant students, speakers of different languages.

Language as social action and the notion of repertoire

Studies on translanguaging and bilingualism support that the language classroom should be a space in which students have the possibility to use and explore their different linguistic, cultural, and social repertoires to signify what is proposed by the teacher (García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; García & Kleifgen, 2018; Seltzer & García, 2020). In this perspective, when interpreting written and oral texts in different languages, students think and discuss the content, interact among them and produce their own texts. In addition, translanguaging pedagogy allows students to use their cultural and linguistic repertoires and make connections between their home, their community and the literacy practices introduced at school (García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017).

In the translanguaging classroom, all present languages deserve the same degree of importance, thus there is an effort to break down the barriers raised by social hierarchies. Students are encouraged to use their whole linguistic repertoire to make meaning of texts, and teachers, in turn, take advantage of all resources present in students' repertoires to leverage their learning.

Prior to implementing translanguaging pedagogy, however, teachers need to reflect on their view of language, especially because their beliefs will influence their stance and consequently be represented in their choices of material, task design, and assessment. Thus, grounded on the assumption that language is used to perform actions in the world (Clark, 2000), the notion of language adopted here is a heteroglossic one (Bakhtin, 1998) in which the

language classroom is a space where students make meaning of new language resources by exploring the linguistic and cultural traits that were already present in their repertoires. Therefore, unlike what is usually expected in traditional language teaching contexts, where language is the overarching goal, in our perspective, all the languages present in the classroom should be used to link emerging linguistic understandings to conceptual knowledge.

In line with the view that language practices are heteroglossic and enable people to do a myriad of things, such as tell stories, ask questions, give information, express opinion, etc., Blommaert and Backus (2013) note that the linguistic repertoire includes diverse “means of speaking,” (p. 11) constituting linguistic means (varieties of language), cultural means (genres, styles), and social media (norms for the production and understanding of language). The linguistic repertoire is developed in different ways throughout life, such as a process of growth, of sequential learning of certain registers, styles, genres, and language varieties, and, as such, it can be unlearned or modified over time (Blommaert & Backus, 2013).

Busch’s (2017, 2021) perspective of linguistic repertoire goes beyond language ideologies and reflects the lived experience through language. To the author, the notion of linguistic repertoire is constituted from the articulation of three fronts: interactional, post-structuralist and phenomenological. From an interactional point of view, the vision from linguistic anthropology and interactional linguistics observes the subject from their linguistic and social interaction with others. From a poststructuralist perspective, it examines the subject as constituted by historical and political discourses. Finally, the phenomenological understanding investigates the subject considering the bodily and emotional prerequisites to express and experience language.

Considering that students in school settings such as the one in Roraima have a complex linguistic repertoire, in which named languages are not compartmentalized in their brains, or a tool that can be simply opened and used, it is important to value all the languages, mainly for educational purposes (Yip & García, 2015). Thus, the use of translanguaging in the classroom may be an alternative to promote social justice among the students (García, 2019), including the local ones and those from migrant backgrounds.

The translanguaging perspective adopted here is primarily inspired by García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017). By finding common ground between the context described by the authors and that of the schools in Roraima, we believe that the model they propose may be successfully adapted to the reality considered for this chapter. Based on this, the following section presents the

guidelines for the design of an IU based on the Translanguaging Instructional Design Cycle (García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017).

The Translanguaging Instructional Design Cycle (TIDC)

The Translanguaging Instructional Design Cycle (TIDC) proposed by García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017) is a model that assists in the use of translanguaging in the classroom and includes five steps: *explorar*, *evaluar*, *imaginar*, *presentar*, and *implementar* (see Figure 1). Each stage of the cycle offers possibilities for the design of tasks that contemplate and explore students' linguistic repertoires from a translanguaging lens. Below each step of the cycle is detailed and suggestions for its use in language education are presented.

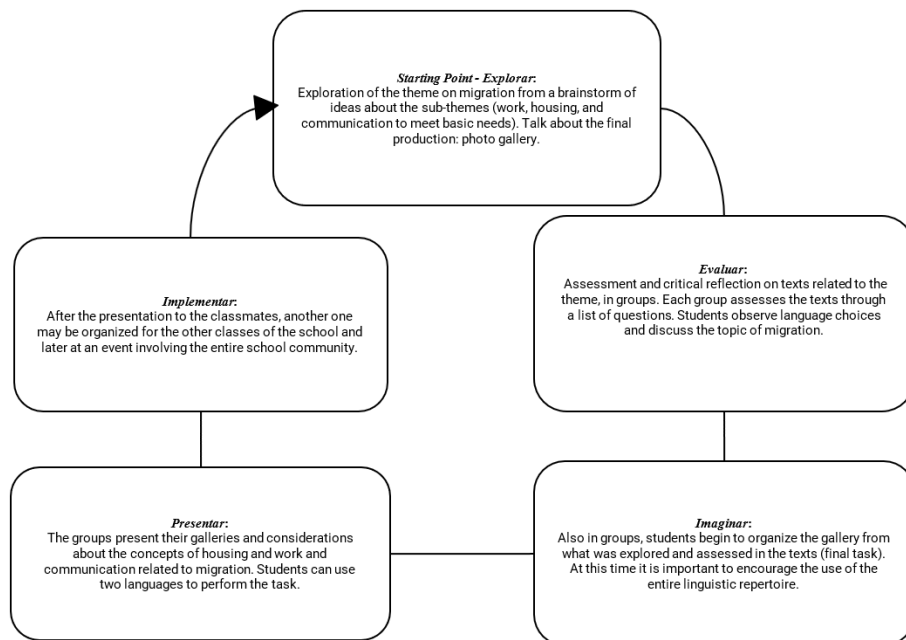
1. ***Explorar***: This step encourages students to explore a given topic or subject area. Teachers must value students' interests and previous knowledge and help them familiarize themselves with the theme to be worked on. To develop this stage in the classroom, teachers may select a theme that is relevant to students' lives and, from it, offer multiple ways of approaching the content, using different types of text in more than one language and of different modalities. For example, they may mix films, news, social media posts, poems, songs, among others because students will understand a theme more deeply if they can visualize it from different perspectives. The teacher can also value the languages present in the classroom by providing materials in all of them. It is important to emphasize that this stage can take place throughout the development of the entire IU, through different types of tasks or input.
2. ***Evaluar***: As students explore, they evaluate what they learn. Evaluating is a stage of TIDC that helps students strengthen their ability to read texts critically. The strategies used by the teacher should motivate students to metalinguistically evaluate the content being taught and to understand the discourse used in the texts worked in the classes. This critical evaluation leads to connections with texts that circulate outside the school and with situations of everyday life. To encourage classroom assessment, teachers can divide students into groups and ask them to express their thoughts and analyze the texts being worked on. The group may work through a conversation, text annotation, and answers to a list of questions delivered by the teacher. It is important to value students' linguistic repertoire by encouraging them to express themselves freely, without limiting them to use a single language.

3. **Imaginar:** This step allows teachers to create new ideas and ways for students to use translanguaging to learn. Students are encouraged to imagine something new from what they have learned in the *explorar* and *imaginar* steps. It is a time when students are free to perform tasks, translanguaging and using their whole linguistic repertoire in the classroom. This step can happen in group work when each student will activate aspects of their linguistic repertoire to interact with classmates and perform the task: for example, synthesize what was discussed, assist classmates in the elaboration of concepts, propose a paragraph of a text, a poem, etc. To *imaginar* means to highlight that the students make use of the entire linguistic repertoire, using all languages present in the classroom to do what was requested.
4. **Presentar:** This stage involves presentations in and outside of the classroom (i.e., for other classes in school or for the school community), whether presentations in pairs, groups, or individual ones. Students may adjust the choices they make about the use of language to the aimed interlocutors. They may present to different audiences and use different languages. This stage proposes that presentations preferably be performed collaboratively, which may reduce the anxiety of students by sharing responsibilities. Another important point is to allow students to practice oral language with an authentic purpose. It is advisable to encourage students to use their complete linguistic repertoire at the time of their presentation. Teachers can provide support for presentations through prompts with specific expressions to help students with the language they are not familiar with, for example, “Our presentation is about...” / “Nossa apresentação é sobre...” or “This picture illustrates...” / “Esta imagem ilustra...”.
5. **Implementar:** This step expands the work done in the classroom to audiences in other spaces and contexts. The teacher may suggest that students produce posters and paste them in strategic places at school: for example, work on healthy eating may be fixed in the school cafeteria. The class may also perform actions in the neighborhood, or post the results of tasks on social networks, blogs or websites to take their productions to different interlocutors outside the classroom walls and thus interact with the world making their work more meaningful.

To illustrate how the TIDC can be implemented, the cycle below was developed by the authors from the theme: “Perspectives of migrants arriving in a host country: work, housing, and communication to meet basic needs”. The

following section contains the justification for the theme's choice, the guidelines for the application of the task sequence, and examples of tasks to be explored in each of the steps.

Figure 1: TIDC - Proposal About Migration.



Source: The authors based on García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017)

Translanguaging pedagogy guidelines and the migration theme

The theme of the IU proposed here was selected because it is prominent and relevant to the students of Roraima and places with similar characteristics, where classrooms are composed of speakers of majority and minority languages, because of the increasing presence of immigrant students in the local schools. Additionally, the topic is highly discussed in the international media, in view of the significant migration flows in different countries.

It should be noted that the IU was primarily designed for high school students to be used in a Spanish class taught in public schools such as the ones in Boa Vista, but it may be adapted to other grade levels. Due to the flow of Spanish-speaking immigrants in this type of school, Spanish is part of the school curriculum even for students who come from Spanish-speaking countries. Since the IU has not been used yet, our purpose is to offer suggestions to

language teachers in different contexts of action. For this reason, no language or task is specified but suggestions of how to use it are offered.

Instructional Unit “Perspectives of migrants arriving in a host country: work, housing, and communication to meet basic needs”

Translanguaging Instructional Design Cycle (TIDC) Guidelines for the teachers
Explorar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring video clips or short videos to the classroom with the audio in one language and the captions in any other language spoken in the classroom. • Propose the exploration of interviews from different media outlets, written and oral, that express different points of view on the theme of migration, with immigrants or people who somehow are involved with the theme. • Display photos related to the content around the classroom to illustrate some of the challenges immigrants go through when they arrive in a new country and have students walk in the gallery and use any language for discussion. • Have students brainstorm the topic, allowing them to use both the target language and other languages to respond. • Write the answers on the board, translating them into the languages being used (e.g., Portuguese-Spanish, English-Portuguese). • Invite people from outside the school, immigrant students’ family members or friends, or people who are involved with immigration, to talk about the topic, using their own language practices. <p style="text-align: center;">Suggestions of how to work the tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start the class with a brainstorm about the perspective of migrants arriving in the country, dividing the board into the following sub-themes: how to find work, how to seek housing, and how to communicate to meet basic needs. • Write students’ answers on the board using all the present languages. • After this, ask if anyone has any real experience lived by themselves or by anyone they know of to share. • Divide the class into three groups and assign each group one of the sub-themes (work, housing, and essential communication). • As a final task, guide each group to gather and prepare a gallery of photos and posters with texts on the sub-theme they are in charge of to explain to visitors what the group’s perspectives of migrants are. • If you have contact with any immigrant, invite them to share their experience in the classroom but use your own discretion about inviting speakers into the classroom based on the potential for discrimination in different contexts. • It is important to allow language interactions to occur freely, without restricting language practices. • Agree with the students on the questions in advance, offering language structures to facilitate conversation.

Evaluat

- Offer different texts on the topic and ask students to analyze them by comparing language structures, content, and perspectives. Question about convergent and divergent information, which was not clear, what the authors' intention/position is, etc.
- Propose that students conduct a critical reflection on language choices and different opinions on migration.
- Request external research on the topic, suggest search sources or ask students to search freely on the internet.
- Draw up a roadmap of questions on the topic to encourage critical discussion.

Suggestions of how to work the tasks

- As students work in groups, offer different texts on the theme for each group: newspaper articles, comments on social networks, reports on experiences, announcements, and others, and ask students to critically analyze the texts that will serve as input for the design of the final task. To facilitate critical analysis, provide a list of questions and a model of what should be built at the end of the analysis (i.e., a summary, topicalized ideas, a poem, or something more creative).

Imaginar

- Have students work in groups or pairs to discuss, plan, rewrite, or review a task.
- Provide templates of what students can create: a poster, an article, a video, etc. These models can be in all the languages present in the classroom.
- Encourage students to produce materials such as tweets, posts on social media, talk shows, plays, etc. in all the languages present in the classroom.

Suggestions of how to work the tasks

- In this step, students can finally begin building the gallery. They can organize the posters, images, and what they will exhibit at the end. It is important to encourage the use of their entire linguistic repertoire. The gallery may even be multilingual.

Presenter

- Give students time to prepare for their presentations and express themselves using their entire language repertoire. Then, give feedback and guide the presentation.
- Make collaborative presentations in which different students take responsibility. This responsibility must be adequately differentiated according to their knowledge, literacy degree, and language dominance. Provide an outline of what is being requested in the presentation.
- Ask students to create multilingual presentations, using translanguaging in text, images, etc. Encourage students to express themselves in the best way in the target language, but allow them to expand, clarify, or explain their ideas in other languages.

Suggestions of how to work the tasks

- The teacher can walk past each group, listen to students' ideas for the gallery, and provide feedback according to the objectives of the task.
- Before assembling the gallery in the classroom, a large circle can be formed for students to present the critical analyses they produced in the *evaluar* stage.
- Students then assemble their galleries in the classroom and a rotation can be arranged for each group to present their work, while the others pay attention to what is being presented.
- The presentations can contemplate aspects of translanguaging by allowing the use of students' entire linguistic repertoire.

Implementar

- Ask students to interview family members or acquaintances about the subject being addressed.
- Share the result of the activities developed on some public websites, such as social networks, blogs, etc., considering the choice of language practices for specific audiences.
- Encourage students' work to be published outside school boundaries.

Suggestions of how to work the tasks

- After presenting to classmates, the teacher can invite other classes to attend another presentation and interact with students outside the classroom.
- It is possible to organize this presentation at some collective event at the school or organize a larger event with the presence of the students' family members and the community.
- It is also possible to display the material produced around the school, so more students will have access to what was produced.
- If students have access to the Internet, it's interesting to create an informative post about migration to be shared on the school's website or Facebook page.

Final considerations

This chapter sought to present suggested guidelines for the construction of an instructional unit for language education based on translanguaging pedagogy. Following the TIDC model developed by García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017), the text exemplified an IU on the theme of migration, which involves immigrants' perspectives in relation to work, housing, and communication to meet basic needs. The theme is relevant for the student population of both Venezuelan immigrant students learning Portuguese and Brazilian local students learning Spanish. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of the use of translanguaging pedagogy by teachers to support their practice so that the learning objectives are achieved in a setting where more than one named language is present in the classroom.

It is important to highlight that the purpose of this chapter was to present the TIDC model as a pedagogical resource to facilitate the understanding of teachers who wish to support their practice through a translanguaging lens. This model may be adapted to suit other student populations and contexts. Overall, by grounding the proposal in translanguaging pedagogy, teachers welcome the linguistic diversity present in the classroom and highlight what the students have rather than what they lack in regard to the whole range of their linguistic repertoires.

References

BAKHTIN, M. *O discurso no romance*. In.: *Questões de literatura e de estética: a teoria do romance* (1934-1935). Trad. Bernadini et al. 4. ed. S o Paulo: Unesp, p. 71-210, 1998

BEILER, I. R. *Marked and unmarked translanguaging in accelerated, mainstream, and sheltered English classroom*. Multilingua. doi: 10.1515/multi-2020- 0022, 2020.

BUSCH, B. *Expanding the Notion of the Linguistic Repertoire: On the Concept of Spracherleben—The Lived Experience of Language*. Review of Applied Linguistics. Volume 38, Issue 3, p. 340–358, 2017.

DEPARTAMENTO DE POLÍCIA FEDERAL – DPF. Sistema de Tráfego Internacional (STI). Brasília, a., 2020. Acesso em: <https://portaldeimigracao.mj.gov.br/pt/dados/microdados>.

FOLHA DE BOA VISTA, 2019. Acesso em: <https://boavistaja.com/local/boa-vista/2019/05/17/dobra-numero-de-criancas-venezuelanas-nas-escolas-de-boa-vista/>.

FGV DAPP. *A economia de Roraima e o fluxo venezuelano [recurso eletrônico]: evidências e subsídios para políticas públicas* / Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Diretoria de Análise de Políticas Públicas. - Rio de Janeiro, 2020. Acesso em: https://www.acnur.org/portugues/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Economia-de-Roraima-e-o-Fluxo-Venezuelano_-30-01-2020-v2.pdf

CLARK, H. H.. O uso da linguagem. In: *Cadernos de Tradução* n° 9. Porto Alegre: UFRGS, jan-mar p. 49-71, 2000.

GARCÍA, O. *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: a global perspective*. MA: Wiley/Blackwell, 2009.

GARCÍA, O. *Bilingual Education in the 21st century: A Global Perspective*. John Willian & Sons, 2011.

GARCÍA, O.; JOHNSON, S. I.; SELTZER, Kate. *The translanguaging classroom*. Philadelphia: Caslon, 2017.

GARCÍA, O; KLEIFGEN, J. A. *Educating Emergent Bilinguals: Policies, Programs, and Practices for English Learners*. Teachers College Press, 2018.

GARCÍA, O; KLEYN, T. Translanguaging with multilingual students: Learning from classroom moments, García, O. & Kleyn, T. (Eds.): New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.

GARCÍA, O. Decolonizing foreign, second, heritage and first languages. In: Macedo, D. (Ed.) *Decolonizing foreign language education: the misleading of English and other imperial languages*. New York: Routledge, 2019.

YIP, J., GARCÍA, O. *Translinguagens: recomendações para educadores*. Iberoamérica Social: revista-red de estudios sociales IX, pp. 164 - 177, 2018.