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Translanguaging: developing its conceptualisation and contextualisation

Gwyn Lewis*, Bryn Jones and Colin Baker

School of Education, Bangor University & ESRC Bilingualism Centre at Bangor University, Bangor, UK

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Following from Lewis, Jones, and Baker (this issue), this article analyses the relationship between the new concept of “translanguaging” particularly in the classroom context and more historic terms such as code-switching and translation, indicating differences in (socio)linguistic and ideological understandings as well as in classroom processes. The article considers the pedagogic nature of translanguaging in terms of language proficiency of children, developmental use in emergent bilinguals, variations in input and output, relationship to the subject/discipline curriculum, deepening learning through language development, cognitive development, and content understanding, and the role of children, including Deaf children, and in the use of translanguaging in educational activity. The conceptualisation of translanguaging is also shown to be ideological.

Keywords: translanguaging; bilingual education; Wales; translation; code-switching

Introduction

This article is a sequel to Lewis, Jones, and Baker (this issue), which considers the origins and development of the term “translanguaging” within an educational context. This paper focuses on conceptualising translanguaging including in relation to other flexible language arrangements such as code-switching, co-languaging, and translation, and then to its theoretical pedagogic attributes. As a developing idea, the initial characterisation is: “Translanguaging is the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages” (Baker, 2011, p. 288). In the classroom, translanguaging tries to draw on all the linguistic resources of the child to maximise understanding and achievement. Thus, both languages are used in a dynamic and functionally integrated manner to organise and mediate mental processes in understanding, speaking, literacy, and, not least, learning.

The contemporary introduction of the term “translanguaging” begs the question of how it relates to, is different to, or significantly advances on similar terms used in language education. We start with a modern concept of “dynamic bilingualism” (García & Kleifgen, 2010) and its relationship to translanguaging.

*Corresponding author. Email: w.g.lewis@bangor.ac.uk

Dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging

In order to capture the linguistic complexity of the multilingual school and outside, Ofelia García (2009a) has recently introduced the concept of *dynamic bilingualism* as a general and holistic concept of which translanguaging is a process. Similar to García (2009a), terms such as “metrolingualism” (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2011), “polylinguaging” and “polylingual languaging” (Jørgensen, 2008; Jørgensen, Karrebæk, Madsen, & Møller, 2011), “heteroglossia” (Bakhtin, 1981), “codemeshing” and “translingual practice” (Canagarajah, 2011; Blackledge, 2011), “multilanguaging” (Nguyen, 2012), and “hybrid language practices” (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejeda, 1999) have tried to capture a perspective on bilingualism that is much more complex but also grounded in daily language usage in communities. Many of these terms (including translanguaging) have “languaging” as part of their root. “Languaging” is regarded as the holistic process through which we gain understanding, make sense, communicate, and shape our knowledge and experience through language (Swain, Lapkin, Knouzi, Suzuki, & Brooks, 2009). However, the terminology list above reveals the recent profusion of a multiplicity of overlapping terminology. Do they all refer to the same concept, or are there subtle variations and differences, or even different concepts? The danger, in breaking new ground, is that we are setting up a maze of terminology.

For Li Wei (2011a), translanguaging and the idea of translanguaging space derive from the psycholinguistic notion of languaging, which moves on language as a noun to language as a verb thus stressing an ongoing psycholinguistic process.

Translanguaging is both going between different linguistic structures and systems, including different modalities (speaking, writing, signing, listening, reading, remembering) and going beyond them. It includes the full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users for purposes that transcend the combination of structures, the alternation between systems, the transmission of information and the representation of values, identities and relationships. The act of translanguaging then is transformative in nature; it creates a social space for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, beliefs and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance, and make it into a lived experience. (p. 1223)

For García and Kleifgen (2010) and Blackledge and Creese (2010), translanguaging (and dynamic bilingualism) move further than the concept of “multi-competence” as proposed by Cook (2002) and “holistic bilingualism” (Grosjean, 1985). Each of those latter concepts was primarily psychological and linguistic, while García and Kleifgen and Blackledge and Creese portray translanguaging as essentially sociolinguistic and ecological, and can only be properly understood as negotiated and interactional, contextualised and situated, emergent and altering, and with ideological and identity constituents, all of which are enacted in the classroom.

Such a viewpoint on translanguaging also challenges the concept of *diglossia*, where the two languages of a bilingual have different uses and functions. For example, a bilingual child may use one language in the classroom but another language in the home and for religion. Translanguaging calls the concept of diglossia into question as:

unlike diglossia, languages are no longer assigned separate territories or even separate functions, but they may co-exist in the same space. Another difference is that languages are not placed in a hierarchy according to whether they have more or less power. In reality, ethnolinguistic groups do not have strict divisions between their languages, and there is much overlap ... As we have said, translanguaging characterizes most encounters among bilinguals. (García, 2009a, pp. 78–79)

Introducing the term “transglossia” to describe societal bilingualism in a globalised world, García (2009a) views it as a stable, and yet dynamic, communicative network with many languages in *functional interrelationship*, instead of being assigned separate functions. “Given the changing ways in which languages now function and in which people translanguage, complete compartmentalization between languages of instruction may not always be appropriate” (García, 2009a, p. 79). García (in press) suggests that bilingual and multilingual classrooms in the 21st century are moving from diglossic (the separation or compartmentalisation of languages) to transglossic arrangements (flexible concurrent language use). For example, pupils with different linguistic profiles are involved in group work and often ignore the language use norms of the classroom, using languages flexibly to support their understandings and building conceptual and linguistic knowledge. For García (2009a, p. 291), such bilingual arrangements can be grouped into three categories, namely strict separation, flexible convergence, and flexible multiplicity. Duverger (2005, p. 93) refers to “macro-alternation” (keeping the two languages separate) and “micro-alternation” (the use of flexible language for instruction), whilst Creese and Blackledge (2011) refer to “separate bilingualism” and “flexible bilingualism” to describe language arrangements in complementary schools in England.

Furthermore, Jones and Lewis (in press), in empirical research on 100 “bilingual” lessons in Wales, identified that language arrangements can be categorised as follows:

- (1) predominantly monolingual usage for bilingualism (e.g., monolingual for first language [L1] Welsh pupils);
- (2) concurrent usage of two languages for bilingualism (e.g., translanguaging);
- (3) blend of monolingual usage and concurrent usage of two languages for bilingualism (concurrent language use, e.g., support for second language [L2] learner in a monolingual lesson).

This is expanded in Figure 1.

Code-switching and translanguaging

The historic construct to which translanguaging appears closely connected is code-switching in the classroom (Chitera, 2009; Kamwangamalu, 2010). That is, teachers and pupils use both languages in the same “sentence” in classroom exchanges. Cook (2001, p. 408) frames code-switching as a highly skilled “bilingual mode” activity in which both L1 and L2 are used simultaneously, including intrasentential and intersentential switches, rather than the “monolingual mode” in which they are used separately. Furthermore, Wei (2011b) maintains that “codeswitching is not simply a combination and mixture of two languages but creative strategies by the language user” (p. 374). This initially seems the same as translanguaging.

Jones and Lewis (in press), in a study of language arrangements within bilingual classrooms in Wales, identify instances of unplanned code-switching with teachers responding to language use of pupils irrespective of the intended language policy of the lesson (e.g., the intended policy for instruction by the teacher is English, but a pupil responds in Welsh and the teacher goes on to give him feedback in Welsh). While the original idea of translanguaging was mainly concerned with intentional and planned two-language usage, field research reported in Lewis, Jones, and Baker

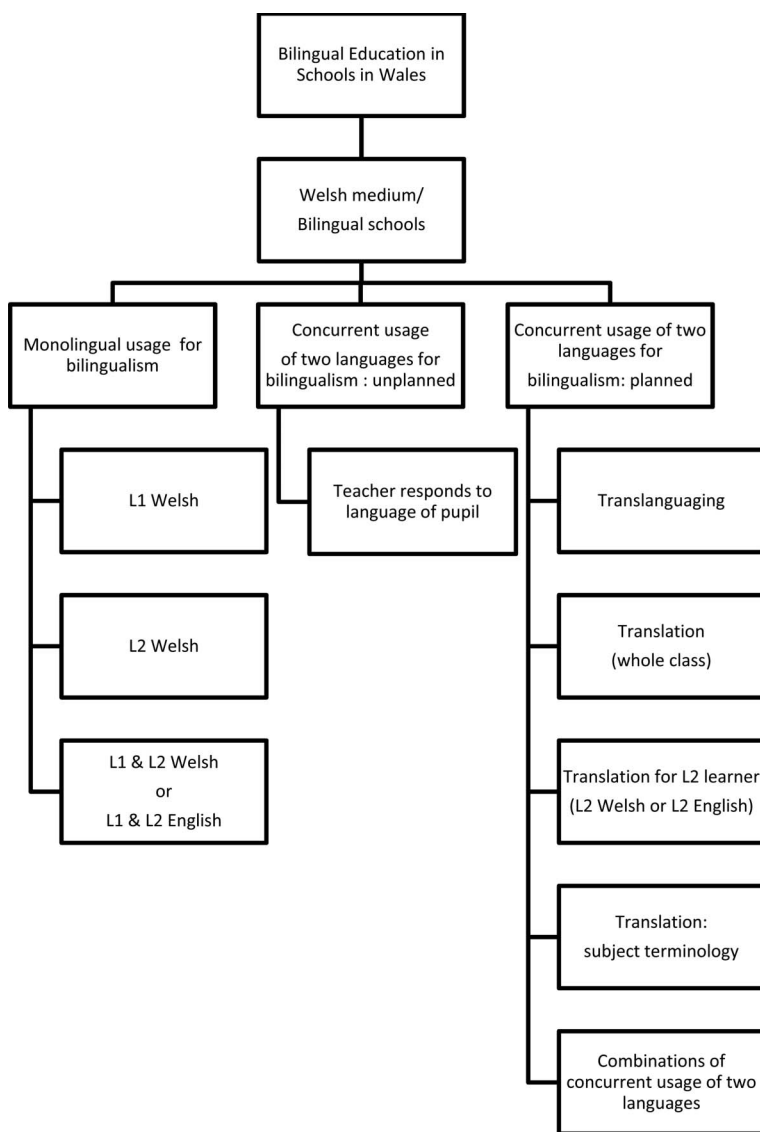


Figure 1. Language arrangements within bilingual schools in Wales.

(in press) also found evidence of frequent spontaneous translanguaging, with pupils themselves utilising both their languages to maximise understanding and performance.

On the other hand, “responsible” code-switching (García, 2009a; Van der Walt, Mabule, & De Beer, 2001) is planned code-switching by the teacher to enhance the students’ cognitive skills and “to clarify or reinforce lesson material” (García, 2009a, p. 299). It is a scaffolding technique in bilingual classrooms, making the L2 more comprehensible, and teachers must check both the quantity and quality of their code-switching. This type of code-switching can be used to develop students’ metalinguistic understandings and metacognitive awareness (García, 2009a, p. 301).

There is clearly much overlap between code-switching and translanguaging, with the former a term from linguistics which analyses the speech of bilinguals, while translanguaging is essentially sociolinguistic, ecological, and situated. García (2009a) maintains that translanguaging “goes beyond what has been termed code-switching... although it includes it, as well as other kinds of bilingual language use and bilingual contact” (p. 45). There is also the ideological movement in that code-switching has associations with language separation while translanguaging celebrates and approves flexibility in language use and the permeability of learning through two or more languages. Particularly in the bilingual classroom, translanguaging as a concept tries to move acceptable practice away from language separation, and thus has ideological – even political – associations.

Translation and translanguaging

In classrooms with children of different dominant languages, a teacher may translate from one language to another so that children understand content in their stronger language. While translanguaging is the concurrent use of two languages, translation is more about language separation, scaffolding, and working mainly in the stronger language. In a classroom with bilingual children, translation may be used so that the weaker academic language (e.g., English) used for content transmission is translated into the children’s stronger (e.g., home) language to ensure understanding and the learning of a concept. However, in practice in classrooms, the two approaches may often be used contemporaneously.

In recent research on translanguaging, Jones and Lewis (in press) identified that in the language arrangements utilised by teachers and pupils in bilingual classrooms in Wales, there was a predominance of a combination of translation and translanguaging. In this 5-year study, translation was categorised into the following groups:

- **Translation (for the whole class)**, particularly found in classes containing a mixture of Welsh L1 and L2 learners. The teacher switches from one language selectively during instruction to explain subject content. The aim is to ensure understanding of content among all pupils but not necessarily strict 50:50 translation.
- **Translation for L2 learner** (L2 Welsh or L2 English) includes responsible code-switching when the teacher explains aspects of the lesson to some pupils in their first language which is different from the intended language medium of the lesson.
- **Translation of subject-related terminology**, which can be identified as a scaffolding approach to help pupils complete tasks undertaken in the classroom, for example, the teacher provides curriculum scaffolding in English to aid understanding in Welsh medium lessons.

Translation practices to support pupils’ bilingualism have also been identified in other contexts. For example, Creese and Blackledge (2011) refer to “bilingual label quests” being used in complementary school settings in England. For example, a term is given in Chinese (*panwang*), and the explanation is given in English.

The “translation” performs a pedagogic strategy of accomplishing the task of new vocabulary teaching, keeping the lesson moving forward. There are many variations of

bilingual label quests in complementary school classrooms. Sometimes the teacher makes the bilingual label quest and also self answers; at other times, the teacher asks in one language and expects the students to provide the answer in the other language. In complementary schools, we see examples of bilingual quests from English to the community language and also from community language into English ... These bilingual quests are common in the bilingual pedagogy of complementary schools and are often used to annotate future teaching texts. (Creese & Blackledge, 2011, p. 17)

García and Kleifgen (2010, p. 64) refer to “acts of translation” (documented by Manyak, 2004), in a primary English as a second language (ESL) classroom of Spanish speakers in California, which play an important role in making meaning accessible for emergent bilinguals and fostering their English literacy development:

Because of the large number of Latino emergent bilinguals and the large number of Spanish speakers in the United States, there are English-only classrooms in which the teacher, with some knowledge of Spanish, can use a preview-view-review pedagogy that is common in some bilingual classrooms. Although English is the official language of the lesson, the teacher gives the gist of the lesson in Spanish, making the message comprehensible to the emergent bilinguals. Many times a written synopsis is given to students in Spanish before the teacher starts to teach. Other times, the written materials that teachers distribute are annotated in Spanish or contain translations. (García & Kleifgen, 2010, p. 64)

Although translation can occur during translanguaging activities, Williams (2002) emphasised the difference between the two processes. Translation tends to separate languages, emphasising that one language is preferred academically even if it is temporarily the weaker language. In contrast, translanguaging attempts to utilise and strengthen both languages.

Co-languaging and translanguaging

García (2009a, p. 303) introduces “co-languaging” as a language arrangement under the umbrella term of “translanguaging”. She explains that “co-languaging” occurs when the curriculum content is delivered to different language groups simultaneously. Lewis (2010) refers to the context of such practices in secondary, further, and higher education in Wales:

such an arrangement is defined by Williams as “teaching and learning in a bilingual setting” as opposed to “bilingual teaching and learning” (ESCalate, 2002). Such “bilingual teaching situations” or “teaching and learning in bilingual settings” in the Welsh context can easily be identified as examples of what García labels “co-languaging” (p. 18).

In a primary school context, pupils often listen to books on tapes in the two languages, sometimes different pupils listening to different languages, other times the same pupils going back and forth to one or the other languages in co-languaging ways (García 2009a, p. 303). Similarly, co-languaging can be promoted through ICT, for example, a PowerPoint slide may present both languages on the screen, using the same content but using a different colour or different font for each language. Jones and Lewis (in press) consider “co-languaging in the bilingual classroom” as an example of “translation for the whole class”, that is, the teacher gives instruction to different groups in either Welsh or English, but all pupils can follow the teacher in

both languages. This is different to “co-linguaging in a bilingual setting”, where the instructor addresses groups of students with only some members able to follow bilingual instruction.

Continuum of emergent scaffolding towards translanguaging

Language scaffolding is often needed to support bilingual pupils in the early stages of using the second language in a mainstream classroom. García (2009a) maintains that “the core of bilingual pedagogical strategies especially for emergent bilinguals in the beginning stages is ‘scaffolding’...” (p. 329). Furthermore, she claims that

in many classrooms for emergent bilinguals – both in ESL and bilingual education programs – educators extend Williams’ translanguaging pedagogy in complex ways. For example, many educators encourage emergent bilinguals to look up resources on the Web in their home languages, as students go back and forth from Web pages that are in one language or the other. In these classrooms, emergent bilinguals make frequent use of dictionaries and glossaries. Likewise, as we saw before, students frequently conduct discussions in languages other than English when reading in English. Frequently they write first in the home language, then translate the writing piece into English... Educators who understand the power of translanguaging encourage emergent bilinguals to use their home languages to think, reflect, and extend their inner speech. (García & Kleifgen, 2010, p. 63)

Describing some of the scaffolding structures for bilingual learning that provide contextual and linguistic support, for example, García (2009a, p. 331; see also García & Kleifgen, 2010, p. 67) refers to routines, contextualisation, modelling, bridging, and schema building, thematic planning, and multiple entry points. Jones and Lewis (in press) refer to “scaffolded translanguaging” for emergent bilinguals in classrooms. Translanguaging may be less obvious as a strategy when the language level of the pupil may be insufficient to assimilate content and engage in the process of learning. In such circumstances, pupils need language support if they are to participate in translanguaging tasks in the classroom.

So far, we have discussed the differences between translanguaging and similar terms to aid conceptual clarity and thus further defining and elucidating the nature of “translanguaging”. The following section goes on to explore pedagogic translanguaging in various contexts particularly to help explicate translanguaging in a classroom context. This derives from a 5-year UK Economic and Social Research Council research project in 29 schools in Wales (for details of the research methodology and main results, see Jones & Lewis, in press; Lewis et al., in press).

Contextualising pedagogic translanguaging

Developmental use of translanguaging

In developing translanguaging as a pedagogy, Williams (2000, 2002) concentrated mainly on pupils who had a reasonably good grasp of both languages. At the time, he argued that translanguaging may not be effective in a classroom when children are in the early stages of language learning since effective input and output in two languages depends on both languages being reasonably well-developed or approaching that stage (Lewis et al., in press). However, García (2009c) points to the potential use of translanguaging as a pedagogical tool in the initial stages of using the second language as well. She emphasises that languages should not be

viewed separately and refers to pupils who are learning a second language (i.e., those who are on different stages of becoming bilingual) as “emergent bilinguals”; it is not a process of learning one language and adding it to the other:

Emergent bilinguals do not acquire a separate additional language, but develop and integrate new language practices into a complex dynamic bilingual repertoire in which translanguaging is both the supportive context and the communicative web itself ... Much like a spider’s web which is the joint product of the web builder’s constructive activity and the supportive context in which it is built. (García, 2009c)

In this context, becoming bilingual is a dynamic process that refers to the different levels of proficiency an individual has in both languages (García, 2009a). In order to cross the linguistic boundaries, children need to use the variety of language, understanding, and learning styles that they possess. Thus, translanguaging can be seen as “normal” where speakers are situated on different points along the bilingual continua (García, 2009b).

This dynamic process is relevant in the context of pupils who are learning through immersion education techniques (Baker, 2011). Children utilise the skills acquired through their first language to guide and support their new dynamic bilingual development. The languages work with each other, integrating into a bilingual process that makes sense of the subject content. This creative integration aids subject understanding and educational development.

Developing the use of translanguaging in emergent bilinguals can be further elucidated by the Welsh education context. Welsh-medium primary and secondary education in Wales includes pupils from a wide and varied linguistic spectrum (Lewis, 2008, p. 75). It is fairly common for the same school to have children from homes where only Welsh is spoken, other children from homes where some Welsh is spoken and who are varyingly bilingual, and others who have no contact with Welsh at home. According to 2011 figures, 38.2% of all primary school pupils were able to speak Welsh, but of these only 7.6% came from Welsh-speaking homes (Welsh Government, 2011, Table 7.6).

In Wales, classroom translanguaging from the majority language (English) to the minority language (Welsh) is much more evident than vice versa, with the emphasis placed on using majority-language resources to develop pupils’ language competence in the minority language. This contrasts with translanguaging pedagogies in other countries, for example, translanguaging from Spanish to develop English in classrooms in New York City, thus “building ... English proficiency using the home language as a scaffold” (García & Kleifgen, 2010, p. 63).

In discussing translanguaging practices among immigrant pupils in Wales, Brentnall, Cann, and Williams (2009) point to the fact that “very little research has been done on the language development and subsequent academic success of minority ethnic additional language learners who have gone through bilingual Welsh-English or Welsh-medium education in Wales” (p. 10). Brentnall et al. (2009, p. 19) explain that it is necessary to plan carefully in order to satisfy the educational needs of learners from ethnic minorities who are learning an additional language or languages. These pupils have additional needs for support with learning both English and Welsh in order to access all the subjects of the curriculum.

The authors’ current research in the context of Wales (www.bilingualism.bangor.ac.uk) documents evidence of translanguaging practices across a wide age-range of learners including emergent and more competent bilinguals in various

educational settings from pre-school, primary, and secondary schools, further and higher education, and through to lifelong learning. However, Lewis et al. (in press) reporting on language arrangements within bilingual classrooms in the primary and secondary schools of Wales found that although translanguaging was evident in all age groups, the highest percentage (i.e., 50%) occurred within the 7–11 age group. This is possibly due to the more project-based, progressive tradition within primary education, where less formal and traditional approaches may allow a higher probability of experimentation and where pupils are encouraged to make more flexible use of their bilingual skills. While the conceptualisation of translanguaging is in advance of implementation, nevertheless, the research found plentiful examples in bilingual classrooms in Wales, considerable interest in in-service training courses of teachers, and an evolution of the practice of translanguaging but not a fast revolution.

Input and output: variations

As discussed earlier, Williams' (1994, 1996) original concept of translanguaging was that of deliberately switching the language mode of input and output in the classroom. However, as García (2009a) has pointed out, in most bilingual curricula it can be more flexible than that which Williams describes. In a New York context, she goes on to exemplify this:

For example, in an advanced biology class given to secondary school students recently arrived in the U.S. from Spanish-speaking countries, the main text is in English. The students use that text alongside one written in Spanish that offers complementary material on the same topic. The instructional dialogue between teacher and students takes place mostly in Spanish. But because students have to write the Advanced Placement examination in English, students write in both languages. Spanish is used most of the time in writing. But English essays, based on those first drafted in Spanish, are carefully prepared. (García, 2009a, p. 302)

In Welsh contexts, this flexibility is now evident. Pupils can read a worksheet that contains both Welsh and English texts and then go on to write (a) in Welsh and/or (b) in English, using information received from both the Welsh and English texts. This is the flexibility that is evident in classrooms where teachers are experimenting with translanguaging.

Subject-determined translanguaging

The use of translanguaging as a pedagogy may depend to some extent on the subject content being taught. Those subject areas which do not involve relatively much jargon, abstract notions, or complex language are potentially more suitable for translanguaging at an early stage. Reporting on the observation of 100 bilingual lessons in Wales, Lewis et al. (in press) concluded that translanguaging was predominantly found in arts and humanities lessons rather than in the teaching of mathematics, science, and the more practical areas of the curriculum:

In humanities and arts areas such as history and geography, translanguaging appears favoured by such teachers. This was expected, but there appears little reason why mathematics and science cannot engage in translanguaging approaches as well.

With reference to a geography lesson for a combination of L1 and L2 Welsh pupils aged 7–9 years old in a bilingual primary school classroom, Jones (2010)

describes how the teacher asked the class to read together information in English on “Fair Trade” on the internet. The pupils were then questioned in English about the meaning of terms such as *crops*, *harvested*, *chemicals*, and the pupils responded in either Welsh or English. An explanation was provided by the teacher in Welsh for certain terms, for example, *environment* (*amgylchedd*), *community* (*cymuned*). The teacher summarised the reading work in Welsh before asking all pupils to complete a poster in Welsh to explain why supporting Fair Trade goods was a good idea.

Varied classroom contexts

In bilingual classrooms when two languages are in use, there are overlapping and interacting complex dimensions to be considered, one of which is the language balance of the children in the classroom, for example, proportions of children with different first languages, heritage and immigrant languages, higher and lower status languages.

A recent issue has been the balance of majority- and minority-language students in a school so that the majority language does not increasingly dominate (Lindholm-Leary, 2000, 2005). This is an issue both in dual-language schools and in heritage-language schools (Hickey, 2001, 2007; Lewis, 2004, 2008). Where the balance is weighted too much to majority-language speakers, informal classroom language may turn frequently to the majority language. Even at the pre-school level, children appear to be aware of the different status, power, and intergroup relationship between the two languages (Hickey, 2001). Their language preference can thus be affected by the saturation of majority-language speakers in a mixed-language classroom (Hickey & Ó Cainín, 2001).

In this context, García (2009a) urges caution to be exercised in classrooms where there is unequal power between the languages, arguing that Fishman’s warning (1991) to protect the minority language is still very relevant:

While it is important to put the minority language alongside the majority language, thus ensuring for it a place in powerful domains, it is important to preserve a space, although not a rigid or static place, in which the minority language does not compete with the majority language. (García, 2009a, p. 301).

Thus, whilst the deliberate and systematic use of two languages in the classroom can be of an advantage to children’s learning, careful consideration must be given to the sociolinguistic contexts of schools, especially in settings where a minority language coexists with a majority language as media of teaching and learning. Jones and Lewis (in press) observed from classroom research that there is a tendency in designated Welsh-medium schools in predominantly English-speaking areas of Wales to control the use of translanguaging in order to preserve and safeguard the use of the minority language. This seems to stem from a growing concern amongst these teachers that allowing the use of majority-language texts (English) for translanguaging purposes might be a stepping-stone for increasing the use of the majority language. Creese and Blackledge (2011) also emphasise a similar point in the context of a flexible bilingual approach to language teaching and learning in Chinese and Gujarati community language schools in the United Kingdom:

Although we can acknowledge that across all linguistically diverse contexts moving between languages is natural, how to harness and build on this will depend on the sociopolitical environment in which such practice is embedded and the local ecologies of schools and classrooms. (Creese & Blackledge, 2011, p. 10)

This leads us to consider examples of translanguageing that can be either teacher led or pupil led.

Teacher-led and pupil-led use of translanguageing

Whilst children may pragmatically and naturally use both of their languages in order to consolidate knowledge and understanding in lessons, there are instances where translanguageing is engineered and controlled by the teacher, which may lead to either increasing or decreasing the use of concurrent approaches. There may be times when children prefer to use one language (e.g., their stronger language or the one with the higher social status) rather than two.

Lewis (2008) and Jones (2010) suggest that two models of translanguageing became evident in their recent survey of bilingual education in Wales. The first could be classified as “teacher-directed translanguageing”, a planned and structured activity by the teacher. For emergent bilinguals, the teacher attempts to scaffold the translanguageing activity, whilst providing translanguageing cues for the more competent bilinguals in the class. Williams (2003) analyses the way in which a highly experienced geography teacher in an immersion class of 14-year-olds made selective use of a television recording, interspersed with focused and purposeful questioning, that “led to a motivational environment where the constant switching from one language to another brought an added value to the learning process” (p. 8).

The second model could be classified as “pupil-directed translanguageing” whereby translanguageing activities are undertaken independently by more competent bilinguals. This is achieved by little teacher support and involves pupils who have gained fairly good mastery of both languages. Pupils work independently and usually choose how to complete the translanguageing activity, for example, gathering information from the internet in English, discussing the content in English and Welsh, and completing the written work in Welsh. Another option would be to gather information in English, discuss the content in Welsh, and complete the written work in English. This is exemplified in Table 1.

Baker (2010) maintains that pupils themselves considerably affect and determine flexible language arrangements in a classroom, needing to communicate their conceptual understanding or misunderstanding in an immediate and efficient manner. Furthermore, García (2009a) maintains that “... children translanguage

Table 1. Models of translanguageing observed in the classroom.

Translanguageing Model	Input Medium (receptive language skills: listening/reading)	Output Medium (productive language skills: speaking/writing)
Teacher-directed translanguageing:		
1. Emergent bilinguals	English	Welsh
2. Competent bilinguals	Welsh	English
Pupil-directed translanguageing:		
	English	Welsh
	Welsh	English

Note: Translanguageing cues: The teacher provides cues to indicate the language medium to complete the translanguageing activity. Pupil-directed translanguageing: Pupils choose how receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) language skills are systematically varied. There are many options available, for example, listening in Welsh and reading in English followed by discussion in Welsh and writing in English.

constantly to co-construct meaning, to include others, and to mediate understandings” (p. 304), enabling language acquisition without having to wait for the teacher to assume her role.

Reporting on the data from the recent survey of bilingual education in Wales, Jones and Lewis (in press) found that pupils themselves recognised the advantages of translanguaging as a means of enabling them “to make sense” of the tasks undertaken in class. Lewis (2008) refers specifically to two 15-year-old pupils interviewed during a secondary school General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) science lesson on “The Human Genome Project”. By gathering information from an English website, the pupils’ task was to create a poster presentation to the rest of the class. Two pupils – one from a Welsh-speaking home and one from an English-speaking home – specifically decided to create the poster and give their presentation in Welsh. When asked why they chose to translanguaging, they observed that they deliberately did so “in order to avoid copying the original material from the internet word-for-word [in English] so that we could fully understand the information conveyed in the English text”. In other words, they “processed” the English information by giving their presentation in Welsh.

Other responses obtained from a group of six Year 12 pupils (16–17-year-olds) from diverse language backgrounds in a Welsh-medium secondary school about the potential advantages of translanguaging during the survey encompass such comments and observations as “translanguaging ... it happens naturally”; “it helps that we simplify the work ... we have to think about it ... you come to understand the work better”; “... you learn independently”; “translanguaging ... is ‘translating to make sense’”. All six pupils considered translanguaging to be an effective learning tool in the classroom that enabled them to further understand the content of their lessons.

Deaf and special needs children

Deaf children may sign and have literacy in another language. For example, the teacher may communicate in American Sign Language (ASL) or British Sign Language (BSL) leading to reading and writing in English. In this context, Deaf teachers are using translanguaging, with the language of input and output differing. In the context of deaf bilingual education (see Andrews & Dionne, 2008; Baker, 2011), the process of translanguaging can occur easily between written and signed languages. Deaf students often translanguaging when they use oracy (spoken language), literacy (reading and writing), or signacy (sign language) (García, 2009a, p. 46). Signacy “is the ability to interpret or attend to, and produce signs” (García, 2009a, p. 61) and is identified as a language ability alongside oracy and literacy in Table 2.

Technology promotes translanguaging skills of deaf bilinguals and affects the ways in which the curriculum is structured and instruction is delivered. For example,

Table 2. Type of bilingual ability and language ability.

Oracy	Literacy	Signacy
Listening Speaking	Reading Writing	Attending Producing

(Source: García, 2009a, p. 61).

PowerPoint enables Deaf students and hearing students who speak different languages to follow a lecture by presenting multiple languages in a co-linguaging arrangement (García, 2009a, p. 302). Thus, the advantages of translanguaging can be shared by Deaf children.

Conclusions

In this article, we have argued that translanguaging as a concept is sufficiently different from code-switching and translation to require its own developing definition and usage. Not only does it have different functions from code-switching and translation, but also the term has been developed to engage, be situated and sociolinguistic. Thus, understanding of translanguaging requires it to have context and not just content, cognitive and cerebral activity and not just about linguistic code, and operate continuously and not just in classrooms. However, translanguaging is an emergent educational concept with its explication, research, and contextualisation being mainly in the classroom.

Originally, translanguaging was portrayed within a classroom context, although the value of the term outside the classroom has now been established. However, the use of translanguaging in the classroom has special properties. It relates to a distinct pedagogic theory and practice that seeks to consciously vary the language of input and output but with dual-language processing. In this sense, there is a paradox. A lesson may begin in one language but then utilise another language because deeper learning may occur when both languages are activated. Deeper learning also can refer to language development, cognitive development, and content understanding. The pedagogic theory of translanguaging challenges the hitherto educational belief in language separation in bilingual education. In this sense, translanguaging is a strong version of bilingual education that stresses bilingual processes in learning rather than just bilingual outcomes. It accents that two (or more) languages are not just the result of bilingual education but the very nature of how a bilingual thinks, understands, and achieves.

Understanding translanguaging requires its historic development among academics and educationalists to be portrayed, and that future development will continue to refine, explicate, broaden, and disseminate the value of the term. The movement from a term that was used in a specific classroom context to one that is more about everyday conversation, to a new consideration in terms of cognition and neuroscience, indicates that an initial pedagogic term that was given sociolinguistic generalisability is now moving towards a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary understanding giving the term even greater value. These are just early beginnings. However, translanguaging in a classroom context remains important as it is creating a debate and a change in thinking among teachers and other educationalists, not only in Wales but also, for example, in International Schools in Europe and in some multilingual schools in the United States.

Thus, and finally, the conceptualisation of translanguaging is ideological. The term reflects a movement from considering languages as separate to integration, from a diglossic to a heteroglossic view of the minority-language world, from ideology that accented the subtractive and negative nature of bilingualism to one that expresses the advantages of additive bilingualism where languages in the brain, classroom, and street act simultaneously and not sequentially, with efficient integration and not separation. Thus, translanguaging is simultaneously symbolic

of a change in ideology about bilingualism and bilingual education, and in itself provides a conceptualisation that promotes that new ideology.

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Notes on contributors

Dr Gwyn Lewis is Deputy Head of the School of Education, Bangor University. His research interests are Welsh and bilingual education, bilingualism, and children's linguistic development. He is currently researching aspects of language heritage and immersion education in the context of Welsh-medium and bilingual schools. Email: w.g.lewis@bangor.ac.uk

Bryn Jones is a Lecturer in the School of Education, Bangor University. His principal research interests include bilingualism in education. The focus of his current research work is on language allocation of Welsh and English in the context of teaching and learning in bilingual primary and secondary classes. Email: b.jones@bangor.ac.uk

Colin Baker is Professor of Education at Bangor University and Pro Vice Chancellor. He is the author of 16 books and over sixty other texts on bilingualism and bilingual education, with specific interests in language planning and bilingual education. His current research interests include the relationship between language planning and bilingual education. Email: c.r.baker@bangor.ac.uk

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