Chapter 17
Translanguaging as Transformation in TESOL

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Abstract Language classrooms are multilingual spaces. While policies and pedagogies in the classroom may strive to circumscribe linguistic boundaries and define languages as separate entities, the task that students set themselves to in expanding their language repertoires is, by its nature, one that calls for multiples languages to coexist and comingle in physical and mental spaces. For this reason, in a few short years the concept of translanguaging has captured the attention and imagination of TESOL educators. Popularized in the field of bilingual education (García 2009), translanguaging has resonated strongly in TESOL because it allows us to bring together several related concerns and see them as different facets of the same conceptual and pedagogical challenge. The concept of translanguagin captures the overall move in the field of TESOL from a monolingual to plurilingual orientation. Translanguaging, therefore, is not about adding another layer to the cake of TESOL methods, but rather about bringing together these perspectives to transform TESOL in a way that truly recognizes and builds upon students' existing and emerging linguistic repertoires. The chapters in this volume provide an excellent representation of translanguaging work across the geographical diversity of TESOL contexts, as well as its diversity in terms of school settings, ages, levels, purposes, and pedagogical approaches.

Keywords Language ideologies · Social justice · TESOL postmethod · Stance-design-shift framework · Bilingual education · Language teacher education

Language classrooms are multilingual spaces. While policies and pedagogies in the classroom may strive to circumscribe linguistic boundaries and define languages as separate entities, the task that students set themselves to in expanding their language repertoires is, by its nature, one that calls for multiples languages to coexist and comingle in physical and mental spaces. For this reason, in a few short years the

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concept of translanguaging has captured the attention and imagination of TESOL educators. Popularized in the field of bilingual education (García, 2009), translanguaging has resonated strongly in TESOL because it allows us to bring together several related concerns and see them as different facets of the same conceptual and pedagogical challenge. These include the earlier ideas of pedagogical code-switching (Jacobson & Faltis, 1990), the role of the L1 in English teaching (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003), the multilingual turn in SLA and L2 teaching (May, 2014; Ortega, 2013), and the increased sensitivity to issues of identity and social justice (Flores, Spotti, & García, 2017; García & Leiva, 2014). As Sembiante and Tian (Chap. 3) argue, the concept of translanguaging, therefore, captures the overall move in the field of TESOL from a monolingual to plurilingual orientation (Taylor & Snoddon, 2013, and cf. Hall Chap. 4). Translanguaging, therefore, is not about adding another layer to the cake of TESOL methods, but rather about bringing together these perspectives to transform TESOL in a way that truly recognizes and builds upon students' existing and emerging linguistic repertoires.

The contributions in this volume have set out to explore the possibilities of envisioning language mixing in TESOL classrooms through a translanguaging lens. The chapters, taken together, provide an excellent representation of translanguaging work across the geographical diversity of TESOL contexts, as well as its diversity in terms of school settings, ages, levels, purposes, and pedagogical approaches. The chapters have addressed these aspects of translanguaging as a theoretical framework for informing TESOL, as an orientation for teacher education, and as a pedagogical tool in the classroom.

1 Theorizing Translanguaging in TESOL

The genesis of translanguaging came from a practical problem in bilingual education: how should the use of languages be organized in language classrooms? This question arose from the practical concern in bilingual settings of protecting and promoting the use of the minoritized language. Initially, the focus was on determining the allocation of languages for certain functions, and the effectiveness of techniques, such as translations, that required students to explicitly connect meanings across languages. García (2009) developed translanguaging by theorizing its role in a broader conceptualization of language in bilingual education. In her work, translanguaging is an instantiation of a flexible, heteroglossic approach. It is explicitly a critical, post-structural view of language that challenges not only the linguistic boundaries separating languages in classrooms, but also the notion of languages as discrete entities. As we take up translanguaging in TESOL, we need to recognize how the theorization of translanguaging constitutes a radical challenge to much of conventional thinking in our field. As reflected in the chapters in the three parts of the volume, the move towards embracing translanguaging poses some theoretical

"problems" as we try to productively incorporate flexible multilingualism into TESOL: the named language problem and the using multilingual resources versus "good English" problem.

1.1 The "Named Language" Problem

Translanguaging does not only seek to call out the separation of language or erase boundaries between languages, it seeks to call into question the existence of languages as discrete linguistic entities. Languages, the argument goes, are not separate from one another in the objective sense; what we name as "English" or "Chinese" or "Zapotec" and think of as distinct languages are social constructions based on historical, cultural, and political considerations (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). The linguistic evidence that there must be distinct languages – dictionaries, reference grammars, works of literature – reifies the objective fact of language X, but a dictionary is also a social artifact, produced for a particular social purpose. As Zentella (2007) points out from a perspective of anthropolitical linguistics, at issue isn't whether there is any objective truth to language boundaries (there isn't), but rather whose purposes are served by policing and enforcing language borders.

The nagging existential question – *is there really such a thing as English?* – is obviously problematic for TESOL, given that its purpose is very clearly to promote the teaching and learning of a language called English. And yet applied linguists applying post-structural lenses have been grappling for quite some time with echoes of this same problem in other, related guises. In the 1980s, Kachru (1986) introduced the idea of *World Englishes,* and described how the fracturing of English was giving rise to the "nativization" of English in various parts of the globe, and distorting the traditional distinction between ESL and EFL settings. Likewise, as work in World Englishes brought the ownership of English under scrutiny, the validity of the concept of native speaker itself was problematized (Faez, 2011). Other applied linguistics have argued that the rise of global English was not a happy accident, a fortuitous by-product of increasing globalization, but was itself an intentional effort aligned with neoliberal political and economic interests (Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992; Sayer, 2015).

And yet, this radical deconstruction of languages and the challenge to the hegemony of global English poses a significant problem for English educators. Sembiante and Tian (Chap. 3) explain the "English (E)" of TESOL has been "traditionally conceptualized [in our field] under a structuralist notion as an objective fact possessed by native speakers or a prescriptive system of syntactic, semantic, morphological, and phonetic rules" (p. 52). On a surface level, we can put "English" in scare quotes to acknowledge that, like all named languages, it is a social construction. Seltzer and García (Chap. 2) adopt the convention of ∗English with an asterisk, following Lippi-Green (2013) who on referred to ∗SAE to remind readers that

Standard American English is social invention. However, even though translanguaging defies the structuralist orthodoxy of language, we also must recognize that ∗English – in particular its standard varieties – is a social construction that does have real world consequences for us as teachers and students.

1.2 Using Multilingual Resources Versus "Good English" Problem

The embrace of translanguaging as a critique of the monolingual approach therefore needs to be balanced by the recognition of the social consequences for many students of learning or not learning "good" English. The focus of much of the early work in sociolinguistics from a code-switching perspective was to validate languaging mixing as a socially and linguistically legitimate language practice, since language mixing has historically been stigmatized because it indexes laziness and lack of education (cf. Zentella, 1997). Likewise, in language classrooms, the L1 has generally been regarded as at best a crutch and at worst an impediment to L2 learning. In the SLA cannon, the L1 is a source of transfer (often negative transfer, or interference), and the use of the L1 was seen in a subtractive sense, as diminishing the amount of exposure and opportunities for L2 practice.

The chapters in this part, and throughout the volume, emphasize that a translanguaging approach takes as its starting point learners' multilingual repertoires, and aims to leverage these as resources for learning English. Sembiante and Tian (Chap. 3) characterize this as a "shift from prioritizing the teaching of English language to employing emergent bilinguals' fluid language practices in support of their English learning" (p. 55). In his representation of TESOL methods, Hall (Chap. 4) explains the alignment of a translanguaging orientation with the emergence of postmethod discourses (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). However, he argues that expert ESOL teachers have long deployed learners' full linguistic repertoires into their classroom. The difference, he maintains, is that within a postmethod approach, "opportunities exist to recognize and value more fully teachers' own theorizing about, and insights into, the affordances that translanguaging offers in the classroom" (p. 85). This not only moves the needle in terms of validating multilingual pedagogies as "best practices," but also has the potential to reduce the gap between theory and practice by recognizing the implications of the real-world understandings of expert practitioners. Seltzer and García (Chap. 2) illustrate how one experienced teacher's practice of translanguaging connected the levels of *stance,* her philosophy towards working with emergent bilinguals, her *design* (organization of the physical and curricular space), and her *shifts,* the moment-by-moment "moves" that teachers make within a translanguaging design. This framework is taken up by authors of several of the chapters in the second part.

2 Translanguaging in TESOL Teacher Education

The six chapters in the second part address how translanguaging is being taken up and incorporated into TESOL teacher education. For many of the same reasons outlined above, that translanguaging represents a theoretical challenge not only for monolingual teaching approaches but also for the conceptualizations of language upon which they are based, the concept of translanguaging is a difficult one for many pre- (and in-) service teachers to build a coherent understanding of. This is due to its complexity, but also because translanguaging actively resists reduction and essentializing into a neat set of steps or binaries. Several of the chapters in this part illustrate how teacher educators have attempted to deal with this complexity by framing translanguaging through ideology, social justice, and identity.

Deroo, Ponzio, and De Costa (Chap. 6) echo Hall's (Chap. 4) argument that a central goal of language teacher education should be to counteract the pervasive ideologies of monolingualism in TESOL. They explain that successfully integrating translanguaging into a language teacher preparation course involves creating opportunities to explicitly engage candidates' existing language ideologies. They lay out an alignment of Howard and Levine's (2018) language teacher learning framework and García, Johnson, and Seltzer's (2017) translanguaging pedagogy framework (stance, design, shift). This is highly instructive, since it illustrates how, for example, teacher support of students' translanguaging is an instantiation of an asset-based orientation to students' diverse linguistic and cultural resources. Robinson, Tian, Crief, and Lins Prado (Chap. 7) also use the *stance-design-shift* translanguaging pedagogy framework, but they root it in a teaching English for justice model. This entails teachers being able to "(1) recognize practices and structures that sustain inequalities (2) critique status quo practices and structures that sustain inequalities and (3) engage in practices that support all learners" (p. 139). Candidates' understanding of translanguaging was developed in relation to their awareness of connections between language, culture and power. In both chapters, the authors maintain that translanguaging represents a form of *praxis* in language teacher education; that is, the space (conceived as either a critique and re-examination of ideology or of power/social justice) where the synthesis of theory and practice is realized.

Turner (Chap. 9) likewise illustrates the creation of praxis in teacher professional learning in Australia with a group of highly experienced generalist teachers. In her conceptualization, *identity* becomes the locus of building teachers' understanding of translanguaging. She describes how this was accomplished through the affirmation of students' bi/multilingual identities, premised on a move from seeing students' identities as multilingual *being* to a view of students *doing* multilingual languaging. This is an important insight, since it not only succinctly captures the important connections between stance-design-shift components of translanguaging pedagogy, it also reflects the language as social practice aspect of translanguaging (and identity), in which we better understanding languaging as a verb, instead of a noun.

Several chapters underscore the need to for teacher educators to approach translanguaging and teacher preparation with honesty and humility. Andrei, Kibler and Salerno (Chap. 5) use narrative inquiry to approach this topic with a great deal of candor: translanguaging is complicated on several levels, and presenting the concept in a way that not only makes sense but is also relevant to teacher candidates is difficult. Andrei acknowledged that her own imperfect understanding of translanguaging made her first attempt to introduce it into her TESOL teacher preparation course as much of a learning experience for her as for the students. However, the fact that some of the students pushed back also underscores the importance of "practicing what we are preaching": creating a learning environment where ideas can be contested, discussed, and co-constructed is a hallmark of a translanguaging classroom. This sentiment was echoed in Morales, Schissel and López-Gopar (Chap. 8). They used participatory action research to document how the teacher educator (Morales) used translanguaging as an entry point to re-thinking his approach to embracing multilingualism, indigeneity, and the sociocultural context of his students in an EFL class for future English teachers. In doing so, he confronts a very practical issue of translanguaging and language teaching: how do we assess students' progress in English in a way that is consistent with a translanguaging approach?

The contributions of Morales et al. (Chap. 8) and Lau (Chap. 10) address the practical difficulties of collaborative projects with teacher educators in "peripheral," post-colonial contexts. Lau describes both the promise of incorporating translanguaging as part of the project of decolonization in post-colonial Malawi, while also recognizing the complexity of the role of English in global discourses on the quality of education and world citizenship. The chapter reminds us that although ideologies of monolingualism and English hegemony are pervasive in many countries, they also take on very particular forms and meanings within local ecologies of language. She observes that "researchers on international development also need to exercise vigilance and humility in our understanding of what decolonization means to local communities […] and how our new theories and insights on language and language education [like translanguaging] might facilitate or hinder local agentive efforts to find creative solutions to make do with varied severe socio- political and economic demands" (p. 222).

3 Translanguaging in TESOL Classrooms

The main themes that emerge across the chapters in part two – ideology, social justice, and identity – are also present in the six chapters in the final part. In this part, the authors portray teachers' efforts to leverage translanguaging productively to support learning goals. Taken together, the chapters give us a sense of the relevance of translanguaging for teachers' practice (and possibilities for reflecting on their practice) across a breadth of TESOL contexts. These include a content-language integrated (CLIL) model in Dutch kindergarten and primary classrooms

(Günther-van der Meij & Duarte, Chap. 11), a high school content-based class for immigrant newcomers in the U.S. (Seilstad & Kim, Chap. 12), a task-based lesson in a secondary school in Vietnam (Seals, Newton, Ash, & Nguyen, Chap. 13), an English for academic purposes at a Canadian university (Galante, Chap. 14), a university EFL course in Costa Rica (Fallas Escobar, Chap. 15) and a university-based Intensive English Program in the U.S. (Aghai, Sayer, & Vercellotti, Chap. 16).

As content-based instruction (CBI), including sheltered instructional models and content-language integrated learning (CLIL) approaches have become more common, many teachers see this as natural opportunity to integrate students' language backgrounds. Since language is seen as the medium of content learning, and L2 acquisition as a by-product – albeit an intentional and carefully designed by-product – of content teaching, the ideologies of monolingualism and language separation may be less influential on pedagogy. This is the case for the two studies that examine translanguaging in CBI classrooms. Günther-van der Meij and Duarte (Chap. 11) describe an approach to organizing languages in a kindergarten program in the Friesland region of the Netherlands that uses a trilingual model (Dutch, Friesian, English). Both migrant and minority languages of pupils are acknowledged and used in education, next to the majority languages. Here, translanguaging becomes a cornerstone of a holistic model for multilingualism in education, and includes components of language awareness, language comparison, receptive multilingualism, CLIL, and language immersion. Importantly, they also provide a specification for teachers of the functions of translanguaging in the classroom, with aims and the types of functions that teachers can use according to their proficiency level. This is an important insight, since it is common for educators when learning about translanguaging for the first time to respond that translanguaging is something that will work for bilingual classrooms where the teachers shares the same languages with students, but not for classrooms with many different languages. In arguing for translanguaging in multilingual TESOL settings, we need to be able to show how translanguaging pedagogies can be successful and effective when teachers and students do not all share the same language backgrounds. To this point, Seilstad and Kim (Chap. 12) give a concrete example of the potential of translanguaging in a highly multilingual high school biology classroom for immigrant and refugee newcomers in the U.S. They illustrate how an "activity drew on translanguaging pedagogy in an English-centric space, resulting in presentations that decentered English and produced an unexpected moment that, while fleeting, destabilized the national/named divisions between languages and created a positive response between the students and [teacher]" (p. 270).

The multilingual turn in TESOL has prompted language educators to re-examine how translanguaging fits into (or transforms) other pedagogical approaches as well. While the fit between translanguaging and content-based approaches may seem like a natural one, other approaches, such as task-based language teaching (TBLT), were developed from a traditionally psycholinguistic/cognitivist (and hence monolingual) approach to L2 learning and teaching, and it is therefore less clear what the role of translanguaging could be. Seals et al. (Chap. 13) acknowledge that there is a theoretical tension between the concept of translanguaging, which is more aligned

with sociocultural ideas of L2 learning, and the mainstream cognitivist SLA roots of TBLT, but they take what they term an "applied sociolinguistic approach" to translanguaging in TBLT. In a secondary EFL classroom in Vietnam, they argue that rather than viewing students as having to "resort" to using the L1 to complete a task, they show that students translanguaged during tasks in order to generate ideas, scaffold, and self-regulate their output in the L2. Likewise, Galante (Chap. 14) documents how translanguaging supports vocabulary instruction for students in a Canadian English for Academic Purposes program. She uses a classic method comparison design to document how pedagogical translanguaging can support vocabulary acquisition, a key element for EAP students. She reports that not only did students in the (experimental) TL group have significantly higher scores on the vocabulary test than students in the monolingual (control) group, but that "students in the translanguaging group engaged in meaning-making across languages and took an active role in language learning" (p. 293).

Fallas Escobar (Chap. 15) and Aghai et al. (Chap. 16) look at the connection between teachers' ideologies of language, their pedagogical approaches, and the possibilities of translanguaging. In these chapters, the main aim is to examine how language teachers' ideologies, or *stances,* frame their approach to multilingualism and/or language separation in the classroom. As Fallas Escobar acknowledges that teachers' stances reflect broader social and institutional language ideologies (cf. Chaps. 2, 3 and 4 in the first part), but that the concept or even the term *translanguaging* can, in and itself, be a tool for teachers. Amongst the Costa Rican EFL teachers in his study, he explained that the initial anxiety or resistance one teacher had to her own acceptance of language mixing in her classroom, and the idea that perhaps translanguaging is a tool for some students but not for others ("struggling students"), was overcome when she realized: "So there is a theory behind what I do…" (p. 340). He described the stances amongst his teacher participants as: translanguaging as a conscientious choice, translanguaging as a political act, and translanguaging as a spontaneous but judicious practice. Likewise, Aghai et al. (Chap. 16) showed that the three focal instructors at a U.S. university-based Intensive English Program with Arabic-speaking students had distinct stances towards translanguaging. Drawing on Ruiz's (1984) language orientations framework, they described the teachers' stances as: translanguaging as a problem, translanguaging as a natural process, and translanguaging as a resource. In both studies, the authors suggest that the concept of translanguaging stance can be transformative because it allows teachers to reflect on their practice through a lens of language ideologies.

4 Future Directions and Challenges for Translanguaging in TESOL

Where do we go from here? At the outset, we stated that the goal for this volume is to contribute to pushing translanguaging into TESOL across a range of contexts and exploring the transformative potential of translanguaging for TESOL. The chapters

provide accounts of teachers in diverse settings creating multilingual spaces that allow students to draw on their translanguaging resources in multiple forms to support their learning of English. We believe that, collectively, the chapters in this book provide convincing evidence that translanguaging is a central theoretical concept and pedagogical tool in the multilingual turn in TESOL. Translanguaging blurs linguistic boundaries, and its potential to inform and transform pedagogical practice extends across national borders, cultural contexts, learners' ages, language backgrounds, and instructional methods. In thinking about future directions for translanguaging in TESOL, there are three main take-aways from this volume: the place of translanguaging within the current state of TESOL (post)methods, the social justice orientation of translanguaging, and translanguaging as an ideology of language.

4.1 Translanguaging and TESOL Methods

The volume has invited us to think about how translanguaging should be integrated into our classroom practice. What is the "fit" between a given teaching method and using a translanguaging approach? The chapters provide examples that translanguaging can work with a range of approaches, from content-based instruction (Seilstad & Kim, Chap. 12), to English for Academic Purposes (Galante, Chap. 14), to task-based language teaching (Seals et al., Chap. 13). Hall (Chap. 4) locates our move to translanguaging as coinciding with the postmethod condition of TESOL. In figuring out the practical aspects of translanguaging pedagogy in a given classroom, we will do well to remember the reason we moved beyond our methods fetish is because we arrived at an understanding of language teaching not as a series of steps or a recipe to be followed, but as a flexible set of techniques and strategies, informed and guided by communicative principles. Here, the notion of *translanguaging shifts* captures the idea that translanguaging should not be reduced to a method, but rather is a set of related strategies that embodies the principles of flexible multilingualism. These can be planned as part of the *design*, such as the multilingual early grade curriculum in the Netherlands (Günther-van der Meij & Duarte, Chap. 11) described, or can be the openness to leveraging the ah-hah! moments that can magically arise within translanguaging spaces, such as the hummingbird example in Seilstad and Kim's (Chap. 12) biology lesson.

4.2 Translanguaging Is a Social Justice Orientation

A theme that runs across the chapters in this volume is that translanguaging is, at its heart, an orientation to language teaching that is rooted in social justice. This is to say, as TESOL educators we should strive to have our work contribute to creating greater social equality. This is certainly true for immigrant students (cf. Seltzer & García, Chap. 2; Seilstad & Kim, Chap. 12), whose linguistic and cultural identities

are frequently marginalized. But it is also true for international students (cf. Galante, Chap. 14; Aghai et al., Chap. 16) who have access to significant socioeconomic resources but may nonetheless be positioned as minorities. This is not to say that a translanguaging lens views the struggles and marginalization of all groups the same. We need to recognize important differences between groups with different types of social and cultural capital. Sembiante and Tian (Chap. 3) remind us that the concept of translanguaging originated in bilingual education, which historically has been oriented towards the development of multilingualism as part of the struggle for civil rights and social justice for minoritized peoples.

The foregrounding of social justice aspect of translanguaging is most clearly articulated in the translanguaging social justice framework proposed by Robinson et al. (Chap. 7), but is exemplified in all the chapters. Two chapters (Turner, Chap. 9; Lau, Chap. 10) illustrate that translanguaging pushes our field to move beyond "learning English = access to linguistic capital for success" narrative that has driven the (neoliberal) argument for the importance of TESOL. The authors connect English language education to projects of decolonization and language maintenance. On the one hand, this argument is paradoxical given the history of TESOL and the rise of global English and neoliberalism. On the other hand, this is precisely why as scholars we are excited by the possibilities of translanguaging to contest and transform the prevailing discourses within TESOL. We would argue that future work on translanguaging in TESOL must remain firmly grounded within this social justice orientation.

4.3 Transforming Language Ideologies in TESOL

In the past decade, we have become more aware of how language education as field is strongly shaped by language ideologies (Deroo et al., Chap. 6; Sayer, 2012). Native speakerism, standard English, global English, testing and certification regimes, have all been powerful discourses that define the purposes and goals of TESOL. One unfortunate effect of this has been the Othering of the people TESOL is meant to serve (let's not forget, the "O" in TESOL stands for other). As Alan Luke (2004) observed: "TESOL is a pedagogical site and institution for educating the racial and linguistic Other" (p. 25). While the field has been largely constructed around dominant language ideologies, in translanguaging we see a discursive space to resist and push back against these ideologies (cf. Li Wei's [2011] notion of *translanguaging spaces*).

Translanguaging as a linguistic ideology of resistance is captured in the notion of *translanguaging stance.* As Seltzer and García (Chap. 2) point out, this is the philosophy that teachers bring into their work with students. It should, as explained above, embrace the social justice aspects of language education. However, as the chapters illustrate, a translanguaging stance incorporates other aspects of multilingual approach to TESOL as well. For Lau (Chap. 10), it includes engaging participants with the broader discourses of English and development and progress in Africa.

A translanguaging stance then, is also a potential space for teachers to interrogate their own practice. As the chapters in Part II illustrate, translanguaging is a powerful tool for teacher professional development. For Andrei et al. (Chap. 5) and Fallas Escobar (Chap. 15), explicitly engaging teachers in discussions on their pedagogical stances allowed them to reflect on, become aware of, and shift the mindsets towards the students' multilingualism. However, Andrei et al. (Chap. 5) note that although the draft version of the TESOL professional standards specifically mentioned translanguaging amongst the knowledge of language processes that teacher candidates should demonstrate, the final version omits translanguaging (but still specifies "interlanguage and language progressions", p. 6). This indicates that the there is still work to be done in pushing ideologies of multilingualism into the TESOL mainstream. A counter example can be found in Günther-van der Meij and Duarte's (Chap. 11) description of the early childhood language curriculum in the Netherlands, where translanguaging is used as a way not only of promoting students' plurilingualism, but of embracing and building bridges between language majority and minority communities. Future work should draw on this perspective, that sees translanguaging as a stance that resists dominant ideologies of language, but seeks to make connections between the diverse identities of students.

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