

Curriculum Design and Lesson Planning for Multilingual Classrooms: asset-based approaches, translanguaging strategies, and culturally sustaining materials

Acting associate Professor of UNIEP

Umurzaqov Dorobjon Bahodirovich

Acting associate Professor of UNIEP

Irgashev Mahmudjon Usmonovich

Abstract

An asset-based orientation to curriculum design reframes multilingual learners not as problems to be remedied but as repositories of linguistic, cultural, experiential, and epistemic resources that can mediate complex academic learning. This theoretical pivot is grounded in sociocultural theory and funds of knowledge scholarship, which posit that households and communities possess organized, historically situated forms of knowledge and practice that are educative.

Key words

curriculum, communities, historically, situated, assonance, knowledge.

Аннотация

Ориентация на ресурсы при разработке учебных программ переосмысливает многоязычных учащихся не как проблемы, которые нужно решить, а как хранилища лингвистических, культурных, эмпирических и эпистемологических ресурсов, которые могут способствовать сложному академическому обучению. Этот теоретический поворот основан на социокультурной теории и исследованиях фондов знаний, которые постулируют, что домохозяйства и сообщества обладают организованными, исторически обусловленными формами знаний и практики, которые носят образовательный характер.

Ключевые слова

учебная программа, сообщества, исторически, обусловленный, ассонанс, знание.

Operationalizing this orientation requires a shift in curricular epistemology from a monocultural canon to a pluriversal curriculum architecture that deliberately maps learners' home languages, occupational practices, storytelling traditions, and community literacies into the formal curriculum. When curriculum designers conduct systematic ethnographic mapping of students' lived experiences, they produce curricular trajectories that are congruent with learners' repertoires, fostering cognitive scaffolding that leverages prior conceptual frameworks rather than replacing them. This alignment not only enhances comprehension through schema activation but also validates learners' identities, thereby improving affective engagement and motivation—variables that are robust predictors of long-term academic persistence in longitudinal educational research across diverse contexts.[6;26]

Materials that sustain culture must do more than translate mainstream texts into students' first languages; they must incorporate epistemologies and modes of representation that reflect learners' values and communicative norms. Culturally sustaining materials draw upon multimodal semiotics, integrating oral narratives, visual arts, community rituals, and digital media in ways that reflect the semiotic practices of learners' communities. In practice, this can include community-authored readers in coastal Colombia that interweave Indigenous ecological knowledge with emergent literacy activities, or Māori-medium resources in Aotearoa New Zealand that encode tikanga and whakapapa within literacy routines. Such materials function as epistemic spaces where content knowledge and cultural knowledge co-constitute one another, thereby resisting the epistemic violence of rendering certain knowledge systems invisible. Empirical evidence from bilingual programs in Wales and the Philippines indicates that when curricular materials reflect students' linguistic landscapes and

cultural schemas, gains are observed not only in language proficiency but also in disciplinary reasoning and concept transfer.

Pedagogically, translanguageing must be conceptualized as a strategic, metalinguistic pedagogy rather than a permissive code-switching allowance. Translanguageing practices enable learners to deploy semiotic resources across languages to negotiate meaning, test hypotheses, and construct academic discourse. When curriculum design explicitly includes translanguageing routines—such as joint text construction that alternates mediational roles across languages—teachers can scaffold metacognitive reflection on language choices, promoting interlanguage development and metalinguistic awareness. This approach has been documented in dual-language programs in the United States and in Sámi-medium instruction in Scandinavia, where systematic translanguageing practices have been associated with improved analytical writing and enhanced ability to transfer concepts between languages. Translanguageing also functions as an index of language ideology: when schools legitimize multilingual repertoires, they enact an additive bilingualism policy that counters subtractive dynamics often present in high-stakes assessment regimes.

A translanguageing-informed lesson sequence typically organizes instruction into phases that systematically transition from comprehension scaffolds toward productive application, with language choices calibrated to cognitive demand. The opening activation phase leverages students home languages and prior knowledge to build schema and reduce cognitive load; teachers may prompt bilingual pair discussions, allow students to annotate complex texts in their home language, or present multimodal stimuli with captions in multiple languages. During the input phase, teachers can provide layered resources that represent the target content in both the language of instruction and students home languages: parallel texts, glossed vocabulary lists, cognate maps, and audiovisual materials with multilingual subtitles. These strategies support

comprehension while modeling crosslinguistic transfer, particularly when lessons emphasize cognate awareness and morphological analysis across languages, which research indicates accelerates vocabulary acquisition and reading fluency in diverse contexts.

Guided practice in a translinguaging lesson exploits collaborative interaction as a cognitive workspace for negotiation of meaning. Strategic pairings and small groupings enable language brokering, where more proficient peers mediate content through translinguaging practices that normalize shifting between languages for clarification and problem solving. In international comparative contexts, such as bilingual schools in Catalonia or dual language programs in Canada, teachers report increased conceptual understanding when students are permitted to use home languages during dialogic problem solving. Guided activities should include explicit scaffolds: translinguaging scripts for academic discussion, sentence frames that appear in multiple languages, and teacher modelling that demonstrates how to use both languages to explicate reasoning. The teacher role is to orchestrate translinguaging, monitoring for equitable participation, and deliberately withdrawing supports to foster independent use of the language of schooling as appropriate.

Assessment design under translinguaging principles requires rethinking construct validity and assessment methods. Traditional monolingual assessments may underestimate content knowledge when language proficiency interferes; therefore formative assessment must be dynamic and multimodal. Teachers can use portfolio assessments that document language growth across modalities, bilingual performance tasks that allow students to respond in the language that best demonstrates their conceptual understanding, and dynamic assessment procedures where mediated assistance is systematically recorded to reveal learning potential. Rubrics should be translinguaging-aware, distinguishing content mastery from language accuracy and

affording credit for strategic use of students full repertoire. Examples from Wales bilingual education and New Zealand contexts illustrate how assessment frameworks calibrated to bilingual trajectories yield more accurate pictures of learning and inform targeted instruction.

Material selection and design play a central role in translanguaging lesson planning. Curriculum materials should not be direct translations only, but curated multilingual texts that foster intertextual reading and ideational transfer. Teachers can create bilingual thematic units that position texts in multiple languages side by side for comparative analysis, use digital corpora to show authentic language use across contexts, and employ subtitled media to connect oral comprehension with print. Technology tools can facilitate translanguaging when used critically; for instance, machine translation may be a starting point for meaning making but requires teacher mediation to address inaccuracies and to promote metalinguistic reflection. International examples demonstrate varied approaches: in Singapore classrooms teachers strategically use English to teach content while allowing code-meshing with students home varieties to negotiate meaning, whereas in South African township classrooms translanguaging resources are often student-generated and community-centered, highlighting the importance of local sociolinguistic ecologies in material design.[7;54]

Finally, policy coherence and curriculum alignment influence the sustainability of translanguaging practices. Lesson plans must reconcile classroom-level translanguaging goals with district or national standards by articulating how bilingual strategies support the attainment of subject-specific competencies. Alignment may involve mapping translanguaging activities to proficiency frameworks such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or to local ESL benchmarks, ensuring that the translanguaging approach is defensible in terms of accountability while remaining pedagogically transformative. In sum, translanguaging strategies in lesson planning

require deliberate diagnostic work, sequenced scaffolds, multimodal materials, assessment reconceptualization, professional development, and community engagement, all oriented toward leveraging multilingualism as a cognitive and cultural resource rather than a constraint.

References

1. Gay, G., Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice, New York, 2018, p. 96-bet.
2. Ladson-Billings, G., The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children, San Francisco, 2009, p. 134-bet.
3. Nieto, S., Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education, New York, 2017, p. 78-bet.
4. Cummins, J., Language, Power, and Pedagogy: Bilingual Children in the Crossfire, Clevedon, 2000, p. 45-bet.
5. García, O., Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective, Malden, 2009, p. 212-bet.
6. García, O. & Li Wei, Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education, London, 2014, p. 56-bet.
7. Hammond, Z., Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students, Thousand Oaks, 2015, p. 121-bet.
8. Villegas, A. M. & Lucas, T., Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers: A Coherent Approach, New York, 2007, p. 63-bet.
9. Moll, L. C. et al., Funds of Knowledge for Teaching: Using a Qualitative Approach in Hispanic Households, New York, 1992, p. 27-bet.