Bilingual and Multilingual Education in the 21st Century
Building on Experience

Edited by
Christian Abello-Contesse, Paul M. Chandler,
María Dolores López-Jiménez and
Rubén Chacón-Beltrán
Introduction

It is broadly accepted that a requirement for the stable maintenance of the two languages of a societal group is the functional allocation of each of the languages; that is, one language is used in certain domains, with specific people and for particular functions, whereas the other language is kept out of this territorial or functional space. But in the 21st century, as the movement of people, goods and information has become more complex, the separate functional distribution of two languages in bilingual and multilingual societies has been questioned. This chapter explores the tensions between the two positions – one which claims that the languages of bilingual groups must be kept separate and be functionally allocated if they are to be maintained, and the other which suggests that the language practices of bilingual groups are always fluid and interrelated. We explore the tensions of these two positions in a societal space that makes the tension evident – the bilingual or multilingual classroom.

This chapter starts out by discussing the concept of diglossia in the sociolinguistic literature, that is, the functional allocation position. The chapter also describes how diglossia has impacted the development of models of bilingual education, as well as pedagogical approaches for bilingualism, throughout the world. But focusing on primary and secondary classrooms in New York City, the chapter then portrays how bilingual and multilingual classrooms are violating the separate functional distribution of languages. Looking at the languaging, that is, the language practices of both students and
teachers in bilingual and multilingual classrooms, the chapter suggests that
effective multilingual classroom spaces might be better described as being 
transglossic. That is, despite the strict separation of languages, students and
teachers in these classrooms enact fluid language practices that we call 
translanguage, and which will be explored below. The chapter argues that trans-
language might be a fruitful way of developing the complex language 
practices that all students need in the 21st century, as well as the standard 
languages which are taught in school.

Diglossia and Bilingualism in Education

Conceptualizations of bilingualism in education have rested in traditional 
understandings of diglossia. The term ‘diglossia’ was used by Psichari 
(1928), a French philologist studying Greek in the late 19th century, to
distinguish the classical standard of Greek, Katharevousa, from the popular 
modern Greek, Dimotiki. This is the way in which Ferguson (1959) used 
diglossia in his now-famous article to refer to societal arrangements in which 
one variety of a language is used for prestigious or high functions, whereas 
the other variety is used for informal or low functions.

Fishman extended Ferguson’s definition to encompass not only language 
varieties, but also different languages. Fishman et al. (1971: 560) warn that 
‘socially patterned bilingualism can exist as a stabilized phenomenon only if 
there is functional differentiation between two languages’. In Fishman’s 
macro-sociolinguistic framework, diglossia is necessary because ‘no society 
needs two languages for one and the same set of functions’ (Fishman, 1972: 
140). Fishman’s model of diglossia relies on strict compartmentalization for 
the two or more languages in question. This language separation could be 
accomplished either by territory (what Fishman calls the territorial principle) 
or by functions (what he calls the personality principle).

Diglossia has been a foundational principle in macro-sociolinguistics 
(also known as the sociology of language and Fishmanian sociolinguistics; 
see García et al., 2006). The language planning field emerged in the mid-20th 
century, mainly as a result of the language diversity that struggles for civil 
rights and the independence of African and Asian countries brought to the 
forefront. Language planning efforts focused greatly on how to functionally 
allocate societal languages to ensure that indigenous languages in the case of 
Asia and Africa, and the languages of regional or immigrant minorities in the 
case of North America and Europe, had a role in society (see Spolsky, 2004; 
Wright, 2004). Whereas in the case of new African and Asian nation-states 
decisions had to be made about whether a former colonial language or an 
inigenous language was made official or used in governmental functions, 
the most important language planning choice occurred in the context of 
education. The struggle over which languages were to be used in education


highlighted the conflicting desires about the language practices of different groups of speakers.

When education was reserved for the elite, the standard language taught in school had great similarities to the language practices of the powerful groups whose children attended these schools. An important purpose of school was then to ensure that children developed a standard academic language which was the measure of an educated man or woman. However, once mass public education was introduced in one country after another in the 19th century, schooling became a place where the language practices of school often had absolutely no similarities to the language practices of the home. Monolingual education became simply a way of developing complex academic abilities in the language of the powerful elite who controlled the schools. Little attention was paid to the language practices of everyone else, and language minority students were expected to either conform to the language practices of the formal school context or drop out of school, guaranteeing that only the elite and the few became educated.

It is not then surprising that one of the most important demands of the struggles for civil rights and freedom of the oppressed that took place in the mid-20th century was precisely to make room for the language practices of minorities in their education. The bilingual education programs that emerged were modeled after monolingual education programs, arguing that language minority children would become better users of the standard language of the majority if they also became literate users of their own standard academic language. Additive bilingualism, with each language clearly separate and fully developed, became the mark of excellence in all bilingual education programs. Thus, bilingual education programs often separate languages through one of four strategies (García, 2009: 292–295):

- **Time-determined separation**: that is, one language is taught for one part of the day, one day or one week; the other language is taught for another part of the day, another day or another week.
- **Teacher-determined separation**: that is, one teacher teaches in one language and the other teacher uses the other language.
- **Place-determined separation**: that is, one language is spoken in one physical space or classroom and the other language is taught in another classroom or space.
- **Subject-determined separation**: that is, one language is used to teach certain subjects while the other language is used to teach the other subjects.

However, although bilingual education programs that separate language in this way might work well for language majorities that are adding additional languages of prestige with power similar to their own, the same cannot be said of language minorities. By definition, the language practices of language minorities are stigmatized and often have not been included in
schools. Therefore, the home language practices of language minorities frequently have very little to do with what bilingual schools, teaching two standard languages, claim to be the home language of the children. That is, the distance between the language practices of schools, whether in the majority or the minority language, continue to have absolutely no similarities to the language practices of the home of the language minority children. Whereas it was obvious that the language practices of schools in what was considered a standard majority language were different from those of homes of students who spoke non-dominant languages, it was less recognized that the language practices of schools in what was considered a standard minority language were also different. The strict insistence on separating languages in teaching language minorities as a way to 'protect' or isolate the weaker, non-dominant language from that of the majority, meant that bilingual students who were being educated 'bilingually' were often left out. On the one hand, indigenous minorities whose language practices had never been used in education before did not always recognize those of the standard academic indigenous language taught in school as their own. On the other hand, regional and immigrant minorities who were bilingual became linguistically insecure in their home language practices. How this happened is the subject of the next section.

Diglossic Arrangements in Bilingual Education and Linguistic Insecurity

Bilingual education programs, supposedly developed to support language minority students, often increased their linguistic insecurity. The most obvious example is that of Indigenous peoples in the Americas, as intercultural, bilingual education programs in Latin America and bilingual/bicultural education programs in North America came into being. In Latin America, where Indigenous languages were widely spoken, the Indigenous minorities had seldom been seriously educated. In Mexico, for example, the numerous Indigenous population (approximately 12 million, constituting about 13% of the population of the country) had not received a meaningful education prior to the 1994 revolt of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), which rose up against neo-liberal policies that ignored the social needs of the Indigenous people. As a result of the agreements signed with the Zapatistas, the General Coordination of Bilingual and Intercultural Education and the General Directive of Indigenous Education finally came into being (García & Velasco, 2012). Intercultural bilingual education programs were developed; however, the educational structures that were set up imitated those of the monolingual education programs of the past. Enormous energy has been spent writing alphabets and developing ways of writing in Indigenous languages, but as the Indigenous languages became standardized so that they
could be taught in school, the distance from the home language practices of many Indigenous communities became obvious. This tension has perhaps become more noticeable in the struggles over the standardization of Quechua so that it could be used in schools in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador. Under the label of ‘Quechua’ fall many language practices that have little to do with each other. Beyond this dialectal difference is the fact that Quechua has now co-existed with Spanish for centuries, and so it differs greatly from what linguists call ‘traditional’ Quechua, and from what educators now call Quechua ‘unificado’, able to be used in schools throughout the region. The insistence that Indigenous Quechua children be taught bilingually in Spanish and Quechua is an improvement over their exclusion from formal education in the past, or even the insistence that they be educated in Spanish only. However, now Quechua itself has become the battleground, as language minority speakers find it difficult to identify their home language practices in those of the standard Quechua taught in school and reflected in textbooks. Bilingual education has put Quechua and other Latin American Indigenous languages on the map, and this is important in itself. But the insistence that only certain standardized practices be accepted in school, and that Quechua be kept separate from Spanish, is responsible for much of the linguistic insecurity spreading throughout Quechua-speaking lands today (Coronel-Molina, 2011; Luyx, 2011).

The insistence on separating the two languages in bilingual education goes against the understanding that bilinguals are not two monolinguals in one person (Grosjean, 1982). Bilingual students or emergent bilingual students (those who are developing the additional language) use their two languages in interdependent ways (Canagarajah, 2005; Cummins, 2000, 2007; García, 2009). Thus, keeping one language out of the reach of the other works against developing bilingualism and appropriating an identity as a bilingual person. In the search to neutralize the power dimensions of the two languages, that is, to work against the linguistic hierarchy of a majority and a minority language, the sociolinguistic arrangement of putting two languages on an equal and separate footing sometimes obviates the complex language practices of bilingual students.

The bilingual education programs that have been implemented for the Deaf community are also involved in this tension between separating the written and the signed language, whereas Deaf students often use both languages jointly. The struggle to incorporate Sign Language in the education of the Deaf has been arduous. But the frequent insistence that the many language practices of the Deaf be performed in isolation has worked against the bilingualism of the Deaf community, who would benefit from using all their language practices jointly in order to make sense of both language and content (Grosjean, 2010).

It is then instructive to think critically about the diglossic arrangements that have been the hallmark of bilingual education programs. Although the
functional allocation of two languages in education might have worked when the languages involved shared similar power, they have to be questioned today when more language minorities are being educated bilingually.

**Transglossia, Translanguaging and Bilingualism in Education**

The traditional concept of diglossia has recently been called into question, as more situations of stable multilingualism without functional allocation are described. Many have used the case of the complex multilingualism of India and many African countries to question diglossic arrangements as the only way to achieve stable bilingualism and multilingualism (see Khubchandani, 1997; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Pennycook, 2010). In India, multilingual contact is the norm and yet language practices have been maintained for generations (Mohanty, 2006). The Indian sociolinguist Annamalai (2005) explains:

> When multilingualism is taken as the norm, the functional (or ecological) relationship between languages in a multilingual network (or linguistic ecology) defines the nature of each language in the network. (Annamalai, 2005: 111)

In the European Union, the promotion of plurilingualism has posited that it is possible to acquire and use different language practices to varying degrees and in interaction with each other to form one overall communicative competence (Council of Europe, 2000). The spread of English throughout a globalized world has also meant that more groups of people are bilingual and use English alongside other language practices in interrelationship, as the multimodalities made possible through advanced technology confront us with different language practices simultaneously.

Mühlhäusler's ecological approach (2000, 2002) posits that languages automatically readjust themselves to fit into the environment and that they are maintained precisely through language contact, rather than in isolation. I have argued elsewhere (García, 2009) that this stable, and yet dynamic communicative network, with many languages in functional interrelationship, might be better called *'transglossia'*. Indeed, bilingual education programs that succeed in making children bilingual and biliterate fill with potential the gap between the diglossic language arrangements that are often the hallmark of bilingual education programs, and the transglossic language practices of groups of students in classrooms.

Transglossia rests on, but goes beyond, the important concept of *heteroglossia* posited by Bakhtin (1981). Bakhtin speaks of the differences of language practices and the different social forces that move them. Transglossia
builds on these heteroglossic practices, but adds a dimension that has much to do with the concept of transculturación/transculturation coined by the Cuban ethnologist Ortiz (1940) in explaining the complex processes of cultural transformation in Cuban society. As Mignolo (2000) has pointed out, Ortiz' concept of transculturation questions the directionality of cultural transformations, and offers an alternative description to the myth that it was the European ‘discovery’ that constructed the Americas, by pointing out that it was the other way around. That is, the Americas created Europe, as riches from the Americas made it back. With reference to the history of tobacco and sugar, Ortiz posits that tobacco, chocolate, coffee and tea came into Europe when the Middle Ages were crumbling and the rationalism of the Renaissance and the Reformation was beginning. These stimulants would not intoxicate Europeans, as alcohol did, but would revive Europe. As Ortiz says:

The tobacco of the Antilles, the chocolate of Mexico, the coffee of Africa, and the tea of China. Nicotine, theobromine, caffeine, and theine – these four alkaloids were put at the service of humanity to make reason more alert. (Ortiz, [1940]1995: 206, cited in Mignolo, 2000: 169)

Transculturation, according to Ortiz, questions the epistemological purity of traditional descriptions and disciplines, as it affects the knowing subject because, as Mignolo (2000: 220) has expressed, it ‘infects the locus of enunciation’. Transculturation changes the principles of similar previous descriptions and transforms the views of how people interact. Transculturation involves what Mignolo (2000) calls ‘border thinking’ (Mignolo, 2000: 6) that produces ‘knowledge conceived from the exterior borders of the modern/colonial world system’ (Mignolo, 2000: 11).

In a similar way, transglossia releases ways of speaking of subaltern groups that had been previously fixed within static language identities and are constrained by the modern/colonial world system. Thus, transglossia has little to do with the static maintenance of two or more languages of nation-states and other societal groups, maintaining the asymmetry of language practices. The focus of transglossia is, as Mignolo (2000: 231) claims, to question and transgress ‘the coloniality of power and knowledge’. The objective of transglossia is to have subaltern groups develop what Mignolo calls ‘an other tongue’; that is, ‘the necessary condition for “an other thinking” and for the possibility of moving beyond the defense of national languages and national ideologies – both of which have been operating in complicity with imperial powers and imperial conflicts’ (Mignolo, 2000: 249). Whereas diglossia was said to rely on static language patterns in different domains to achieve stability and the preservation of group bilingual practices, transglossia refers to the fluid language practices that question traditional descriptions built on national myths, as well as challenging the locus of enunciation.
Transglossia in bilingual and multilingual classrooms is enacted through practices that I and others, extending Williams (cited in Baker, 2006), have called translanguaging (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García, 2009). Translanguaging for me is the process by which bilinguals engage in complex discursive practices that release ‘an other tongue’ and that change the principles which have been established by those in power. These principles, often, although not always, upheld by monolinguals, are the product of monoglossic ideologies, that is, beliefs that languages are autonomous systems. In blending transculturation and languaging, the term translanguaging responds to the complex and multidirectional processes in the language practices of peoples that, as in Ortiz’s transculturación, ‘has something of both parents (languages) but is always different from each of them’ (Ortiz [1940] 1995: 103). As such, translanguaging challenges the view of languages, as used by all speakers, especially those who are bilingual and multilingual, as autonomous and pure. Translanguaging then is a product of border thinking, of subaltern knowledge conceived from a bilingual/multilingual and not monolingual position. Translanguaging transgresses reified categories of language, exposing meanings and histories buried within fixed language systems and identities.

Translanguaging subsumes code-switching — which is usually defined as the shift between two languages in context — and it also incorporates translation, but it differs from both of these practices in that translanguaging refers to the process by which bilingual people make sense and perform bilingually in myriad other tongues, as fixed identities and meanings are questioned, and new signification is made.

Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom is precisely a way of working in the gap between, on the one hand, the global designs of nation-states and their education systems that set up bilingual programs with strict compartmentalization between languages and, on the other hand, the local histories of peoples who ‘language’ differently, especially in bilingual situations. The languaging in the classrooms to be portrayed below shows the tensions between the global design of the United States in educating immigrants and language minorities, and the local histories of those students. As we will see, in their design, these classrooms separate languages, and sometimes are supposed to exclude the minority language. In reality, students and teachers violate these compartmentalizations, acting on their border thinking, as they make new meanings of what it is to be bilingual in the United States.

Classrooms and Bilingual Students in the United States

In the United States, the possibilities of using languages other than English in educating language minorities and language majorities are shrinking.
English-speaking monolinguals have rarely been interested in acquiring an additional language, and the teaching of ‘foreign’ languages usually begins in high school at the age of 15. However, since the Bilingual Education Act was passed in 1968, Spanish in particular, but also other languages of immigrants, as well as of Native Americans, have been used, alongside English, to educate minorities. Most of these programs have been of the transitional bilingual-education type, which use languages other than English only until students have developed English proficiency. Very few developmental maintenance bilingual-education programs have offered language minorities the possibility of being educated in English and other languages. With the growing interest in the learning of Spanish and Chinese in recent years, some immersion bilingual-education programs have been developed for speakers of English. The ubiquity of Spanish speakers and other language minorities, however, has also made it possible to develop some two-way immersion bilingual-education programs (also known as dual language), in which immigrant children with limited proficiency in English (usually Spanish speakers, but also mainly speakers of Chinese, Korean and Russian) are taught together with Anglophone children who are learning these languages. However, in the insistence on naming these programs ‘dual’ rather than bilingual lies a tale, for the US has moved in recent years towards silencing bilingualism in education (see García, 2009; García & Kleifgen, 2010; Hornberger, 2006; Wiley, 2005). The insistence has been on either teaching in English only or, when teaching bilingually, on doing so strictly compartmentalizing the languages, insisting on the students’ ‘dual’ and separate language systems. Nevertheless, teachers and children, as will be shown below, constantly transgress these diglossic arrangements, constructing their meaning on the flexible multiplicity of translanguaging (García; 2009) and the dynamic bilingualism of 21st century citizens.

The goal of bilingual education programs in the 21st century must be to develop the students’ dynamic bilingualism; that is, the ability to use complex discourse practices in functional interrelationship, the ability to translangua, rather than the ability to develop the linear additive bilingualism of the past (García, 2009). These complex multilingual discourse practices have been readily observed in bilingual and multilingual classrooms throughout the world (e.g. Cummins, 2007; García et al., 2011; Lewis, 2008; Manyak, 2004; Saxena, 2009). However, these language practices need different support, and despite strict diglossic arrangements that separate languages according to the strategies delineated above, there are flexible multiple arrangements of language practices (García, 2009), all of which are evident in the classrooms that I describe below:

- Responsible code-switching both ways, that is, to offer meaningful instructional support, and as a systematic sense-making process.
- Preview/view/review, with one set of language practices used to preview the lesson, another set to view the lesson, and either language to review it.
• *Translanguaging* in the way defined by Williams (1997), as a pedagogy that alternates the language of input with the language of output.
• *Co-languaging*, with two or more languages used simultaneously, often enabled through technology.
• *Cross-linguistic work and awareness*, with contrastive analysis and cross-linguistic work being part of the instruction for different effects and reflection.

Despite diglossic arrangements and the functional allocation of languages, most students and teachers in bilingual education classrooms work in the gap between the global designs and the local practices. The classrooms to be discussed below, mostly for Latino immigrant children, show how in the United States – despite little interest in advancing bilingualism, and bilingual education programs that speak to the primacy of English – the local histories of its Latino participants enable complex translanguaging. These multiple discursive practices result not only in making visible histories of oppression and differential power tensions but also, over time, in developing standard academic English as well as standard academic Spanish. To make this process visible, we look at structures and practices in different kinds of classrooms and programs for English–Spanish bilinguals in the US, and specifically in New York City.

New York City has been called the Multilingual Apple (García & Fishman, 1997). Fifty-two percent of the population over five years of age (3,712,467 people) speak a language other than English at home (US Census Bureau, 2009). Although Spanish is indeed the largest language in the city, spoken by 24% of the population over five years of age, the language diversity in New York is greater than in most US cities, indicating its global reach.

Below, I describe the use of translanguaging in four ethnographic case studies of New York classrooms with emergent bilinguals that I have conducted over the years. The classrooms range from a kindergarten to high school classrooms. Two of the classrooms are two-way, ‘dual language’ programs. One is officially an English as a second language (ESL) classroom. The high school classrooms are different – there are transitional bilingual education classrooms, English as a second language classrooms and what I have called ‘dynamic bilingual’ classrooms (García & Kleifgen, 2010), where adolescents themselves are in control of the language they use in order to make sense of instruction. Some of these classrooms have been described extensively in other publications and I will refer to these below. My objective in describing them again here collectively is to allow us to look at translanguaging for different purposes and contexts and with various age groups.

A two-way bilingual kindergarten

This is a class of five-year-olds in a two-way bilingual kindergarten, the first schooling experience for most children. The teachers, Maia Starcevic
and Alexandra Terry, have developed a side-by-side model, meaning that they share 27 children with Starcevic teaching in English only in one room, and Alexandra teaching in Spanish only in another room, and children going back and forth between the two rooms and the two languages of instruction. Half of the children, all Spanish-speaking Latinos, have been assessed before school started with a New York State test, the Language Assessment Battery Revised, and have been found to have 'limited proficiency in English'. Thus they have been classified as 'English language learners'. The other half have been classified as fluent English speakers, and most are not Latinos. But the fact that half the children are Spanish speakers and the other half are English speakers is only an illusion. Among those who are English speakers, eight of 13 are bilingual. Some are speakers of Spanish at home; others speak languages other than English at home – Arabic, Italian, Portuguese or Urdu. Among the English speakers, there are some who are immigrant children, having arrived in the US after birth. Among the Spanish speakers, four out of 14 were born in the US. Often there are children who have lived in English-speaking and Spanish-speaking countries and contexts, sometimes because they have traveled back and forth, or at other times because their mothers have married, divorced and remarried, and their families have been reconstituted several times. Despite the apparent homogeneity of one group and the other, there are huge differences among individuals in the groups that have been constituted as simply English-speaking and Spanish-speaking.

The less structured classroom context of a kindergarten class, coupled with the fact that young children often speak to themselves, makes this a most appropriate context to listen to the language of emergent bilingual children. The observations that follow were documented during the first three months of schooling in 2007 (for more on this study, see García, 2011).

On one occasion, the English teacher has taken the children who are new to English outside for a lesson on comparisons. The children are sitting in a circle and I am sitting next to a girl, Angélica, who is mumbling under her breath. The teacher is asking the students to repeat: 'This tree is bigger. That tree is smaller.' Angélica is trying out under her breath what she knows. 'This tree is...', and then she stops and grins to herself as she says: 'grander'. For Angélica, this is part of her languaging, drawing from her 'grande' home language practices to make sense of the new language practices that she is confronting in school.

Another day, Alfredo, another Spanish-speaking child who is new to English, is having a snack at his table in the English-language room. I am sitting at the same table. The children around him have different language practices. As he looks up, he sees it is raining, and in Spanish he says, 'Mira, está lloviendo' ['Look, it's raining']. But as he looks around at the children at his table, he realizes that some of his classmates will not understand him, so he quickly says, 'There's washing afuera'. It is the bilingual girl sitting next
to him who responds to him, immediately insisting that he follow the language protocol of the classroom. After explaining to me that Alfredo speaks Spanish, ‘only Spanish’, she tells him, ‘Alfredo, raining’. Alfredo quickly picks up on what she is saying, and repeats, ‘Raining’. Alfredo translanguages to make himself understood by all; the bilingual girl mediates to ensure that he follows the ‘right’ language of the classroom. And Alfredo quickly acquiesces by repeating ‘raining’.

In this classroom, children quickly learn that their language practices need to be pinned to one language or the other, and develop attitudes about what is one language or the other. In the Spanish-language classroom, children constantly label what they are learning to say as Spanish. For example, on one occasion, María, a bilingual Latina, is playing with letters alongside Oscar, an English-speaking boy, and speaking in Spanish to me, sitting beside them. She is conscious of the fact that in two minutes play time will be over, and tells me: ‘En dos minutos cuando dicen, a limpiar...’ ['In two minutes when they say, clean...']. Immediately Oscar, who is listening, recognizing the words ‘a limpiar’, tells me: ‘A limpiar means clean up, and pare means time out. That’s Spanish’ (17 October 2007). More than learning Spanish, these students are learning to label some of their language practices as English, and others as Spanish.

Despite the territorial and curricular structures to separate languages in this kindergarten class, the children can only make sense of what they are learning precisely by transgressing those structures. Thus, translanguaging allows the new significations that are the product of learning, but also of language development which includes standard English and standard Spanish.

An English-only third/fourth grade

Christina Celic teaches an elementary school classroom for 26 third and fourth graders (eight- and nine-year-olds) who are all emergent bilinguals; some are recent immigrants and others were born in the United States. The school has only an ESL program and thus classroom instruction is supposed to be in English only. Although most children are from Latin America, there are also four Chinese speakers and a Nepalese-speaking child. Christina speaks English natively, but she has lived in Spain and is married to a Spaniard; thus, she is bilingual in English and Spanish.

Christina uses a balanced-literacy workshop approach to the teaching of English reading and writing (see her own description of her practices in Celic, 2009). For her mini-lessons, she calls students to the rug in the front of the room. Sometimes during the mini-lesson Christina reads a book out loud; at other times, she teaches an explicit language function or form. The children sit in twos and threes on the floor, grouped heterogeneously by English language ability. That is, children who have more English proficiency are paired
with those who have less. Christina scaffolds the mini-lesson by modeling intensely and then providing the children with an opportunity to discuss what she has explicitly taught or read. To do that, she asks the children to ‘turn and talk’ to their partner(s) and to discuss (or repeat) what she has modeled. But not all the children can make sense of what Christina has taught. Some have understood it fully and can produce it; others, not so much. Thus, the groups of children work in and out of English, offering explanations in Spanish in some groups, in Chinese in others. The Nepalese child often pairs up with Christina, who offers pictures, drawings and acting out to contextualize the task.

When the children go back to their desks to read and write, they continue to work in collaborative groups, but this time in larger groups of about six students who are more homogeneous in English literacy. That is, children reading at a similar level of English work together, reading the same text, interrogating each other, discussing ideas. Although the children read in English, they translanguage as they discuss the texts. Every day, Christina works with a different reading group in guided reading, providing an introduction and orientation to the text, and presenting key vocabulary. When working with Spanish-speaking groups of very low English proficiency, Christina does this in Spanish. She then listens to them read in English. She often makes students repeat in English, and sometimes asks students for translations or does so herself. Finally, the discussion that ensues about the reading material often takes place in Spanish with children encouraged to translanguage as they try out their ideas with new language practices.

Although Christina cannot provide bilingual guided reading to the Chinese-speaking group, she does allow discussion to take place in Chinese among the children. Often, the children write translations to key vocabulary in word walls in Chinese, and the Chinese children, as well as all the children including the Nepalese child, have dictionaries that they often use.

It is during independent reading that the children have the most opportunities to work through their own language practices. Christina provides zip-lock bags with authentic children’s books in English, as well as books in Spanish, Chinese and Nepalese at their own grade level. Even though the Spanish children’s books have been leveled by New York City’s Department of Education, the same cannot be said of Chinese and Nepalese books. For that, Christina has involved the Chinese and Nepalese parents, as well as the community.

In writing, Christina allows students to write essays in Spanish, Chinese or Nepalese. Although she can read the Spanish students’ writing, she often asks students to provide her with an oral summary of what the essays are about in English or has one of the other students do so. She encourages students to use the English they know in order to write essays, and points out to them how expert literary texts are often bilingual. They also explore the effect of writing bilingually. By allowing the children to develop a languaging
voice as authors regardless of the official classroom language, and to trans-language, the children become authors very quickly, able eventually to write an essay in standard academic English when prompted to do so.

Christina's classroom is, in principle, in English only. However, the multilingual realities of the classroom are performed in translanguaging ways every day, as the children make sense of what is being communicated and taught through home language practices that are far from those sanctioned by the school.

A Fifth Grade two-way bilingual classroom

Maritza Rfos' and Nancy Soto's fifth grade classrooms are part of a two-way bilingual education program where children who started out as English speakers and those starting out as Spanish speakers have been educated together in English and Spanish since kindergarten. After five years of instruction, these 22 10- and 11-year-old children, both Latinos and non-Latinos, are mostly bilingual. Last year, two children arrived from Latin America, and this year one new child has arrived. Except for these three recently arrived children, the others prefer English for academic and social tasks.

Maritza and Nancy divide English and Spanish strictly. For example, Maritza teaches in Spanish in the morning and English in the afternoon. In the morning, she teaches US history in Spanish. And yet, one often finds children making sense of the history lesson by reading passages in English and discussing the Spanish-language texts in English. For example, since students are taught to write essays for the English Language Arts Assessment following English literacy discourse conventions, on a particular day I found a student who was following the written instructions that had been given to her in English for the English Language Arts class, in order to develop a Spanish language essay on the topic of colonial life in the US. It is perhaps the review lesson for the Social Studies New York State exam that gives us the best glimpse of the translanguagings in these classrooms.

The New York State Education Department translates content tests into five languages – Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Russian and Haitian Creole – in order to ensure that immigrant students with low levels of English proficiency are not unfairly penalized in assessing content knowledge. Although the students have been studying social studies in Spanish, Nancy's class has decided that they would prefer to take the state exam in English, proof of their greater comfort with English at this stage. As bilingually instructed students, they will be allowed to have both forms of the test (the English and the Spanish) on their desks and to go from one to the other. All answers, however, will have to be written in English.

The review lesson takes place in English, following an old test paper. However, the newly arrived child has been given the same old review test in
Spanish, and he is following along in Spanish as the teacher and the rest of the students discuss in English. Their English discourse is often interrupted to translate for the Spanish-speaking child. At other times, they stop to read from their Spanish text or from notes that they have written in Spanish. When this happens, English 'seeps' in. They go back to writing answers in the review test in English, however, understanding that despite their ability to translanguage, the New York State Education Department will only allow answers in standard academic English. Although their translanguage validates their complex language practices and enables them to make sense of their learning, it is also precisely what scaffolds their production of standard academic English.

As in Christina Celic's classroom, Maritza Rios and Nancy Soto also use a workshop-type balanced literacy approach. The classrooms have many sets of authentic children's literature, chapter books that children read in 'book clubs'. In the morning the book clubs are in Spanish, whereas in the afternoon they are in English. Children are taught to put post-it notes in the pages and paragraphs where they might have a question or an idea that connects the text to others or to themselves as they read independently. This will enable them to have a focused discussion later in their book clubs. The post-it notes are not collected by the teachers, making it possible for students to display all their language prowess. Translanguage is then the most prevalent language practice for the post-it notes, facilitating the meaning-making of students whose language practices are fluid, despite the compartmentalizations to which their language practices are subjected in school.

As students get older, the understandings and messages imparted in school lessons get more complicated. As we will see in the next section, translanguage is then the only way to ensure that emergent bilingual adolescents make meaning from lessons imparted in English, and develop the standard language practices of high schools.

High schools for emergent bilinguals

Is it possible to effectively teach immigrant newcomer adolescents who are emergent bilinguals in English only or even bilingually if there is strict language separation? The answer, according to our study of Latinos in New York City High Schools (LAT-NYHS) is a resounding 'no'. During the 2009–2010 academic year, our research team conducted seven case studies of highly effective New York City high schools that had very high percentages of Latino students who were emergent bilinguals, but also had very high graduation rates. Three of the high schools claimed to have English-only instruction, while four of the high schools claimed to have transitional bilingual education programs. What we found, however, was that whether the programs were structurally English-only or bilingual, the practices that were observed in classrooms and which teachers and students described to the researchers were those of translanguage.
In the bilingual high schools for Latino newcomers, students generally have three 45-minute periods of ESL a day, while the rest of the content classes (science, math and social studies) are supposed to be taught in Spanish. Yet the insistence on higher standards in English and on passing high-stakes graduation exams in English fueled by No Child Left Behind legislation has made translanguaging the only way to give emergent bilingual adolescents practice with English while teaching content in Spanish, and meaning in Spanish while teaching content in English.

Whether in English-only or bilingual programs, teachers in content classes constantly translanguate so that students take up vocabulary and structures in English. The graphic organizers that teachers provide students in order to scaffold the English reading are often bilingual; at other times, they are in Spanish. In some classes, the same school text is available in both English and Spanish, and teachers, even in English-only classrooms, allow these adolescents to make use of the Spanish texts.

In a bilingual high school, a teacher teaching science in Spanish uses a book written in English, as well as English-language material on earthquakes available online. An example of the classroom discourse follows. The teacher says, ‘Hit the bar. Vamos con el foco. ¿Quién me puede leer lo que dice el foco en inglés?’ [Let’s go to the focus. Who can read to me what the focus says in English?]. A student then reads in English. The teacher follows up by saying: ‘What does it say?’ A student answers, ‘Focus is foco ... y abajo, underground, cuando hay un break, allí es que ocurre el earthquake. . . .’ The teacher repeats English phrases that students understand. The students are required to read in English, but then to translate. Their translation, however, is never a traditional one. They are not translating from English into Spanish, as the teacher thinks they are. The students are simply translanguaging, using discourse strategies that they are beginning to integrate as they acquire these other language practices from school that some call ‘English’. The use of the word ‘break’ with what some might call Spanish phonology points in this direction. Bilingual students use languages fluidly, but are also schooled into understanding when they can and cannot use these fluid language practices. In this bilingual classroom, intent on teaching science, students know that they can translanguate. Their fluid language practices emerge as they make quick sense of what they are learning (for more on this case, see Bartlett & Garcia, 2011).

With the higher stakes tests that students are required to take, ESL high school classes have given up on the communicative approaches of the past and are using cognitive approaches, focusing on writing and critical skills. To get there, translanguaging is key. Thus, for example, students read novels that they have already read in their Spanish-language class, and often use both texts alongside each other. They write essays in English, as practice for their English graduation exam, although they use dictionaries and glossaries. They have practiced the written discourse strategies needed for the English
graduation exam in their Spanish-language classrooms, and often look up those notes as they write the English essays.

The math teacher portrayed below teaches in another school for emergent bilinguals. She uses a preview-view-review mode for her teaching where she previews the content in English and follows it with a lesson supposedly in Spanish. However, her discourse reveals how she uses translanguaging effectively to make the math content comprehensible and, at the same time, to develop the school language practices in English needed for the English graduation exam:

"¿Cuál es la diferencia entre perímetro y área?"
[What is the difference between perimeter and area?]

"Repite. What is the difference between perimeter and area?"

"¿Qué palabra es nueva para ustedes aquí?"
[Which word is new for you here?]

"Ustedes saben que pueden usar inglés, spanglish o español, ¿verdad que sí?"
[You know that you may use English, Spanglish or Spanish, right?]

"Quiero que usen mi amigo mío, el diccionario, porque si no traducen no aprendemos. Por eso les doy la clase primero en inglés ..."
[I want you to use my friend, the dictionary, because if we don’t translate we don’t learn. That’s why I give you the class in English first ...]

The teacher is not only using translanguaging effectively, but gives students metacognitive strategies to use translanguaging to learn on their own. She points to cognates and words they can recognize in the discourse. She encourages them to use all their language practices, to translanguage, to translate, to use the dictionary, to go from one language practice to another. The students in this class are not only learning math, they are learning how to survive linguistically in a context that values certain language practices and not others, precisely by using their own home language practices to integrate new ones.

Despite school structures that keep out Spanish by stating that they are English only, or school structures that separate the two languages in ways that alienate speakers of Spanish who do not see themselves represented in the monolingual academic Spanish of the classroom, teachers and students are negotiating these monolingual and diglossic arrangements (for more on teachers as policy makers, see Menken & García, 2010). Teachers seem to understand that the language practices of US Latino students can only function in integrative and interdependent ways, and that this fluidity is needed in order to develop both content knowledge and language. And yet, in doing so, teachers are also preparing students to use translanguaging metacognitively, to ensure that they learn on their own, and to understand when to suppress their fluid language practices in order to perform the monolingual and monocultural identities that schools, even bilingual ones, demand.
Conclusions

It is in classrooms where the tension between global and national designs, on the one hand, and local practices and desires, on the other, are made more evident. Schools will continue to be mostly monolingual, and on occasion, bilingual, even though students around the world are mostly bilingual. Bilingual education programs in the 21st century must not only extend to all, minorities and majorities, but must engage in the tension created by the desire to teach academic language according to monolingual standards, and the dynamic language practices of bilinguals.

I end with the monologue of a bilingual Latino boy, Pablo, in the kindergarten classroom described earlier. Pablo is sitting next to me and playing with an 'Etch a Sketch' board, where, as he turns the knobs, the image that he has drawn disappears:

"Esto es magic. Yo puedo hacer magic. Mira, se borró todo, y aquí está."  
[This is magic. I can do magic. Look, it was all erased, and here it is.]

"Es magic ... Mira que es magic. Y aquí está."  
[It's magic ... Look, it's magic. And here it is!]

"Mira, son papeles. Y los encerraron aquí, pa' que los hagamos."  
[Look, they're papers. And they put them in here, so we can do them.]

"I just erased it with my hand."

At this point, the English-speaking assistant teacher gives him a worksheet. Pablo turns toward her and asks,

"Can I do this with pencil?"

"I need some. I need this one. I could write ..."

But as he starts writing on the worksheet, the magic is gone, for he cannot erase, he cannot do, he can only do it badly.

"Mira, ¿quieres ver?"  
[Look, do you want to see?]

"Este no se borra con la mano."  
[You can't erase this with your hand.]

"Y esto lo vamos a llevar a mi casa."  
[And we are taking this to my house.]

He speaks to himself, as he writes his name,

"¡Ay, qué mal! Es que siempre lo hago mal."  
[Oh, so bad! You know, I always do it wrong.]
Speaking to himself again because he did not write his name on the paper. (9 October 2007)

I use this as a metaphor for what happens to bilingual students in classrooms that do not recognize their translanguagings, their many movable and changing signs, leading bilingual students to think that their language is always wrong – like Pablo’s, ‘siempre lo hago mal’. Restricting language to one form or the other, and identities to one or the other, does not take into consideration the fluid language practices and identities of most students today. Only when all teachers allow students to erase and weave their different and fluid language practices and linguistic identities will bilingual education programs hold promise. The promise of bilingualism in education lies in its potential for liberating ‘other tongues’ that would let loose the imagination of all students. For language minority students, the promise of bilingual education programs also lies in the possibility that translanguaging might release the histories and meanings of oppression that are often hidden in the fixed meanings, identities and languages assigned to them. In being allowed to name their realities with dynamic translanguaging, language minority bilingual students will also have more possibilities of incorporating into their linguistic repertoire standard academic language practices that do not compete, but that work in unison with their more fluid language practices.

Notes

(1) I would like to thank Claire Fontaine for her careful reading of an earlier draft of this chapter. I also want to thank the teachers and students in the classrooms and schools that I portray here. They have welcomed me into their classrooms and enabled me to see their practices. Without their generosity, none of this could have been seen and described here.

(2) The Bilingual Education Act was Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Act was first authorized in 1968 and was up for reauthorization every four years. As a result of this Act, the US Congress provided funds for school districts which started bilingual education programs for language minority students. The 1974 reauthorization defined bilingual education as transitional.

(3) This case was more thoroughly described in García (2011).

(4) LAT-NYHS was a collaborative study of RISLUS and the PhD Program in Urban Education at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, funded by the New York City Department of Education, and conducted from September 2009 to January 2011. The Research Team was made up of Ofelia García (Principal Investigator), Haiwen Chu, Nelson Flores, Heather Woodley, Laura Kaplan and Suzanne Dikker. See García, Woodley, Flores and Chu (2012).

(5) The No Child Left Behind Legislation (2001) required that all states test students in certain grades in exchange for federal funding. The legislation also stipulated that all sub-groups of students, including those classified as ‘Limited English Proficient’, become proficient in Math and Reading by the year 2014. In November 2011, the Obama administration offered flexibility from meeting this requirement in exchange for serious state-led efforts to close achievement gaps, promote rigorous accountability and ensure that all students were on track to graduate.
References


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