

*Annamária Kacsur*

## **Good practices of pedagogical translanguaging: A global overview of emergence, development, and classroom applications**

### **1. Introduction**

The notion of multilingualism, which examines the ability of an individual to use more than one language efficiently in diverse contexts, has long been a feature of several societies, but its recognition as an intellectual, cultural, and economic asset has become more distinct in recent decades. The compound process of globalization, migration, and technological developments has encouraged more frequent intercultural exchanges, amplifying the need for multilingual communication. This is particularly evident in urban centres where linguistic diversity is becoming the norm, and in digital platforms that facilitate cross-linguistic interaction.

Wherever multilingualism is present and languages are intermingled, the phenomenon of translanguaging emerges. Translanguaging, compared to multilingualism, is a relatively recent concept in sociolinguistics. It refers to the dynamic process through which multilingual individuals navigate between and blend their languages in fluid and creative ways (García, 2009). Unlike traditional views that treat languages as separate, bounded systems, translanguaging recognizes the flexible, integrated nature of multilingual communication. It highlights how speakers draw from their entire linguistic repertoires to make meaning, depending on context and need (Otheguy-García-Reid, 2015).

Both forementioned concepts are becoming central to educational policies and pedagogical practices worldwide. In schools, translanguaging is recognized as a powerful tool for promoting inclusive education, particularly for students from linguistically diverse backgrounds (Schwartz-Asli, 2014; García-Lin, 2017; Scibetta-Carbonara, 2020).

Transcarpathia is a territory that exemplifies the abovementioned linguistic diversity. The present paper aims to provide the region's teachers with a brief overview of translanguaging and pedagogical translanguaging, as so far, the

journals published in this county have not yet addressed this issue. The reader may find useful information about their emergence and development in various countries, as well as examples of teachers' good practices.

## **2. The phenomenon of translanguaging**

The phenomena of multilingualism have long captivated the attention of scholars, educators, and philologists (García, 2009; Creese-Blackledge, 2010; Cenoz-Gorter, 2015). This term refers to the peculiar capacity of individuals or communities to sinuously navigate and utilize multiple languages in their everyday lives. As our world becomes ever more interconnected, the need to understand and accept this linguistic diversity has never been more critical (Saville-Troike, 2012).

Individuals who speak more than one language, or more than one version of a language, have long been accustomed to using different elements of their linguistic repertoire at the same time. Branching out from this observation, a new concept, translanguaging, came to the fore in the 1990s. The word translanguaging was first used by Cen Williams in the Welsh form: *trawsieithu* (Lewis-Jones-Baker, 2012). Since then, translanguaging has become a concept that has gained significant attention in the globalised world and in the field of multilingual education. It entails the seamless incorporation and dynamic utilization of various languages and linguistic systems for effective communication (Poza, 2017, p. 102). According to one of the most renowned researchers of this topic, Ofelia García, translanguaging is characterized by versatile features, as is an effective method that focuses on the linguistic abilities, the actions and behaviors of multilingual individuals (García, 2009). Another main concept that characterizes this phenomenon is that translanguaging is a practice that deploys linguistic resources without regard to the boundaries of traditional language categorizations. Individuals do not switch between separate linguistic systems but instead draw from a unitary linguistic repertoire (Otheguy-García-Reid, 2015).

It is important to differentiate between translanguaging and code-switching, as they are rooted in distinct theoretical frameworks and have different objectives in educational contexts. Translanguaging views multilingual individuals as having a unified linguistic repertoire that combines all their language resources, which can be purposefully leveraged to support communication and learning. In contrast, code-switching involves alternating between two or more languages within a conversation or discourse. Translanguaging extends beyond code-switching by embracing the fluid and flexible nature of language use. Rather than simply switching between individual words or phrases, translanguaging involves the integration of multiple languages

across broader teaching and communication practices, such as using different languages for explanations, instructions, or discussions. Moreover, translanguaging emphasizes the agency of speakers, highlighting their ability to consciously select and use different languages for specific purposes in educational settings, giving them more control over their language choices (García-Otheguy, 2021).

In addition to the abovementioned properties, translanguaging encompasses both a linguistic practice and an educational strategy employed in multilingual contexts and learning environments. One of the new terms coined in the past two decades is translanguaging practice. As a linguistic practice, translanguaging acknowledges that languages are not isolated, distinct units, but rather interconnected systems that can be flexibly employed to enhance communication (Canagarajah, 2018).

In its role as an educational strategy, translanguaging recognizes and appreciates the diverse linguistic abilities of students. This approach promotes the use of students' complete linguistic repertoire, including their native language, within the classroom setting to facilitate learning and enhance both language proficiency and subject matter comprehension. The following section looks at how pedagogical translanguaging has emerged as a valuable educational tool in different countries throughout the world, with particular attention to our region, Transcarpathia.

### **3. The theory and practice of pedagogical translanguaging**

In accordance with the information provided in the previous section, pedagogical translanguaging is an educational strategy that utilizes the linguistic resources of multilingual speakers to enhance both language acquisition and content comprehension. This approach aligns closely with multilingual teaching methods, as it leverages the diverse language skills of students to facilitate learning. By recognizing the value of students' multilingual repertoires, which encompass their various language abilities, pedagogical translanguaging aims to activate these linguistic resources to support language development and metalinguistic awareness. Moreover, this instructional technique is situated within the broader framework of multilingual education, serving as a specific approach within this educational context.

Pedagogical translanguaging examines the potential of harnessing a child's ability to comprehend and utilize multiple languages within the educational setting and throughout the process of acquiring knowledge (Cenoz-Gorter, 2021, p. 1). Consequently, by harnessing the power of translanguaging, educators empower a fair and inclusive approach to education (García-Wei, 2014, p. 119).

Pedagogical translanguaging can also be understood as planned by the teacher inside the classroom so that multilingual learners can benefit from their entire linguistic repertoire (García-Kleyn, 2016). Translanguaging in this context is never accidental, but strategic. This strategy involves three elements connected to the teacher: stance, design and shift. First, the teacher develops a philosophical stance, which may even question the already existing ideologies. This stance positions the language in the minds of pupils and not in external policies. In order to realize it, teachers need to design the implementation of rules through instruction in the classroom. All the instruction connected to translanguaging have to be focused on the pupils and their needs. However, it can be only accomplished if the educators shift their attention from languages to pupils as individuals and language users (García-Kleyn, 2016).

Furthermore, pedagogical translanguaging is a part of the broader context of multilingual education too, as it is an instructional approach in the context of multilingual education. The usage of pedagogical translanguaging has been shown to have various benefits for both teachers and students. Bringing in different languages to a classroom may have a positive impact, as they are capable of reinforcing each other (Cenoz-Gorter, 2021, p. 3). Although it is widely argued that the aforementioned practice can be considered as a detriment to the use of the target language during foreign language teaching, according to recent research, accessing two or more languages during the same lesson does not mean less exposure to the target language (Cenoz-Gorter, 2021).

In the following, through examples brought from various countries, it is shown how pedagogical translanguaging has become the focus of attention around the world and has been gradually integrated into the education system.

A vast proportion of the research on this topic has been carried out in the USA. This is due to a number of reasons, the main one being the linguistic and practical competence of teachers. Many teachers working in U.S. bilingual programs consider themselves highly proficient in a second language. Surveys show that Spanish is the second language in most cases (Faltis, 2020, p. 41). This also reflects the language needs of learners. In the southern part of the country, the Fishman Rule (Fishman et al., 1967, p. 32) was introduced, whereby non-native English-speaking pupils were allowed to use their mother tongue freely during the first year, with only 10% of the education being in English. Later research suggested that this should be changed to 50–50% (Faltis, 2020, p. 43). In addition to the language issue, the practical skills of teachers are also crucial for language use in schools. According to a Texas-based study, part of their training is to prepare them for the following aspects of teaching: creating a space where the linguistic background of each pupil is accepted and leveraged, and following the outline of critical language awareness (Henderson-Sayer, 2020, p.

208). Following the development of the aforementioned practices and growing in popularity across the country in the present century, pedagogical translanguaging now offers both monolingual and multilingual teachers a secure option for developing pupils through their home language through its transformative, dynamic and flexible nature (Garcia-Woodley, 2015, p. 137).

From the learners' perspective, translanguaging offers more opportunities to successfully carry out oral tasks, and to make reading tasks less monotonous for children who have immigrated to the United States. Regarding the former, the practices showed that their skills improved the most through storytelling: learners were more confident in their use of dialogue and reported speech. It may be worth allowing learners to use the voicing, gestures, and facial expressions of their own culture during oral tasks. It creates a familiar environment and relieves tension. Teacher feedback should not aim at correcting grammatical errors, but at regulating the switching between languages. Regarding the reading tasks, teachers who use translanguaging prefer speech-oriented approaches. The text is accompanied by pictures that help readers to process information, and the answers are discussed orally rather than in written form. For this part of the task, pupils can use a language other than the target language. However, teachers must ensure that each pupil's language is represented to achieve successful class work (Gort, 2020).

In parallel with the United States, one can find several instances of pedagogical translanguaging on the European continent. Italy is one of the leading countries in this respect, as more than 826,000 foreign pupils attend Italian institutions. Therefore, one can find consensus amongst policymakers and practitioners that translanguaging in education should not be periodic or limited to one subject, but that continuity is important (Scibetta-Carbonara, 2020, p. 116). Similarly to the American model, the first steps were to carry out ethnolinguistic investigations and adopt the concept of critical language awareness. However, they went one step further, and actively involved the parents and pupils in the process: preparing language portrait activities for them and observing classrooms. It was followed by the relevant teacher training and trial period. In regions of the country where non-indigenous linguistic minorities live, support courses have been introduced in schools as a trial period. Here pupils have become accustomed to the new classroom practices starting in the elementary school. Young learners of EFL could name objects first in their own (non-Italian) language, and only then in English. It was meant to show that their languages were appreciated, and how the task had to be carried out. In addition to English, the trial period covered other subjects such as mathematics. Teachers suggest that in multilingual classes more time should be devoted to teaching the curriculum, as parallel to it they also teach Italian and cover practical skills to be used in Italy (Scibetta-Carbonara, 2020, p. 124).

Research carried out in the subsequent years emphasised that cultural mediation and success in the acquisition of Italian L2 are important positive elements in the implementation of pedagogical translanguaging. However, the issue of class composition was raised in several instances. Participants of the education hope that by establishing the ordinariness of this practice may help smoothing the initial difficulties (Scibetta–Carbonara, 2020, p. 127).

Similarly to the Italian example, Scandinavian countries have a growing issue of increasingly multilingual classrooms. A concession can be observed here that pupils often have diverse linguistic backgrounds, including the languages of other European countries, but also Arabic Turkish or Kurdish. As Norway and Sweden prioritize educational equity, their schools have quickly taken advantage of the techniques and ideas behind pedagogical translanguaging. In the context of Norway and Denmark, the active practice of translanguaging may offer a solution for balancing between the minority languages' preservation and the acquisition of national languages. Thus, linguistic integration and language maintenance are both secured by the system (Simonsen–Karrebaek, 2019, p. 94).

Contrary to the above-mentioned examples, the Central and Eastern parts of Europe are characterized by linguistic diversity created by indigenous linguistic minorities. One of the affected territories is Transcarpathia, Ukraine's westernmost region, which is known for its rich linguistic diversity and multilingual culture, the harnessing of learners' multilingualism in education has gained recognition (Hires-László, 2015, p. 168). Studies on this subject have been compiled in one volume by the Antal Hodinka Linguistic Research Centre in 2015, but here the term 'code-switching' is used instead of translanguaging. Nevertheless, the approach of pedagogical translanguaging can be observed in the published material. This approach likely stems from its ability to both recognize and respect students' varied linguistic backgrounds, while also fostering a positive learning environment where students can draw on their full range of language skills to understand and express meaning across different settings. This is particularly crucial in Transcarpathia, where multiple languages, including Ukrainian, Russian, Hungarian, Romanian, Slovak, and others, coexist. It is essential for students to grasp that all languages hold value and play a key role in the process of acquiring knowledge. It is also worth mentioning that by adopting pedagogical translanguaging as a teaching method in Transcarpathian schools, educators can tap into learners' multilingual abilities to foster more inclusive and engaging learning environments. Using translanguaging techniques can also support language development and deepen students' comprehension of subject matter across various disciplines. For instance, allowing learners to incorporate their full linguistic repertoire in class discussions together with the target language, like English or Ukrainian, can be particularly advantageous.

A similar situation prevails in neighbouring countries, such as Slovakia and Romania. Romania is home to several linguistic minorities, including Hungarian, Ukrainian, and German speakers, while Slovakia's minorities are Hungarians, Ruthenians, and Ukrainians. In these countries pedagogical translanguaging is more frequently observed in areas with significant minority population, mainly Hungarian. However, its application tends to be informal and community-led, with a stronger focus on bilingual education (Brubaker, 2006). In these countries, much of the research on translanguaging is carried out by representatives of minorities. Learning the official language and history of the state can be difficult for minorities, but the introduction of translanguaging can make the process successful. As teacher training or the schools' adaptation is not as advanced here as in Italy, pupils can help each other a lot. Different sections of material can be assigned to different groups as project work for revision purposes. The teacher has to assign pupils with different mother tongue into each group. An important factor in this process is that the focus is always on the teacher's instructions: each one should be precise and encourage the learners (Tódor, 2021).

Eastwards, teachers in Asian countries have been exposed to the realities and usefulness of pedagogical translanguaging with the rise of the English language. South Korea is an outstanding example of how teachers are tackling the challenges of globalisation. Across the country, EFL teachers have faced first-hand the multilingual realities of their classrooms and have been subjected since then to several studies regarding the question of translanguaging in educational context. These surveys reported about positive changes and practices. For instance, teachers developed several activities focusing on translanguaging and everyday situations. They also reported that by first helping pupils understand the rules and truths of translanguaging, they can ensure successful dialogues in the future. As English is an integral part of Asian pop-culture, teachers have observed that students chat in both English and Korean. Following this trend, written exercises are sometimes carried out in chat format. This creates a sense of familiarity and a more creative way to correct any mistakes. However, teachers see the increasing number of English expressions becoming an integral part of the Korean language as a difficulty (Rabbidge, 2020).

Drawing on the preceding examples, it can be concluded that pedagogical translanguaging is an increasingly common phenomenon, and a growing body of research is being produced on its practice. It can be stated that from a pedagogical perspective, translanguaging functions not only as a mechanism for enhancing content comprehension but also as a means of bridging the gap between pupils' lived linguistic experiences and formal educational discourse. By facilitating connections between languages, cultures, and identities, it promotes multilingual competencies and fosters a more inclusive and responsive

educational practice. This provides a broader platform for both indigenous and non-indigenous minorities to experience their linguistic reality. Consequently, pedagogical translanguaging represents a significant paradigm shift from traditional language policies in education in American, European, and Asian countries, challenging educators to re-evaluate how language is conceptualized and utilized in multilingual learning environments.

#### **4. Summary**

In summary, while multilingualism is not a novel phenomenon in contemporary culture, the idea of translanguaging is still in its infancy. After all, Cen Williams only first introduced this term exactly 30 years ago, in 1994. However, it has since become an integral part of education in several countries under the notion of pedagogical translanguaging. As demonstrated by the examples of a range of cases, countries with both indigenous and non-indigenous language minorities can draw from its advantages. While enabling the instructed usage of translanguaging in education, teachers and policymakers give way to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of academic content. This way a more inclusive space is created for the pupils where validation of the existing knowledge occurs at the same time with the acquisition of new material in the target language. Through breaking down fixed language boundaries, translanguaging encourages intense learner participation. In addition, the use of several languages in learning promotes cognitive processes such as critical thinking, metacognitive awareness, and mental agility.

Nevertheless, as the example of the United States has shown, it has been a long journey and several amendments to the existing regulations that have led to the current improvements. Hopefully, as further successes similar to Italy's are discovered, more good practices will be implemented in the future.

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### **Good practices of pedagogical translanguaging: A global overview of emergence, development, and classroom applications**

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This paper deals with the concept of translanguaging as a powerful tool for fostering inclusive education in linguistically diverse settings. Translanguaging, unlike traditional views of languages as separate, bounded systems, recognizes the flexible, integrated nature of multilingual communication. It highlights how speakers draw from their entire linguistic repertoires to construct meaning, depending on context and need.

The paper aims to provide teachers in Transcarpathia with a comprehensive understanding of translanguaging and its pedagogical applications. It explores the historical development of the concept, its key characteristics, and its differentiation from code-switching. The paper also discusses the theory and practice of pedagogical translanguaging, highlighting its benefits for both teachers and students. It presents examples from various countries, including the United States, Italy, and South Korea, to illustrate how pedagogical translanguaging has been implemented in different educational contexts.

One of the core principles of translanguaging is that all languages are valuable and can be used to support learning. Teachers can create a more inclusive and equitable classroom environment where all learners feel valued and respected via accepting this principle. Translanguaging can also help students to develop a deeper understanding of the world around them by allowing them to connect their experiences across different languages and cultures.

In addition to its benefits for learners, translanguaging can also be a powerful tool for teachers. By using translanguaging strategies, teachers can create more engaging and interactive lessons that are relevant to their students' everyday lives. Translanguaging can also assist teachers to develop their own language skills and to become more culturally sensitive.

While the implementation of translanguaging in the classroom may require some initial training and planning, the benefits are well worth the effort. This paper provides valuable insights and practical guidance to support teachers in harnessing the power of translanguaging to enhance language acquisition, content comprehension, and overall student success.

**Keywords:** *Transcarpathia, translanguaging, pedagogical translanguaging, multilingualism, education.*

### **Досвід транслінгвізму в педагогіці: етапи виникнення, розвитку та застосування в навчальному процесі**

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У статті розглянуто концепцію навчання за допомогою транслінгвізму як ефективного інструменту для розвитку інклюзивної освіти в різноманітних мовних середовищах. На відміну від традиційних поглядів на мови як на окремі замкнені системи, транслінгвізм визнає гнучкий, інтегрований характер багатомовної комунікації. Він підкреслює важливість використання мовцями свого мовленнєвого запасу для створення значення залежно від контексту та потреб. Метою розвідки є розкриття сутності транслінгвізму та можливостей його застосування в педагогіці. Описано основні віхи розвитку транслінгвізму, представлено його особливості, акцентовано на відмінності цього явища від перемикання кодів. Розглянуто теорію і практику педагогічного транслінгвізму, підкреслено його переваги як для педагогів, так і для учнів. Продемонстровано, як педагогічний транслінгвізм застосовують у освітніх контекстах таких країн, як: США, Італії та Південній Кореї.

Один із основних принципів транслінгвізму полягає в тому, що всі мови є цінними і можуть використовуватися у процесі навчання. Згідно з цим принципом педагоги можуть створити більш сприятливе середовище в класі, коли кожен учень відчуватиме, що його цінують і поважають. Використання транслінгвізму в процесі навчання також може допомогти учням глибше зрозуміти довілля, дозволяє пов'язати свій досвід у різних мовах і культурах. Окрім переваг для учнів, транслінгвізм у процесі навчання може бути ефективним інструментом для вчителів. Виявлено, що використовуючи стратегії транслінгвізму, вчителі можуть створювати цікаві інтерактивні уроки, які відповідають життєвим потребам учнів. Це допоможе вчителям розвинути власні мовні навички і краще зрозуміти культурне різноманіття учнів. Зазначено, що впровадження стратегії транслінгвізму у процес навчання потребує певної первинної підготовки та планування, проте отримані результати вартуватимуть докладених зусиль.

У статті запропоновано цінні поради та практичні рекомендації, які допоможуть вчителям використовувати стратегії транслінгвізму з метою покращення результатів навчання мови та успішного засвоєння учнями навчальної програми.

**Ключові слова:** *Закарпаття, транслінгвізм, стратегія транслінгвізму в педагогіці, багатомовність, освіта.*

## A pedagógiai transzlingválás jó gyakorlatai. Megjelenésének, fejlődésének és tantermi alkalmazásának globális áttekintése

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Jelen tanulmány a transzlingválás koncepciójával foglalkozik, mely a nyelvileg sokszínű környezetben az inkluzív oktatás előmozdításának hatékony eszköze. A transzlingválás, ellentétben a nyelvekről mint különálló, korlátozott rendszerekről alkotott hagyományos nézetekkel, elismeri a többnyelvű kommunikáció rugalmas, integrált jellegét. Hangsúlyozza annak fontosságát, hogy a beszélők a teljes nyelvi repertoárjukat felhasználják a jelentésalkotáshoz, a kontextustól és a szükségletektől függően.

A tanulmány célja, hogy a kárpátaljai tanárok számára átfogó képet nyújtson a transzlingválásról és annak pedagógiai alkalmazásairól. Feltárja a fogalom fejlődését, főbb jellemzőit és a kódváltástól való megkülönböztetését. A tanulmány a pedagógiai transzlingválás elméletét és gyakorlatát is tárgyalja, kiemelve annak előnyeit mind a tanárok, mind a diákok számára. Különböző országokból – többek között az Egyesült Államokból, Olaszországból és Dél-Koreából – származó példákat mutat be annak illusztrálására, hogy a pedagógiai transzlingválást hogyan alkalmazták különböző oktatási kontextusokban.

A transzlingválás egyik alapelve, hogy minden nyelv értékes és használható a tanulás támogatására. A tanárok ennek az elvnek az elfogadásával befogadóbb osztálytermi környezetet teremthetnek, amelyben minden diák úgy érzi, hogy értékeli és tiszteli. A transzlingválás segíthet a tanulóknak abban is, hogy mélyebben megértsék az őket körülvevő világot, mivel lehetővé teszi számukra, hogy összekapcsolják a különböző nyelveken és kultúrákban szerzett tapasztalataikat.

A diákok számára nyújtott előnyei mellett a transzlingválás a tanárok számára is hatékony eszköz lehet. A transzlingválási stratégiák alkalmazásával a tanárok vonzóbb és interaktívabb órákat hozhatnak létre, amelyek relevánsak a diákok mindennapi életében. Továbbá segíthet a tanároknak abban is, hogy fejlesszék saját nyelvi készségeiket és kulturálisan érzékenyebbé váljanak.

Bár a transzlingválás bevezetése az osztályteremben igényelhet némi kezdeti képzést és tervezést, az előnyök megérik az erőfeszítést. Ez a tanulmány értékes meglátásokkal és gyakorlati útmutatással segíti a tanárokat abban, hogy kihasználják a transzlingválás erejét a nyelvtanulás, valamint a tananyag megértésének és a diákok sikerességének fokozása érdekében.

**Kulcsszavak:** *Kárpátalja, transzlingválás, transzlingváló pedagógiai orientáció, többnyelvűség, oktatás.*