Enhancing English language teaching in China’s ethnic minority schools

_A practical guide to transform pedagogical practices with learners’ languages_

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4 October 2023
Outline

• English language teaching and learning in China’s ethnic minority schools
• Teacher training and translanguaging strategies
• Examples of translanguaging activities
• Implications for translanguaging teaching practices
The Context

- 56 ethnic groups
- Over 280 languages
- National lingua franca: Mandarin Chinese
The context

Ethnic Korean schools (Korean + Chinese, L3 English↓)

Mainstream schools (Chinese, L2 English↑)

Multilingual pedagogy (Using Korean & Chinese for English teaching)

Preferred by students
Advocated by researchers
The Intervention

**Pedagogical translanguaging:** a teaching approach that will leverage students’ Korean-Chinese bilingual competence

*Can it be more effective in developing English literacy skills than current teaching practices (i.e., using only Chinese)?*

- A quasi-experimental research design
- Duration: 21 August to 22 December 2023
- Participants: Grade 5 students (n=62) in an ethnic Korean primary school
- Intervention focus: Vocabulary instruction
Outline

• English language teaching and learning in China’s ethnic minority schools

• **Teacher training and translanguaging strategies**

• Examples of translanguaging activities

• Implications for translanguaging teaching practices
Teacher training

• Date: 16 August 2023 (before the autumn semester began)

• Location: Meeting room of the participating school

• Two one-hour sessions

Session 1.1

- **Overview of the research project**
  ‘Transforming pedagogical practices for academic success: Raising language learning outcomes in China’s ethnic Korean children’

- **Pre-training questionnaire**
  Teacher profile and language attitudes

- **Objectives and expectations**

  “The best way to teach English must be creating an English-only environment. However, I have to use Chinese sometimes to ensure students of low English levels understand me. This is not a desired teaching practice but I have to do so.”
Session 1.2

• The MultiLiLa Project (2016-2020)
• Key findings and recommendations
• Benefits of multilingual resources in teaching
Session 1.3: Translanguaging pedagogy

**What:**
- planned teaching practices using learners’ languages
- Two types: pedagogical vs spontaneous translanguaging
- Three dimensions: stance, *design* and shifts

- Element 1: Collaborative tasks and peer interaction
- Element 2: Multilingual and multimodal teaching materials
- Element 3: Translanguaging teaching strategies

- Medium of instruction
- Language assessment
Session 1.3: Translanguaging pedagogy

*Why:* 
- Theoretical background
- Empirical evidence

*How:* 
- A framework for the implementation of pedagogical translanguaging (Zheng, 2021)
A framework for the implementation of pedagogical translanguaging
(Main categories → Secondary categories → Primary strategies)

Explicit strategies
- Demonstration
  - Listing
  - Switching
- Connection
- Transformation
  - Multidirectional translation
  - Multimodal practices
  - Teacher's language switching
  - Group organisation

Implicit strategies
- Translanguaging space creation
- Translanguaging space creation
- Teacher's language switching
- Group organisation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstration</th>
<th>Listing</th>
<th>e.g. Make a trilingual word cloud around the winter theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switching</td>
<td></td>
<td>e.g. Read a menu in the three languages: English, Catalan and Spanish</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connection</th>
<th>Mixing</th>
<th>e.g. Rewrite a sentence by mixing different languages</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>e.g. Compare subjects and auxiliary verbs in the multilingual postcard</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transformation</th>
<th>Multidirectional translation</th>
<th>e.g. Engage students in using their repertoire to translate idiomatic expressions into their L1/LXs</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multimodal practices</td>
<td>e.g. Read the news in Spanish and summarise it orally in Basque, then listen to the news in English, finally write the news item in Basque</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 2

• Main points of the first session
• Translanguaging lesson plans
• Videos of translanguaging teaching practices in the classroom
• Discussion & Feedback
• Weekly lesson planning workshops - Ongoing
Outline

• English language teaching and learning in China’s ethnic minority schools

• Teacher training and translanguaging strategies

• **Examples of translanguaging activities**

• Implications for translanguaging teaching practices
### Example 1: Work bank (Listing & Comparison)

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<th>What’s he/she like? He/She is ...... (He/She is a ......person.)</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>clever</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>polite</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>聪明 (的)</td>
<td>똑똑한</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>polite</td>
<td>有礼貌 (的)</td>
<td>공손한</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>体贴的</td>
<td>친절한</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 hard-working</td>
<td>辛勤的</td>
<td>열심히 일하는</td>
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<td>6 helpful</td>
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<td>살고 있는, 유용한</td>
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Activity 2: Complete the sentences (Mixing)

1. Ming puts his T-shirt on inside out.
   Translation: He looks f______.
2. Jane rarely raises her hand to speak in class.
   Translation: She is very s_____.
3. The students like to ask Amy for help, because...
4. My grandma ...
5. He is a good student.
6. My sister studies in Peking University.

Target words:
funny, shy, helpful, old, young, hard-working, clever, strict, kind, friendly, polite
Activity 3: Fill in the blanks (Multidirectional translation)

Meet Robin!

I have a robot! His name is Robin. My grandpa made him.

Robin is short but strong. He is really clever. He can speak Chinese and English.

He is hard-working. He is very helpful at home.

He is strict, too. He makes me finish my homework!
Activity 3: Fill in the blanks (Multidirectional translation)

I have a robot! His name is Robin. My grandpa made him.

我有一个机器人！他的名字叫罗宾。他是我爷爷______的。

이라에겐 로봇이 있어요! 그의 이름은 로빈입니다. 우리 할아버지가 그를 만드셨어요.

Robin is short but strong. He is really clever. He can speak Chinese and English.

罗宾虽然______，但______。他非常______，他会说汉语和英语。

로빈은 키가 ( )지만 ( )하다. 그는 정말 ( )해요. 그는 중국어와 영어를 할 수 있습니다.

He is hard-working. He is very helpful at home.

他工作很______，他在家里非常______。

그는 ( )하다. 그는 집에서 매우 도움이 됩니다.

He is strict, too. He makes me finish my homework!

他也很______，他会______我完成我的家庭作业！

그는 _______하기도 해요. 그가 나에게 숙제를 끝내게 해요!
Activity 3: Fill in the blanks (Multidirectional translation)

Meet Robin!

Sept. 1st, Tuesday

1) I have a robot! His name is Robin. My grandpa made him.
2) Robin is short but strong. He is really clever. He can speak Chinese and English.
3) He is hard-working. He is very helpful at home.
4) He is strict, too. He makes me finish my homework!

9월 1일 화요일

罗宾 엄마보세요!

1) 你有一个机器人! 他的名字是罗宾。他爷爷制作的。
2) 罗宾虽然矮，但是很强壮。他非常聪明。
   他会说汉语和英语。
3) 他工作很勤奋，他在家里非常有用。
4) 他也很严格，他会要求我完成我的家庭作业！
The sequential relationship in the explicit strategies
Conclusion

• Benefits for students

• Challenges for teachers

• Practical implications
Thanks for your attention!

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