TRANSLANGUAGING IN LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOMS:

THEORY TO PRACTICE

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Abstract

A new model for second-language learning, translanguaging, is emerging in recent years as an antithesis to the immersion model of language education. Translanguaging views language as a system and encourages the use of all of students’ languages and language learning resources in the classroom. Translanguaging stands in stark contrast to the language-separation underpinning of the immersion model of language education. While there exists a growing quantity of research on the theoretical foundations of translanguaging, there is a very limited amount of published application of translanguaging principles to curriculum, especially in the linguistically diverse classroom. This project investigates translanguaging inside these classrooms where multiple different languages are spoken and where the teacher does not speak the same second language as the students. As an application product, eight translanguaging strategies are provided and applied to a pre-established language arts curriculum, with a specific focus on the linguistically diverse classroom. While the strategies are crafted specifically for fifth- and sixth-grade language arts, they are easily adaptable to fit a wide variety of grade levels and content areas.

*Keywords:* translanguaging, linguistically diverse classroom
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Introduction

A relatively new pedagogical phenomenon, translanguaging can be defined as students drawing meaning from, communicating by, and intermingling multiple languages, specifically by mixing their first language with the language they are learning (Hornberger & Link, 2012). It is a new approach to language education that is: “centered not on languages, as has often been the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable” (García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017, p. 45). The practice of intermixing multiple languages is effective not only in literacy and language instruction, but across all content areas (Makalela, 2015). Previous research has demonstrated that when applied to a linguistically diverse classroom, translanguaging can be an effective pedagogical tool (García et al., 2017; García & Kleyn, 2016). This project provides thorough explanations of usable translanguaging strategies for the linguistically diverse classroom, specifically by applying them to an established curriculum to demonstrate how these principles can be pedagogically effective in a classroom where multiple different languages are spoken. It provides five categories of translanguaging strategies to improve English language learners’ language acquisition specifically in a fifth and sixth grade language arts context, but is applicable across the grade levels.

Rationale

I am currently a teacher in the Anchorage School District. I have held positions at two different schools within the district. During the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years I was a teacher in a fifth and sixth grade combination classroom at Mountaintop Elementary School (pseudonym). During the current 2017-2018 school year, I am working in a fourth and fifth grade combination classroom at Treetop School (pseudonym). The Anchorage School District is the most diverse school district in the United States (Tunseth, 2016). With over 90 languages
represented (Tunseth, 2016), Anchorage classrooms are a melting pot of cultures, values and tongues. At Mountaintop Elementary, there were seven different languages represented in my classroom alone. Eleven of my 32 students went home to speak a different language than the one we spoke at school, English. This project is written in response to the linguistic diversity I encountered while at Mountaintop Elementary. Not only is this project directly applicable to classrooms like that one, but also to my school district at large. While there has been extensive research on translanguaging in various classrooms throughout the United States, as of now, there is no published research on translanguaging in Alaska. This project applies research-informed translanguaging strategies to the linguistically unique classrooms found in this state and district. It also comes at a crucial time in American history. As our nation becomes more and more diverse, the need to learn multiple languages is a pressing issue on many students’, parents’ and teachers’ minds. While the immersion model has long been the accepted method of language acquisition (Makalela, 2015), researchers and teachers alike are beginning to broaden their thinking to include the concept of translanguaging in their understanding of second-language pedagogy.

**Personal Connections**

My personal interest in translanguaging began with an interaction with one of my students at Mountaintop Elementary near the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year. This student was a female who moved to Alaska from American Samoa in 2015. I had her older sister in my class at Mountaintop my first year teaching and I knew the family well. While the children in this family all took English classes in their school in Samoa, they had very little working English upon arriving in Anchorage. When I had the older sister my first year, I noticed that she had essentially adopted the English immersion model and refused to speak Samoan in class. In
contrast, the younger sister that I had the next year often spoke to her classmates in Samoan. For a while, I caught myself correcting her, reminding her that, “We only speak English in this classroom.” I was saying this mostly because I had reason to believe she was using Samoan to gossip and say inappropriate things, but our interactions got me thinking. In further reflection, I began to wonder if the “we only speak English in this classroom” model really was the most effective model to use when it comes to second-language acquisition.

I had another student who was a native Spanish speaker. I encountered discipline and behavior issues with this student all year. He often talked back, and had a hard time “buying in” to the content I was teaching, both academic and social-emotional. I was constantly redirecting his behavior and his focus. His cousin was also in my class, and the two often expressed similar negative attitudes and attention issues. One day when both of their behaviors came to a head, I told them both that I was going to call home. I called them separately up to my desk, and with a twinkle in their eye, they told me that I would probably have a hard time talking to their parents because they only speak Spanish. I assured them it would not be a problem because I spoke Spanish too. I then began speaking to them in Spanish to describe why I was calling home and what I was expecting to change in their behavior. The moment I began speaking to them in their native language, they lit up. Their countenance completely changed and apologies came flowing out. It was as if I released a burden of linguistic stress they had been holding on to. By including their first language in my discussion of classroom expectations, I made those expectations accessible to them. The benefits of allowing students to use multiple languages in my classroom were multiplying in my head.

As a teacher, my end goal is for my students to learn the required content. As evidenced above, monolingual instruction can become a barrier to students’ learning in all content areas. If
my objective is to help my students master the necessary content, I need to make that content accessible to them. I began to wonder if using my students’ first language might be the best way to accomplish this. I briefly experimented with this in my classroom. While my classroom at Mountaintop Elementary was a neighborhood classroom, the school was also home to the Spanish immersion program for our district. My students were not enrolled in the Spanish immersion program, however. Students in “neighborhood” classrooms like mine attend the school because it is the one located closest to their home. However, because it was the Spanish immersion school, every morning we said the Pledge of Allegiance in both Spanish and English. One morning after we finished saying the pledge, we got on the topic of second languages and I taught my kids how to count to ten in Spanish. I wrote each number on the board and had them recite the numbers with me. I then asked my German student how to count to ten in German. He recited it and helped me write the numbers on the board. Then I asked my Samoan students the same thing and added a third set of numbers. My students were so engaged during this time. They were eager to learn a little bit of a new language, and even more eager to share their own. At the time, I really had no idea if this method of instruction or my personal theory was legitimate. I began to research this idea further; I found that it was called translanguaging and that it was in fact supported by much research (Makalela, 2015). From this personal reflection, classroom experimentation, and independent research, my question and project were born.

Distinctive Aspect of this Project

Current translanguaging research is divided into two categories. A large portion centers on classrooms where two languages are spoken, and where translanguaging happens in two languages. In these bilingual classrooms, the teacher is either fluent in both languages, or the students have two teachers, one for each of the two languages they are learning. My classroom
did not follow this typical model, however. In my classroom at Mountaintop Elementary there were multiple different languages spoken, and for most of my students, I did not speak their native language. A smaller portion of translanguaging research included classrooms such as mine where multiple languages are spoken and where the teacher does not speak all the languages represented. My project is directed towards this latter, smaller portion of research. The aim of my project is to increase the accessibility of translanguaging in linguistically diverse classrooms by providing specific curriculum application of translanguaging principles for such classrooms. This critical application piece is the distinctive aspect that this project seeks to add to current translanguaging literature. I am confident that it will be a highly effective tool for diverse schools and a positive addition to the translanguaging discussion.

Literature Review

In the research surrounding translanguaging, multiple themes rise to the surface. Much of the literature sought to frame translanguaging as a contrast to the current immersion model of language education. Divulging the intricacies of these two frameworks was essential to build the foundation for my research. It was also interesting to note the variety of translanguaging research already performed in the United States and how Anchorage, Alaska, home to the most linguistically diverse school district in the nation, has not yet been the site of published research on this topic. In attempting to define translanguaging, I found that a first step was delineating the differences between translanguaging, code switching and codemeshing, as these three terms are inherently different. Much of the research also pointed to translanguaging as a catalyst for the creation of integrated language systems in students. For teachers to promote these language systems, they must use translanguaging strategically and intentionally as a pedagogical tool. When applied correctly, translanguaging in the classroom fosters true multiculturalism in
students, and can integrate the funds of knowledge that each child brings into the classroom (Langman, 2014). When planning translinguaging strategies to use in the classroom, it was important for me to keep all of these themes in mind, as they are the foundation for – and driving force behind – the strategies I describe.

Current Models of Language Education

A discussion of the literature surrounding translinguaging must begin by examining the two theoretical frameworks currently used in language education programs, specifically, the immersion model and the translinguaging model. While the immersion model argues that languages should be kept separate (Creese & Blackledge, 2010), the translinguaging model believes that teachers should encourage multilingual students to shuffle between their first and second languages in order to foster the development of an integrated language system (Canagarajah, 2011). By juxtaposing the two models, one acquires a more holistic perspective of the theoretical framework of my project.

The immersion model. Language immersion is a relatively new phenomenon in education. It has emerged in recent decades as a promising alternative to the English-only model that was the standard in English instruction for years (Martínez, Hikida, & Durán, 2015). However, bilingual education, while an attempt to incorporate multiple languages, still promotes language separation at its core. There is also evidence to suggest that the immersion model may not be the most effective way to promote bilingualism (Martínez et al., 2015). In attempting to describe the immersion language acquisition model, it is important to distinguish what characterizes an immersion classroom. There are two qualifiers within the immersion model that help to differentiate the type of model being used. Dual language and bilingual programs generally teach students 50% of the time in one language (L1) and 50% of the time in a second
language (L2). In 2015, Gómez and Gómez published their “Dual Language Enrichment model” of education. In their model, kindergarteners receive language arts instruction in their native language (either English or Spanish), math in English, and science and social studies in Spanish. General classroom language and instructions are spoken in the “language of the day.” On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays it is English, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays it is Spanish. From second to fifth grade, the goal is for students to receive almost an exact 50/50 split between languages in the day. In these grades, language arts and mathematics are taught in English and science and social studies are taught in Spanish (Gómez & Gómez, 2015). Adding the qualifier “two-way” to a dual language program means that each classroom has equal amounts of native L1 speakers and native L2 speakers (Garrity, Aquino-Sterling & Day, 2014; Garcia et al., 2017). The issue with the Gómez and Gómez (2015) model, whether one-way or two-way, is that it does not account for multiple languages being spoken in the classroom. It only considers one-language immersion classrooms, and it is specifically tailored to Spanish.

In both one-way and two-way bilingual classrooms, the languages are kept separate. When it is L1 time, the students are forbidden to speak, read, or write in the L2 and vice versa (Garrity et al., 2014). In the immersion model, the two languages operate as “distinct autonomous systems” (Garrity et al., 2014, p. 177). Creese and Blackledge (2010) provided an outline of the three basic tenants of monolingual instruction within the immersion model: first, instruction is carried out exclusively in the target language; second, translation from one language to another is discouraged and discredited; and third, the two languages are kept separate at all times: they operate independently, not interpedently, of one another. Garrity et al. (2014) described the two language groups as “static,” “homogenous,” and “monolithic” (p. 177). The authors argued that this model does not reflect the actual language needs or practices of
students (Garrity et al., 2014). Furthermore, as Martinez et al. (2015) pointed out, “Despite a deliberate and explicit focus on cultivating bilingualism, the emphasis on language separation within dual language programs reflects some of the same ideologies of linguistic purism that undergird English-only instructional models” (p. 26).

The translanguaging model. The translanguaging model, in contrast to the immersion model, encourages the use of a students’ L1 in the acquisition of their L2. Martinez-Roldán (2015) defined translanguaging as a “pedagogical alternation of languages to support bilingual and multilingual students’ learning” (p. 45). In the translanguaging classroom, students are encouraged to use both their languages concurrently as they seek dual-language, and sometimes even multi-language, mastery.

Translanguaging is both a pedagogical tool (Martinez-Roldán, 2015), and a naturally occurring phenomenon that most language learners practice already (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 401). The teacher in a translanguaging classroom walks a fine line of being both a facilitator of the naturally occurring language use of multilingual students, and an initiator of multi-language use. The teacher must promote a language-rich environment in which students are encouraged to use both their first language and their target language in all contexts, social and academic, while also supporting the current language practices of students (Canagarajah, 2011). García et al. (2017) undergirded these claims by using the metaphor of a current. They used the Spanish word for current, corriente to explain the necessity for a focus both on students’ translanguaging performances, and the teacher’s translanguaging pedagogy. This corriente, as defined by García et al. (2017) is a language flow “produced and driven by the positive energy of students’ bilingualism” (p. xi). The corriente can be either fast or slow. It may be slower in a classroom where the teacher is bound by state-mandated instructional practices and does not tap into
students’ home languages, or strong, as in bilingual classrooms where teachers are able to draw on students’ home languages in their instruction (p. xi). The authors argued that this corriente produces new language practices (p. 22).

One of the drawbacks mentioned about the immersion model of bilingual education is that it does not address the real-life language needs of students (Garrity et al., 2014). Gort and Sembiante (2010) argued that the translanguaging model directly contrasts this as it focuses on what the language learners will actually end up doing with their bilingualism in real life. Bilingual students will grow up to need both languages interchangeably. Teaching students to rely on both of their languages interdependently is a skill that Gort and Sembiante (2010) argued the translanguaging model encourages. The authors substantiated their argument by adding that in their language learning, bilinguals simultaneously create bicultural identities: identities shaped by social expectations and language ideologies (Gort & Sembiante, 2010). Learning two languages concurrently is more than a convenience for bilingual and multilingual students; it is a necessity.

After scrutinizing the two models of language education, we can take a step back and juxtapose the two to identify the differences between them. Garcia et al. (2017) went to great lengths to describe the polarizing dissimilarities between the two models and the drawbacks of the immersion model. The authors argued, “Despite the existence of many bilingual classrooms, bilingual [immersion] education often suffers from a monoglossic ideology. That is, bilingualism is often understood as simply ‘double monolingualism’…both major types of bilingual education classrooms – transitional bilingual and dual-language bilingual – conceptualize the two languages as separate” (Garcia et al., 2017, p. 23). Martinez et al. (2015) also emphasized that one of the key tenants of the dual-language model is that the two languages always remain
separate. Garcia et al. (2017) connected this language-separation issue to the development of students’ identities. The authors argued that the goal of translanguaging education is for students to see their identities as U.S. bilinguals, and that the “dichotomous conceptualization [of immersion classrooms] prevents bilingual identities from emerging” (p. 24). Instead of throwing out the idea of immersion language education completely, however, Garcia et al. (2017) proposed that translanguaging practices should be applied within the dual-language classroom to produce the most ideal language-experience for students. The prove this, in their book they examined three classrooms where translanguaging was taking place, and two of the three were in dual-language settings. As such, one recognizes that while dual-language methods cannot be applied to a translanguaging classroom, translanguaging methods can be applied to a dual-language classroom. Doing so, however, requires that the key tenants of the immersion philosophy be changed to allow, and even encourage, the use of both languages at once; for most schools this would require sizeable policy change at the district level.

**Translanguaging Research Throughout the United States**

Translanguaging research has taken place all over the United States of America and in multiple other countries (Adamson & Fujimoto-Adamson, 2012; Childs, 2016; Creese & Blackledge, 2010). In the United States, three states have seen a large amount of the translanguaging research due to their high rates of immigration and language diversity. In 2012, New York, California and Florida were three of the top four states with the highest immigration rates (Krogstad & Keegan, 2014). New York has been a cultural melting pot ever since the surge of immigration through Ellis Island in the early 20th century. California borders Mexico and as such, is the closest American access point for Mexico, Central, and South America. Florida’s geographical location also serves as an ideal immigration point for newcomers arriving over the
Atlantic Ocean. It is not surprising, then, that these three states also scored in the top 10 most linguistically diverse states in the nation (Rumbaut & Massey, 2013). The research that is taking place in each of these three states is unique; analyzing and juxtaposing the three helps to frame the necessity for this project.

**Translanguaging in New York.** Case studies are an ideal way to examine the use of preexisting translanguaging practices in classrooms. García and Kleyn (2016) are editors of a book of six case studies in a variety of New York public schools. The editors aimed to provide the reader with a holistic view of how translanguaging strategies can be applicable to a wide variety of classroom contexts. However, only two of the six case studies they referenced took place in linguistically diverse classrooms. The other four case studies, which comprise the majority of the book, were studies in bilingual Spanish/English classrooms. The first linguistically diverse classroom study took place in an eighth-grade language arts classroom at a diverse middle school in the Queens borough of New York City. The students at this middle school came from 21 different countries. Ebe and Chapman-Santiago (2016), the authors of this case study, described the school as a “microcosm of the community” (p. 58). They went on to explain that the residents of this particular section of Queens are predominately African and Caribbean, and that the students in the school speak nine different languages (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016). In their publication, the authors divulged the specific translanguaging practices found inside this eighth grade classroom, and how, by specific and intentional planning, the language arts teacher was able to promote all languages inside her linguistically diverse classroom. Ebe and Chapman-Santiago (2016) showed how translanguaging practices are applicable in a wide variety of classroom settings. I saw aspects of my own classroom, like the student interactions I described above, directly reflected in this study.
The other linguistically diverse classroom case study in the Garcia and Kleyn (2016) text also took place in the Queens borough of New York City. This case study was most applicable to my own classroom experience, as it was the only study in an elementary school. The teacher in this case study, Mr. Brown, taught a fifth grade class with eight different home languages represented. The strategies Mr. Brown employed in his classroom to meet the extensively diverse language needs of his students were creative and engaging. A focus of his classroom was to have students speak, hear, and see all the different languages. These strategies will be explained in-depth below, as I adapted two of his strategies as part of my final product.

**Translanguaging in California.** Los Angeles, California is another American city that is home to a wide variety of languages and cultures. The Garcia et al. (2017) text described a middle school in Los Angeles where an English as a Second Language teacher, Justin, faced a class whose members were all emergent bilinguals and spoke Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, French, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Korean, Mandingo, and Pular (Fula) (Garcia et al., 2017). In his classroom, Justin was steadfast in his desire to maintain translanguaging principles, in spite of the difficulty presented in his linguistically diverse group of students; he employed whatever resource he could to make languages approachable for students. Sometimes this meant online translating tools, and other times, he asked students who were more experienced bilinguals to help those who were lower performing. Although he himself was ESL teacher, he positioned himself as an instructional leader working with the content-area teacher to ensure maximum learning for his students. In describing Justin’s work, Garcia et al., (2017) emphasized his unswerving allegiance to maintaining both a translanguaging stance in his own theoretical understanding of education and a translanguaging design in all of his instruction.
Translanguaging in Florida. In the Southeast corner of the United States, Gort and Sembiante (2015) showed how translanguaging was taking place in classrooms as young as preschool. The authors presented an ethnographic study performed in a linguistically, socioeconomically, and culturally diverse community of South Florida over the course of two years. The preschoolers in their study were also classified as “emergent bilinguals.” The teachers in the dual language Spanish/English program attempted to engage students in both Spanish and English in “authentic and varied ways” (Gort & Sembiante, 2015, p. 10). The authors recognized the emergence of Spanish as a prominent language in the United States as the amount of Latino/a immigrants had increased over the last 10 years (Gort & Sembiante, 2015, p. 10).

Translanguaging in Alaska. The translanguaging research that has taken place in New York, California and Florida has helped to spur this new model of language education in the United States. However, while these states have high levels of language diversity, Alaska’s is higher. Alaska is home to the most diverse public school district in America, yet has not been the site of any published translanguaging research thus far. As aforementioned, Anchorage School District students alone represent over 90 languages in the district’s 97 schools (Tunseth, 2016). When it comes to diversity, the district is home to 19 of the top 20 most diverse elementary schools, five of the top 10 most diverse middle schools, and the top three most diverse high schools (Tunseth, 2016). While current translanguaging research has been thoroughly applied in many states with linguistic diversity, the research has yet to be applied to Alaska. This project seeks to bring attention to that gap, and make translanguaging strategies applicable for Anchorage’s classrooms.

Codeswitching, Codemeshing, and Translanguaging
In discussing a framework of translinguaging, it is important to recognize what it is not. The terms codeswitching and codemeshing are often used in second-language pedagogy. Though they are frequently grouped together with translinguaging, these three ideas are distinctly different from one another. Codeswitching occurs when a student substitutes a word or phrase in one language for a word or phrase in a second language (Heredia & Altarriba, 2001). For example, if a student were to say “Dame una hamburguesa sin LETTUCE por favor” (“give me a hamburger without LETTUCE please”), they are codeswitching; they use the English word “lettuce,” to replace the Spanish word for lettuce, “lechuga” in the middle of the Spanish sentence. Codeswitching is distinct from codemeshing, however. Codemeshing refers to the idea of mixing vernacular with the standard formal form of a language (Canagarajah, 2011). One example of codemeshing is found in the following quote from Victor Villanueva (2008) in his commentary on racism and its connection to language: “What does one do when one becomes fully conscious of the alienation that arises from the exile of being racialized, of knowing something ain’t right and there ain’t no puttin’ it right but can’t be no ignoring the wrong?” (Villanueva, 2008, p. 84). In this quote, Villanueva (2008) begins by using standard formal English when he says, “What does one do when one becomes fully conscious of the alienation that arises from the exile of being racialized?” (p. 84) but in the second half of the quote, he inserts common vernacular like “ain’t,” “puttin’,” and “can’t be no” (p. 84). He does not switch to another language mid-sentence like in codeswitching; he simply uses the vernacular of the language with which he began. Codeswitching and codemeshing are different on a theoretical level as well. Canagarajah (2011) emphasized the difference between the two by using a systems metaphor. In codeswitching, the language user employs and alternates between two language systems. In codemeshing, the user brings together the vernacular and the formal into one single
integrated system. To define translanguaging in the context of codeswitching and codemeshing, it is helpful to extend this “systems” analogy. If codeswitching refers to the individual using two language systems and codemeshing as a combination forming one system, translanguaging could be described as the factory that houses all the systems. Translanguaging goes beyond simply the production of language and word choice, and includes communication decisions, language function, and the thought processes that go into language use (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012). Garcia and Wei (2014) build upon these tenants and add: “it is a dynamic process in which multilingual language users mediate complex social and cognitive activities through strategic employment of multiple semiotic resources to act, to know and to be” (Garcia & Wei, 2012). Translanguaging is a multilingual individual’s ability to communicate competently; codeswitching and codemeshing are the “the realization of translanguaging in texts” (p. 401). While they share some fundamental characteristics and often beget one another, “codeswitching,” “codemeshing,” and “translanguaging” are not interchangeable terms.

**Integrated Linguistic Systems**

Much of the research surrounding translanguaging points to the fact that students draw from multiple resources when becoming literate individuals. “Language” is not a box in which some things fit and others are left out; rather, it is a fluid space with indistinguishable boundaries. In their language acquisition, students must be free to overlap and use languages interchangeably as they capitalize on all of their discursive resources (Makalela, 2015; Canagarajah, 2011; Martinez-Roldán, 2015). When they are free to mingle interchangeably between all their different linguistic structures, students will begin to go beyond those structures into new linguistic territory; this is the ultimate goal of multilingual education (Makalela, 2015; Martin-Beltrán, 2014). The term “language ecologies” (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 104;
Haugen, 1972) is often used to describe this phenomenon. This term specifically refers to the study of languages in relation to each other. In their description of language ecologies, Creese and Blackledge (2010) stressed the importance of the teacher-student connection in order to make smooth transitions between the first and second language (p. 104). Gort and Sembiante (2015) added to this argument by saying that “the language practices of bilinguals are multiple and dynamic, complex and interrelated, and constantly adapting and adjusting in response to the affordances that emerge in everyday communicative situations” (p. 8). To provide a better picture of the integrated language system, Makalela (2015) offered the metaphor of an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV). Just like in translanguaging, the wheels of an ATV extend and contract, flex and give, to make moving over difficult territory manageable and progressive, albeit a little bumpy and irregular at times (p. 202). A great quantity of the translanguaging research points to its role in creating these integrated linguistic systems.

**Translanguaging as Pedagogy**

As previously stated, translanguaging is both a “naturally occurring phenomenon” (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 402) and a pedagogical tool. The necessity of teacher support inside the translanguaging classroom in both of these categories cannot be understated (Palmer, Martinez, Mateus & Henderson, 2014). Garcia et al. (2017) explained that using translanguaging as a pedagogical tool requires teachers to have and do three things. They must first have a translanguaging stance, that is “the philosophical ideological, or belief system that teachers draw from to develop their pedagogical framework” (p. 28). They must also build their classroom around a translanguaging design. This means the teacher “purposefully design[s] instruction and assessment opportunities that integrate home and school language and cultural practices” (p. 28). Finally, the teacher must constantly make translanguaging shifts. These shifts refer to the
hundreds of moment-by-moment adjustments that teachers make throughout the school day. Translanguaging teachers must be willing and flexible enough to change the course of the lesson or the language use planned in the lesson according to student need (Garcia et al., 2017, p. 28). The authors argued that these three strands, when woven together, produce the strong cord of translanguaging pedagogy.

To further demonstrate the use of translanguaging as pedagogy, Martin-Beltrán (2014) provided excerpts from actual interactions with students working within a translanguaging model with teacher support. The following excerpt shows how this support promotes the development of what Martin-Beltrán (2014) called “multilingual spaces” (p. 224). In this excerpt, three students, Anna, Arturo, and Juanita are native Spanish speakers working with their bilingual teacher.

- Teacher: Do you know ‘embarrassed,’ Juanita?
- Juanita: embarrassed is like humilado {humiliated}
- Arturo: Oh
- Juanita: Te dio pena {It made you feel bad}
- Teacher: Te da pena o vergüenza {It made you feel bad or embarrassed}
- Angel: Oh, like shy.
- Teacher: So, you shouldn’t . . . you don’t want to be embarrassed . . .
- Anna: yeah, don’t . . . because we both want the same thing.
- Angel: uh-huh
- Anna: It’s not a contest. How do I say that?
- Angel: I try to speak English and you try to speak Spanish.
- Anna: We’re both trying to learn so there’s not like . . . room for embarrassment

- Teacher: So, how could you say that, not being embarrassed because you want to help each other?
- Juanita: No tengas miedo {Don’t be afraid} (Martin-Beltrán, 2014, p. 222)

As shown here, the teacher encourages the use of both languages to fully understand the meaning of what is being said. Instead of forcing the students into one language “box,” she promotes the use of multilingual spaces – the free flowing from one language to another to construct holistic
language understanding. This is an explicit example of the benefits and effectiveness of the translanguaging model.

In their article, Adamson and Fujimoto-Adamson (2012) expounded on the importance of pedagogical translanguaging for lifelong multilingualism; they argued that as the teacher promotes intermingling of the L1 and L2, students would be more prepared for language use in other multilingual contexts outside of school. By promoting these fluid language practices, teachers provide a safe place for all students, including less-motivated students, to explore and develop linguistically (Canagarajah, 2011; Adamson & Fujimoto-Adamson, 2012).

Translanguaging research demonstrates the both/and necessity of language education: supporting students in their already established multilingual practices, while also promoting multilingual spaces for further development.

**Translanguaging and Multiculturalism**

Another principal theme in the translanguaging literature is that of the interrelatedness of translanguaging and multiculturalism. A bilingual classroom that does not support translanguaging breeds what Heugh (2015) called an “epistemological divide” (p. 283). This divide causes students to see distinct differences between the two languages and cultures that they are acquiring. In contrast, as students are allowed to develop their two languages simultaneously, they converge the unique values and cultural ideals of the varying languages and develop true multiculturalism. Langman (2014) recognized that this multicultural identity formation is complex, but she argued that it is worth it. She described how it “yields a mosaic of multiple languages and cultures—always in a state of transition, ambivalence, conflict and yet [is] also a potentially rich and enriching resource” (p. 185). She went on to explain how “language crossing evokes a sense of movement across social and ethnic boundaries” (p. 185). In
a world where cultural awareness is a prominent topic not only in the academic realm but also in the social and political one, teachers hold an immense responsibility to foster students’ cultural development. For multilingual students it is vitally important that all of their languages and cultural backgrounds be equally supported and encouraged.

**Funds of Knowledge**

Teachers spend a great deal of their time putting together resources to help students achieve their maximum potential. It is important to note a resource that every child innately brings into the classroom: funds of knowledge. The term “funds of knowledge” refers to household knowledge that students grow up learning at home. Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) described it as the “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning” (p. 133) This knowledge can include subjects as broad as ranching and farming, house maintenance, and even child rearing. Moll et al. (1992) went on to clarify that funds of knowledge can be regionally rooted, but that it does not replace the term “culture” in its broader sense. Teachers still must make a concerted effort to be culturally sensitive and to integrate cultural values into their teaching.

Funds of knowledge can be a tool used to help integrate culture into classroom instruction (Moll et al., 1992).

In their analysis of funds of knowledge as a tool for educational change, Moll et al. (1992) emphasized that funds of knowledge can be built upon in the classroom. Eventually, children acquire collective funds of knowledge with their peers about learning (Moll et al., 1992). In this way, funds of knowledge are flexible and adaptable, able to be added to; they are not static “boxes” of knowledge that students carry in to a classroom. It is the job of the teacher to be multidimensional in his or her instruction. Hall, Cremin, Comber, and Moll (2016) stated
that funds of knowledge can be used to promote personally and academically responsive inquiries. Teachers should draw upon household knowledge to develop a participatory pedagogy (Moll et al., 1992) wherein students learn and grow from one another.

Household funds of knowledge are not just funds of information called upon in various circumstances, however. They are what members of a household use “to deal with changing and difficult social and economic circumstances” (Moll et al., 1992, p. 133). In their research, Moll et al. (1992) discovered that families’ social networks were inherently tied to their funds of knowledge, because their funds of knowledge put them in specific social environments. The same can be said for school. The social relationships formed at school through specific social networks facilitate the development and exchange of knowledge and information that enhance the student’s ability to survive or thrive. Household networks are generally flexible, adaptive, active, and interrelated (Moll et al., 1992), the socially responsive teacher is the one who allows and even encourages students to participate in classroom social practices and will step in to facilitate classroom social networks to ensure that these networks are just as active and interrelated as the ones at home. And, just as household funds of knowledge and social networks may change over time (Hall et al., 2016), classroom networks do, too. The ebb and flow of knowledge, information and personal and academic growth within students will prompt change in the classroom social environment throughout the year which, in itself, can be a catalyst for learning.

As their research was published years before translanguaging came into the educational literature, Moll et al. (1992) do not specifically describe funds of knowledge in a translanguaging classroom context. However, I would argue that a strong understanding of funds of knowledge is invaluable for the translanguaging teacher. Students’ linguistic background is tied to their
household knowledge; if the goal of the translanguaging classroom is to promote the development of a student’s home language alongside their second language, then the social, cultural, and familial ties that are connected to their home language must also be recognized and seen as a source for their learning (Hall et al., 2016). When used adeptly in the translanguaging classroom, funds of knowledge are a pedagogical tool equally important as curriculum, technology or a well-crafted lesson plan.

Evaluating all the aforementioned research has led me to form my own working definition of translanguaging. To frame this definition, I refer back to the definition proposed by Garcia et al. (2017) that stated that translanguaging is: “an approach to bilingualism that is centered not on languages, as has often been the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable” (Garcia et al., 2017, p. 45). While this definition highlights the uniqueness of the innate language usage of students, I believe it minimizes the cultural implications of this pedagogical strategy. My current working definition of translanguaging is: a way of conceptualizing language learning that sees language as an integrated system and involves instructing to and supporting all of a student’s language resources to produce not only multilingual students but multicultural citizens. With this definition in mind, I apply the abovementioned translanguaging research into usable strategies for a linguistically diverse classroom.

Statement of Bias

As both a graduate student and teacher, I bring certain assumptions into my project. My teaching experience is limited to my undergraduate student teaching experiences and my first two years of teaching. I spent part of my undergraduate degree student teaching in a bilingual school in rural Oregon. Lincoln Elementary School in Woodburn, Oregon, operated under a
Spanish immersion bilingual model. Each of the bilingual teachers in their program was fluent in both Spanish and English. The teachers spent half the day teaching in English, and half the day teaching in Spanish. It was not a two-way immersion program, according to the standards put forth by Garrity et al. (2014), as approximately 90% of the students were native Spanish speakers (Oregon Department of Education, 2016), but precisely followed the rest of the Dual Language Enrichment model outlined by Gómez & Gómez (2015). Mountaintop’s Spanish immersion program was similar to that of Lincoln Elementary in that it also followed the Dual Language Enrichment model, but it was a two-way program that enrolled equal amounts of native Spanish and native English speakers. In Mountaintop’s program, instead of having bilingual teachers, each grade level had two classes. One English and one Spanish teacher was assigned to the group, and the two classes of kids switched from one room to the other mid-day. The other Spanish immersion school in my district, as well as the seven other immersion schools I have visited – in multiple different states – also followed one of these two models. Thus, I bring in to my project the assumption that most bilingual/dual-language schools do not adopt a translanguaging model, but instead opt for the immersion model. My classroom at Mountaintop was unique as it was a neighborhood classroom situated right next door to a Spanish immersion classroom. As a neighborhood teacher in an immersion school, I had a very unique perspective. Everyday I observed the immersion program in operation with their bilingual students, but in my classroom, eleven different languages were represented and we had no bilingual model to follow. I was the only teacher for my students, and the only language that we spoke in my classroom was English. The frustration I encountered in this context, and the dichotomy I observed in my school added to the necessity for my project.
When speaking of bias, it is also important to note that English is the target language of a translanguaging classroom. As stated by Hornberger and Link (2012) the goal of a translanguaging classroom is for students to mix their first language with the language they are learning. In this case, the language that they are learning is English. A translanguaging model seeks to help students both learn English and improve their first language concurrently by encouraging them to shuttle between their two languages (Canagarajah, 2011). Translanguaging is an additive, rather than subtractive, classroom model. For the purposes of this curriculum project, translanguaging strategies will be implemented to support student's use of their home language at school and to promote proficiency and fluency in English.

**Ontological and Epistemological Perspective**

When I consider my ontology, I think of my way of being, growing, developing and becoming both the teacher and student that I am today; I operate from both a realist and a relativist ontological standpoint. I do believe that real, positive outcomes are possible when it comes to student language learning. Although it is not simple, I do believe that sorting out and supporting multiple languages through the process of translanguaging is possible. However, I also recognize that this process requires an acceptance of ambiguity rather than precision, which incorporates a more relativist viewpoint. Epistemologically speaking, I am a constructivist by nature. My understanding of knowledge is built from an amalgamation of many voices, including convention, my perception, my lived experience, and what I learn from others. This epistemology also holds true in my view of student learning. The co-construction of many voices has significant influence on the way students process the information given to them; thus, adopting a translanguaging model requires the cooperation of many – as it is the people implementing this pedagogical structure who will most influence my students’ learning.
More generally speaking, there are two factors that have influenced my worldview and teaching perspective. First is the high regard with which I hold multiculturalism. I have spent significant time either in or with people from multiple different countries including Guatemala, Chile, Mexico, Ecuador, Rwanda, Nigeria, England, France, Samoa, Germany and rural Alaska. I strive to foster a desire for global citizenship in each of my students. I encourage all of my students, multilingual or not, to embrace multiple views and ways of knowing; I consider this to be crucial in their development. In reflecting on both my ontological and epistemological standpoint, I also consider the influence that my position as an educator has had on me. The teaching career was originally created as a helping profession, to guide children into becoming world-changers and lifelong learners by incorporating the social, cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge that they bring into our classrooms. In recent years, however, teaching has shifted to a data-driven occupation marked by assessment and analysis. Teachers today are evaluated on the performance of their students regardless of background or culture, but are still responsible for students’ linguistic and social-emotional development. This is a profound dichotomy engrained in the teaching career, and I inherently carry the weight of this contradiction into my project.

**Description of a Translanguaging Classroom**

Before divulging the nuances of specific translanguaging strategies. It is helpful to get a picture of what a translanguaging classroom might physically look like. Garcia et al. (2017) provided an extensive list of different resources that every translanguaging classroom should have. After analyzing this list, I observed that it boils down to three essential components: multilingual literacy resources, multicultural artifacts, and a multilingual Word Wall.
When it comes to literature and literacy resources at large, “multicultural” does not necessarily mean “multilingual.” There are plenty of English books written about other countries and cultures. The translinguaging classroom should possess literature written in students’ first languages. If Samoan, Spanish, Hmong, and English are all represented in the classroom, then the classroom library should have children’s literature written in each of those languages. García et al. (2017) insisted that authentic literature experiences are invaluable for multilingual students. It is crucially important that literature be available to them in their own language. Multilingual literacy resources can also include posters and signs, student work hung around the classroom in both English and home languages, student textbooks in both English and home languages, and bilingual dictionaries. The translinguaging classroom should also offer auditory resources like a listening station where students can hear the content in both languages. Video clips with subtitles in both English and home languages can also be helpful, as well as an open invitation to parents and community members to come and share in their home languages. All of these literacy resources support the development of genuine multiculturalism, as described by García et al. (2017).

**Multicultural Artifacts**

The translinguaging classroom should also display artifacts from the various countries and cultures represented in the classroom. If the teacher does not possess said artifacts, asking the students to bring in their own is a great way to engage them in their learning and help them “buy-in” to what is happening in the classroom. However they are acquired, seeing physical representations of their cultures in and around the learning environment helps students to remember that all cultures are important in their classroom, and that all should be talked about and celebrated. Some examples of artifacts might be a Guatemalan doll, Alaskan native mukluks,
or a Samoan dress. Artifacts are also great tools to use right in the middle of lessons. Allowing students to touch and feel items that they would otherwise only see on a page helps bring the cultures and languages alive.

**Word Walls**

In 2005, Patricia Cunningham is credited with originating the Word Wall – a systematic way of displaying new, key words as part of a classroom’s vocabulary instruction (Ohoud Abdullatif & Basma Issa, 2014). Word Walls, as defined by Ohoud Abdullatif and Basma Issa (2014) are “an ongoing, organized display of key words that provides visual reference for students throughout a unit of study or a term” (p. 39). While Word Walls are not explicitly stated as a translanguaging strategy, as I analyzed translanguaging research and created the strategies below, I found that a multilingual Word Wall would be an invaluable tool in a translanguaging classroom. There are four components that a Word Wall should include to make the resource most useful for students; these four components are especially true in a linguistically diverse classroom setting.

Students should be part of the creation and maintenance of their Word Wall. Ohoud Abdullatif & Basma Issa (2014) stated that children learn words best when systematic vocabulary instruction is integrated into their classroom routine. I would argue that this is even truer in a linguistically diverse classroom. A key aspect of this systematic vocabulary instruction is in the teacher building the Word Wall *with* the class. “Both students and teachers can suggest additions to Word Walls. Students are asked to interact with words on the Word Wall on an ongoing basis. In this way, the words become an integral part of students’ reading, writing, and speaking vocabulary” (Ohoud Abdullatif & Basma Issa, 2014). The authors went on to state the importance of students’ involvement with the Wall: “Word Walls prove to be useful by
encouraging children’s active involvement in the learning process, rather than their passive reception of information” (Ohoud Abdullatif & Basma Issa, 2014).

In order to accomplish the active involvement stated above, the Word Wall must be accessible for students. Ohoud Abdullatif and Basma Issa (2014) argued that students should have daily, if not hourly interaction with the resource. To make this possible, the Word Wall must be in an accessible location for students. Kids should be able to quickly and easily approach and write on the wall. Their active involvement in the learning processes increases their reception of the new information (Ohoud Abdullatif & Basma Issa, 2014).

The layout of a Word Wall is a strategic part of its development and maintenance. Ohoud Abdullatif and Basma Issa (2014) pointed out that the specific organization of the Word Wall should match the teacher’s purpose. I advise for the translanguaging Word Wall to be structured by semantic groups. The Wall might be designed as a “checker board” style with squares of different colors holding different semantic categories of words. One square might be dedicated to household items, another to transportation, and another to animals, etc. The category title in each square should be written in all students’ home languages. When a new word from any language is introduced throughout the school day, particularly when engaging in one of the strategies described below, students from any language group are encouraged to add the word to the Wall in the appropriate semantic group.

While traditionally, Word Walls are free from any pictures, graphs or charts, Ohoud Abdullatif and Basma Issa (2014) submitted that adding pictures to the Word Wall increases its effectiveness in students’ vocabulary acquisition. I would argue that when many languages are represented in the classroom, the picture component becomes even more crucial. My suggestion for the translanguaging Word Wall is to have the students draw a small picture for each word
that they write on the Wall. Some words such as “what” and “how” may require some extra creativity; in these cases, the teacher may ask the whole group for ideas of how to best depict the word. The class may decide to use a question mark to represent “what,” or a person scratching their head for the word “how.” Pictures help students to know what words mean even when they are written in a language foreign to them.

When the translinguaging classroom includes multilingual literature, multicultural artifacts and an appropriately designed Word Wall, the teacher can ensure that the environment is applicable to and approachable for their diverse group of learners.

**Description of Final Application Product**

The aim of my project is to apply the principles of translanguaging into a product that is directly applicable not only to my classroom but to the rest of my school and district. The Anchorage School District has adopted the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum for literacy instruction for kindergarten through sixth grade. The curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and is structured around six unit studies. In teaching these units to my diverse class of fifth and sixth graders, I found that most of the content and vocabulary went over their heads. The Houghton Mifflin curriculum did include a supplementary book for teaching English language learners, but its strategies were in line with the immersion model of language acquisition. They emphasized mastery of English vocabulary paying little if any regard to the students’ native languages. While the supplementary materials were optional for teachers, the curriculum itself was mandatory to use. It was up to the teachers’ discretion as to which parts of the curriculum to pull from, depending on the unique needs of their students. Because Houghton Mifflin is the adopted curriculum for my district, I align each translinguaging strategy to the curriculum and provide examples of how it might be used in the context of fifth and sixth
grade English language arts. This makes it a practical and usable resource for Anchorage’s classrooms.

**Final Product**

For my final product, I describe five categories of translanguaging strategies in depth, and describe how they might be applied to the curriculum. While the strategies are aligned to the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum for fifth and sixth grade, with small adaptations they can apply to a wide variety of grade levels and content areas. The strategies focus on encouraging the use of all students’ languages. They follow a sequence, building on one another. They are described comprehensively and the curriculum applications written thoroughly, but because every classroom is different, and to make strategies applicable across content areas, the plans leave room for teachers’ unique timing, scheduling, and content-area needs. Every teacher has a different amount of time allotted for each subject each day; this project has built in flexibility specifically for that purpose. With the goal of connecting theory to practice, it was important that these strategies be understandable and accessible for teachers, but that they also hold true to key translanguaging principles.

The five categories of strategies – questioning techniques, independent student processing, collaborative processing, individual response and group response – are the building blocks for a translanguaging classroom. At first glance, they might seem very similar to a traditional classroom, but the implementation of each strategy is vastly different from what it would be in a traditional context. There are eight specific classroom strategies embedded within these five categories; of these eight, four of them – shades of meaning cards, think-pair-share, performance, and group discussions – are established strategies used in translanguaging classrooms already (García & Kleyn, 2016; García et al., 2017; Woodley & Brown, 2016). The
other four strategies – close reading, kid teachers, picture drawing, and journal writing – were created by taking fundamental translanguaging principles, specifically those laid out by Garcia and Kleyn (2016) and Garcia et al. (2017), and adapting them to be usable classroom strategies. The eight strategies can be put together in any combination to create a translanguaging lesson that is both content-focused and linguistically inclusive. Translanguaging teachers can use the strategies as a foundation to meet the unique needs of their multilingual students.

Challenges

The greatest challenge that I face in creating this project is making it applicable to a wide variety of content areas. For exemplification sake, I apply the strategies to a fifth and sixth grade language arts curriculum to demonstrate what they would look like in the classroom and to provide specificity. However, because I want these to be applicable across grade levels and in a variety of contexts, a certain amount of generality is required. Another challenge is in explaining how the strategies that sound like their traditional counterparts are distinctly different in both their delivery and execution from what they would be in a traditional classroom. When teachers hear activities like “think-pair-share” and “journal writing,” many already assume they know what to expect. It takes great descriptive skill to demonstrate how these strategies are unique to a translanguaging classroom. However, the benefits of this project far outweigh the challenges.

The Strategies

As aforementioned, the translanguaging strategies fall into five categories: questioning techniques, independent student processing, collaborative processing, individual student response, and group response, within these five categories lie eight different strategies.
A teacher may begin the lesson by posing a question to the class, provide time for students to process as a group, and then have them respond individually. In this project, I have provided strategies for each of these steps within a lesson. However, very seldom is the translanguaging classroom able to follow a pre-cut lesson plan verbatim. There are simply too many moving pieces in the linguistically diverse classroom for a rigid structure to suit. Under my model, the translanguaging teacher can use these strategies as tools to build custom lessons that meet the unique needs of each particular class and content area.

**Questioning Techniques**

Questioning is foundational in any learning environment, especially the translanguaging classroom. Teachers ask questions throughout the school day. The use of questioning techniques and the potential for questions to be leveraged as a learning tool was born out of the case study of Mr. Brown’s classroom in New York City by Woodley & Brown (2016). Mr. Brown’s classroom is an ideal example of using questioning techniques to maximize student learning. He demonstrates how a proficient translanguaging teacher uses questioning techniques to not only drive the lesson forward, but to promote collaboration among students. In his classroom, Mr. Brown asked questions for a variety of reasons, but a primary purpose was instructional. After evaluating his techniques, I found that his instructional questions all fell into one of three main categories: investigative, assessment, and reflective. Throughout the case study it became clear that these three types of questions were a key component of his translanguaging classroom. They were the primary way that he got students to participate in class and use their linguistic resources. As such, my translanguaging project would not be complete without a thorough
investigation of questioning techniques, and an explanation of how to leverage questioning to ensure maximum language use in students.

**Key Components of Questioning Techniques**

Mr. Brown put conscious effort into the ways he posed questions to his students. The very first step in planning any lesson was to form an essential question (Woodley & Brown, 2016). The way he crafted his questions had direct implications on how his students processed the information and provided their responses. In evaluating the case study, the first type of question that I identified was **investigative**. In using this type of questioning, Mr. Brown was looking to find out what students already know about a text, situation, or topic. In his lesson on the slave trade, he asked the students: “What does it mean if something is unfair?” (Woodley & Brown, 2016, p. 90) He was attempting to tap into students’ funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) to signal cultural, familial or social ties that they might apply to this particular class discussion. The second type of question that Mr. Brown asked was **assessment** questions. When he asked this type of question, he was looking to find out what his students had learned from the lesson. In his lesson on the slave trade, Mr. Brown asked his students: “How were slaves acquired?” (Woodley & Brown, 2016, p. 88). This assessed what they had learned about the content (the slave trade) and what he needed to review or reteach. In Mr. Brown’s classroom, students provided answers like “they stole people” (Woodley & Brown, 2016, p. 88) and “chains on their necks and backs” (Woodley & Brown, 2016, p. 88). These responses both demonstrated an understanding of what the class had learned about the slave trade and how slave owners acquired new slaves. The final type of questioning technique that Mr. Brown used was **reflective**. Reflective questions were asked at the end of the lesson to check students’ ability to apply what they had learned to their life or to another context. To frame a summative reflection question in
his lesson on the slave trade, Mr. Brown went back to his original investigative question and asked his students, “What is something that you are familiar with that is unfair?” (p. 90). His wording in this question required students to apply what they just learned (the meaning of “unfair”) to their funds of knowledge to form new meaning. Reflective questions should not be confused with assessment questions, as their primary purpose is to help students draw connections between their personal experiences – familial, cultural, social, or otherwise – to the academic content. By using questioning techniques specifically and intentionally, Mr. Brown structured his lesson to support all students’ backgrounds, and encouraged their use of language, even at varying levels of development. The translanguaging teacher can take from Mr. Brown’s example and apply questioning techniques to their curriculum as an adept translanguaging strategy.

**Questioning Techniques Applied to the Curriculum**

To apply Mr. Brown’s techniques to my own curriculum, I have provided three sets of questions, categorized under the three types of questions described above. The first question in each set is a traditional question taken directly from the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum for fifth grade (Cooper et al., 2005); the story excerpt that these questions refer to is *The Fear Place* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (1996). The second question in each set is an adapted translanguaging version of the original.

Two examples of investigative questions are:

- **Question 1 (Traditional):** Look at the title, introduction, and illustrations before reading the selection. What can you infer about Doug? What do you predict will happen? (Cooper, et al., 2005, p. 185)
• Question 2 (Translanguaging): Can you think about a time that you had to face one of your fears? What did you do?

Notice that in the first question, the students have to have specific understanding about this story and process the information. It is difficult to answer this question in a language other than English. The second question is written in such a way that students can draw from their funds of knowledge to answer, which requires the use of more of their linguistic resources (Hall et al., 2016). The second question is also very easy to answer in a language other than English while still probing for previous understanding of the theme of the story. It is important to note that writing translanguaging questions does not mean simply making them more vague, or asking for less information; it is structuring the question in such a way as to allow students to use their full linguistic systems to answer (Makalela, 2015).

The second type of instructional question that Mr. Brown asked was assessment questions. Assessment questions can be formative or summative. While formative assessment questions are generally asked at the end of one lesson or activity, summative assessment questions are asked at the end of a unit. Below we find two examples of assessment questions. The first is an original question drawn from the curriculum; the second is its translanguaging counterpart. The two questions refer to this particular portion of The Fear Place (Naylor, 1996) in the Houghton Mifflin curriculum:

When he came out again into open space, the winds buffeted him. A hawk he had startled from a nearby rock flew directly past, so close that Doug could hear the steady flap of its wings. He held tightly to a rock, not wanting to look down, but did. It didn’t frighten him particularly, because there was plenty of room between him and the edge. Over the rocky hogbacks slabbéd with quartz and sprinkled with muscovite, he could see a tongue of
aspen crowding the narrow gorge below. It looked like the set for a model railroad.

(Naylor, 1996, p. 74)

- Question 1 (Traditional): Why does Doug compare the aspen trees to the set for a model railroad? (Cooper et al., 2005, p. 188).
- Question 2 (Translanguaging): Do you think Doug is being brave in this situation? Why or why not?

The text that these questions refer to contains a large quantity of difficult vocabulary words. The first question requires the student to understand nearly all of the vocabulary words in order to answer correctly. The second question still assesses for a thorough understanding of the passage, especially by asking the students to articulate the why or why not of their stance, but without requiring the specific vocabulary understanding. In this way, students can draw meaning from all parts of the passage to answer the question.

The third type of instructional question that Mr. Brown used was reflective. As in Mr. Brown's example, reflective questions are almost always posed at the end of lessons. Translanguaging reflection questions should require the students to make one of four types of connections: text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world, or text-to-others. By connecting the text to something else, students demonstrate that they have a full understanding of its meaning. The following two questions also draw from the *The Fear Place* (Naylor, 1996) excerpt, but instead of being focused on one particular portion of text, as the assessment questions were, these questions ask about the story as a whole. The excerpt of this story found in the Houghton Mifflin curriculum focuses on the part of the book where Doug, the main character, is on a hike and faces a series of difficult obstacles in order to make it to the top of a ridge.
• **Question 1 (Traditional):** Of all the obstacles Doug faces, which one is the most difficult for him to overcome? How do you know? (Cooper et al., 2005, p. 202).

• **Question 2 (Translanguaging):** What are some obstacles that are hard for you? Why?

The first question requires specific recall of the text, rather than connecting to other texts or to the outside world. In contrast, the translanguaging question is easily answered in another language and allows students to pull from their own memory and experience while still requiring them to connect that experience to what they learned in the text. In asking the second question instead of the first, the teacher does not give up any amount of quality of the reflection, but allows students to connect to their outside knowledge (Hall et al., 2016). It may seem overstated, but connecting content to funds of knowledge is absolutely critical for multilingual students.

**Independent Student Processing**

A central part of the translanguaging curriculum is the way teachers allow students to process information after it has been presented. Teachers can employ certain strategies to help multilingual students process information efficiently and effectively, using both their home language and the language they are learning. The first of the independent student processing strategies, shades of meaning cards, is already commonly used in translanguaging classrooms. This strategy appeared in the Woodley & Brown (2016) text in Mr. Brown’s classroom example. The other independent student processing strategy that I provide originated from a list of translanguaging strategies compiled by Garcia et al. (2017). In this list, the authors repeatedly mention the need for students to read content-related readings and both analyze and make connections to the text in any language. I began to think about how this could be turned into a usable classroom strategy and found that close reading was an activity well suited for such a
task. While close reading is not innately a translanguaging strategy, the teacher can make it one by being strategic in its implementation and intentional in its structure.

Shades of Meaning Cards

In the case study of a translanguaging classroom in New York City referenced above, Mr. Brown used a creative vocabulary activity that I wanted to adapt into a usable strategy for my linguistically diverse classroom in Anchorage. Mr. Brown used “shades of meaning cards” to teach vocabulary in a linguistically inclusive way (Woodley & Brown, 2016, p. 90). This strategy lends itself excellently to the translanguaging classroom as the cards can be completed in any language. Shades of meaning cards are also very versatile. They can be used before, after, or in the middle of lessons, and can be completed independently, as a whole group, or with partners. When Mr. Brown came to a word that his students were unfamiliar with, he stopped the class and had everyone fill out a shade of meaning card on that word. Another way to use this strategy is to have students create the cards as they work through their assignment independently, focusing on the words that they do not understand. In Mr. Brown’s example, he had students write the new English word on the top shade, and then two or three different synonyms for the word in their home language in the shades below it. I have adapted this strategy just slightly and instead ask students to write the word, along with a synonym, a short definition, and a small drawing of the word, on whatever shades they want to. Asking students to provide a synonym and a short definition requires them to pull from their funds of knowledge, as their synonyms and definitions will be based on words and ideas they already understand. Drawing a picture of the word is another adaptation not included in Mr. Brown’s original example. I included this because of the argument made by Makalela (2015) of the necessity for pictures and visual aids in the formation of students’ integrated linguistic systems. Makalela (2015) emphasized that students’
discursive resources include the areas of visual and spatial modes. In language learning, students
draw from not only their discursive resources, but on all their multimodal resources including
gestural, aural, visual and spatial. All students’ resources, linguistic, cultural and multimodal,
work together to cultivate a rich language-learning atmosphere. Drawing a picture promotes this
integrative effort.

**Key components of shades of meaning cards.** At the beginning of the year, the teacher
should collect as many four-shade paint chips as they can. The teacher can also assign this task to
the students as homework, so that students can pick color shades that they like the best. To create
a shades of meaning card, students should situate the paint chip vertically, with either the lightest
shade on top and the darkest on the bottom or vice versa. On one of the shades, the student
should write the English word or phrase that they have trouble with. Again, this can be a word
the teacher assigns or one the student selects from a class reading. In another shade, the student
should write the equivalent for that word in their L2; if their L1 is English, can write a synonym
for that word or a translation of the word from one of their peer’s home languages. In another
shade, the students should write a short definition of the word; this should be a concise, student-
created definition in whichever language the student prefers. Finally, on the last available shade,
the student should draw a quick sketch depicting the word or phrase. This should not be an
intricate, detailed drawing, but a simple illustration to help cement the meaning of the word for
the student. In filling out their shades of meaning cards, students will inherently have to draw
upon their funds of knowledge to think about how they can best define the word to make sense to
them. Shades of meaning cards are an excellent example of how funds of knowledge and
translanguaging work together. Students draw upon their variety of linguistic systems and their
various knowledge resources including those acquired both at home and at school (Moll et al.,
1992) to make new meaning for a word previously not understood. Upon completing a shade of meaning card, the student will have a tripartite understanding of that word, which results in a greater depth of comprehension.

Some teachers may choose to have students save all their cards and bind them together in a “book” to use as a vocabulary recall tool; other teachers may prefer to display students’ shades of meaning cards around the room as a visually-pleasing recall device for the whole class. It is not recommended that teachers collect and grade the cards, as they are to be a tool for students to use on their own, and are completed in students’ language of choice. Should the teacher choose to display them, the diversity in languages on the cards adds to the visual appeal and language-inclusiveness of the classroom.

**Shades of meaning cards applied to the curriculum.** To give an example of how shades of meaning cards might be used in the Houghton Mifflin curriculum, we turn to the story *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls (1961). An excerpt from this book is found in theme three of the Houghton Mifflin curriculum. This theme is entitled “growing up,” and focuses on children’s transitions into adolescence. In the story, the main character, Billy Colman, is saving up money to buy two dogs. At the beginning of the excerpt, Billy describes how he works hard to earn money to buy the dogs.

That winter I trapped harder than ever with the three little traps I owned. Grandpa sold my hides to fur buyers who came to his store all through the fur season. Prices were cheap: fifteen cents for a large opossum hide, twenty-five for a good skunk hide.

Little by little, the nickels and dimes added up. The old K.C. Baking Powder can grew heavy. I would heft its weight in the palm of my hand. With a straw, I’d measure
from the lip of the can to the money. As the months went by, the straws grew shorter and shorter.

The next summer, I followed the same routine. (Rawls, 1961, p. 27)

The teacher may assign this passage for students to read, asking them to make a shades of meaning card on any word they do not understand. From this passage, the students might make cards on the words “hides,” “cheap,” “heft,” and “routine.” Below are examples of shades of meaning cards for these words from a native Spanish speaker.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hides</th>
<th>Tener un precio bajo</th>
<th>Heft</th>
<th>Rutinario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lo que cubre el cuerpo de los animales</td>
<td>Barato</td>
<td>Sopesar</td>
<td>Hacer siempre en la misma manera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piel</td>
<td>Cheap</td>
<td></td>
<td>Routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher should walk around the room to help students in their work as much as possible.

Shades of meaning cards are a way to help students store vocabulary in their long-term memory. By integrating funds of knowledge with the visual and spatial modalities, teachers maximize students’ linguistic and multimodal resources for vocabulary mastery.

Close Reading

In order to create the integrated linguistic systems that Canagarajah (2011) and Makalela (2015) promote, I turn to the strategy of close reading. While shades of meaning cards focus on vocabulary acquisition, close reading is a strategy used to improve reading comprehension while
also integrating writing practice. García et al. (2017) repeatedly stated the need for multilingual students to read for meaning, rather than for speed (p. 112). Close reading is a strategy widely used by teachers in many different disciplines to accomplish exactly this. While it is not an official translanguaging strategy, I believe that with a few modifications and intentionality on the part of the teacher, close reading can take on a completely different structure and be an excellent translanguaging tool to accomplish the need identified by García et al. (2017). In a traditional classroom, when teachers assign close reading, it is most often a text in English, and they simply ask students to draw symbols as they read. This minimizes the amount of engagement that students have with a text. In the translanguaging classroom, close reading texts are offered in both the students’ home language and in English, and every symbol that the student draws is connected to a short comment or question that the student poses in their language of choice. In her discussion of producing genuine multiculturalism, Heugh (2015) states the necessity for “horizontal use of language” (p. 282), that is, allowing students to flow between the languages however is most comfortable for them. Allowing students to choose the language they read and write in throughout this activity gives them ownership over their language and fosters the genuine multiculturalism that Heugh (2015) encouraged.

**Key components of close reading.** The most distinct difference between close reading in the traditional classroom and close reading in the translanguaging classroom is that the texts are offered both in a student’s home language and in English. The rationale for this comes from Garcia et al. (2017). As one of their classroom strategies, the authors specifically recommend offering texts in students’ home languages; this recommendation plays directly into close reading. To maximize efficiency during close reading, I would suggest teachers copy the home language text on one side of the paper and the English text on the reverse side, allowing students
to have access to both texts without having to keep track of multiple papers. During their reading, students are asked to make marks on the paper that each has a specific meaning. At the beginning of the year the teacher should make a poster or some sort of visual aide with the students depicting the four marks they are to use: question mark, exclamation point, asterisk, and underline. When students have a question about something they read, they should draw a question mark next to it and write their question in the margin. The exclamation point is used if something in the text is new, surprising, or particularly interesting for the student. Again, the student should write what surprised them in the margin. An underline is used when students come across a word or phrase that is unfamiliar to them; the teacher should encourage the students to take a guess at the definition in their own language. Finally, the student should draw an asterisk next to a word or phrase indicating that they want to write a comment about it; often, these comments are text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world, or text-to-others connections. If margins on the page are tight, or if the students are reading from a textbook, they can use sticky notes. What makes close reading in the translanguaging classroom so unique is that students interact much more deeply with the text than simply writing symbols, as in traditional close reading. By requiring an analysis of the text in the margins, students must dive deep into what the text means and its implications for them as a reader, and by allowing students do these analyses in their language of choice, the activity becomes accessible to them. In their thinking about the text, students draw from their funds of knowledge and what they previously know about the topic of the book or subject of the text to draw deeper personal meaning from it (Hall et al., 2016). In this model of close reading, students have a “conversation” about the text in their home language. They can say, think, and believe what they want to about a text, in their own way, and in their own time. This is an invaluable tool for multilinguals. As the research cited
above emphasized, the translanguaging classroom should encourage the use of all represented languages. Giving students a concrete way to interact with a text in their language of choice maximizes their comprehension of it.

**Close reading applied to the curriculum.** To exemplify this strategy, we turn again to the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum. The following selection from *Where the Red Fern Grows* (Rawls, 1961) comes about halfway through the excerpt provided in the curriculum and about a quarter of the way through the full book. In this excerpt, Billy makes his daily check-in at his grandfather’s store. His grandfather has responded to an ad in the newspaper for puppies for sale. Both are waiting to hear a reply. For the purposes of this sample, I have made various marks on the passage, set apart by brackets and bold type to show examples of what students might mark.

Day after day, I flew to the store, [?] grandpa would shake his head. Then on a Monday, as I entered the store, I sensed a change in him. He was in high spirits, talking and laughing with half a dozen farmers. Every time I caught his eye [?], he would smile and wink at me. I thought the farmers would never leave, but finally the store was empty.

Grandpa told me the letter had come [!]. The kennels were still there, and they had dogs for sale. He said he had made the mail **buggy** wait while he made out the order. And, another thing, the dog market had gone downhill. The price of dogs had dropped five dollars [!]. He handed me a ten-dollar bill [*].

“Now, there’s still one stump in the way [?],” he said. “The mail buggy can’t carry things like dogs, so they’ll come as far as the **depot** at Tahlequah, but you’ll get the notice here because I ordered them in your name [*].”

I thanked my grandfather with all my heart. (Rawls, 1961, p. 31)
The following are examples of student comments in response to reading this excerpt. Again, these would be written next to the marks in the margins of the page or on a sticky note, in their language of choice.

- “I flew to the store” [?] Did he actually fly to the store?
- “I caught his eye” [?] How can you catch someone’s eye?
- “The letter had come” [!] Exciting! He has waited so long for it!
- **buggy** Like a car or a wagon?
- “The price of dogs had dropped five dollars” [!] Surprising! Billy wasn’t expecting that, and it is good news!
- “He handed me a ten-dollar bill” [*] His grandpa is very generous!
- “There’s still one stump in the way” [?] Is there really a stump in the ground?
- **depot** Like a train station?
- “I ordered them in your name” [*] I remember a time that my parent ordered me something I really wanted.

In engaging with the text in such an organic way, the students can be very honest about their own thoughts, questions and feelings regarding what they read. By expressing such thoughts in their home language, students use a greater variety of their linguistic resources.

**Collaborative Student Processing**

Group collaboration is a key feature of the translanguaging classroom. It is imperative that students interact with one another in a variety of different languages in order to promote all languages represented in the classroom. The first of the two group collaboration strategies, **kid teachers**, is an adaptation of another one of Mr. Brown’s strategies (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016) in response to the need for “meaningful collaborative dialogue” (Garcia et al., 2017, p. 112). The
other strategy, think-pair-share, is a proven translinguaging strategy demonstrated in both the Garcia et al. (2017) and the Garcia and Kleyn (2016) texts. Kid teachers is a quick partner or group collaboration vocabulary activity that I adapted from Mr. Brown’s translinguaging classroom (Woodley & Brown, 2016). Kid teachers can be performed mid-lesson and is most often used when coming across a new word in a content-area text. In this strategy, the teacher allows the students to be the teachers, either to the whole group or with a partner, which gives them confidence while promoting, and assessing for, a deeper level of understanding. Think-pair-share is a more in-depth activity that promotes group collaboration across languages. While kid teachers is vocabulary focused, think-pair-share is generally used to reflect on larger pieces of text.

Kid Teachers

In the discussion of translinguaging in California, I mentioned a case study that Garcia et al. (2017) examined, involving a teacher, Justin, and his classroom in Los Angeles. His use of students themselves as a resource for language learning pointed me to the necessity for teacher-student collaboration inside the translinguaging classroom. The Woodley & Brown (2016) text also provided an authentic example of collaborative dialogue that I wanted to adapt as a more “official” translinguaging strategy. These two texts, and the necessity for student collaboration called for in both, led me to develop the strategy of kid teachers. In discussing his philosophy of translinguaging, Mr. Brown described his use of student-teacher collaboration to foster language growth:

Students should take the lead and facilitate learning in their home languages and use translinguaging to support themselves and others... the teacher is a co-learner in the classroom. It is the teacher’s active role, the way he or she sets the stage for
translanguaging and student leading, that enables the space for student voices to lead the learning. (Woodley & Brown, 2016, p. 85)

Allowing students to work in groups to digest information is critical in the translanguaging classroom. A large part of language learning is speaking, and the most natural way to have students practice their oral language is to engage in conversation. Unfortunately, group discussion is not always feasible. When oral practice is needed but time is of the essence, kid teachers is a great strategy to use. Kid teachers pushes students to support both themselves and others in their language learning; this is demonstrated in Mr. Brown’s lesson on the slave trade:

As Mr. Brown takes a moment to recap everything Benjamin has described to the whole classroom, Benjamin whispers in Spanish to his classmate and asks him how to say “escapar” in English. Benjamin then adds that people tried to escape the boats. (Woodley & Brown, 2016, p. 88)

I took Benjamin’s looking to his classmate for help as an example of the collaboration called for by Garcia et al. (2017). This student’s action, and the translanguaging philosophy described by Mr. Brown, inspired me to create a strategy that allows students to assume the role of instructor. When they become the representative for their language group and have the opportunity to teach their peers, students experience a sense of power and autonomy.

**Key components of kid teachers.** Kid teachers is used most often in the middle of lessons to supplement vocabulary learning. There are two primary structures for kid teachers: partner and group. When the class comes to a word that is unfamiliar to one or all of the students, the teacher may provide a quick definition of the word to make sure that all students understand it, and then call for “partner teachers.” In partner teachers, the students turn to a different L1 partner and teach their partner how to say the word in their home language. The other partner
does the same. Each partner should practice saying the word in the language they just learned, helping each other with the pronunciation. Then, the teacher should encourage the students to add the new words they just learned to the Word Wall. When the words from multiple different languages are displayed on the Word Wall, it encourages the linguistic inclusivity that is central to a translanguaging classroom. Partner teaching also promotes autonomy in students from lesser-represented language groups who might not like to speak in front of the whole class. It puts both languages in the partnership on equal footing, emphasizing that all are important. When translating or explaining a word or phrase to a partner from a different language group, students will have to apply their funds of knowledge to adeptly communicate its meaning. When a student states the word in their home language to their partner, they are automatically using funds of knowledge. They are drawing upon their home resources to deepen their understanding in an academic context. The reciprocity inherent in kid teachers is another trigger for funds of knowledge. When two students exchange information, they are not only drawing upon their previous funds of knowledge, but building upon them as well (Moll et al., 1992).

Another way kid teachers can be used for vocabulary is with the whole group. Using kid teachers in front of the whole group follows much the same model of partner teachers, but instead of working with a partner, one representative from each language group comes up to the front of the room and writes the word in his or her home language on some form of widely-viewable medium like a whiteboard, bulletin board, poster, or under a document camera. This allows all students to experience all languages. The teacher should stop and review all the words on the board, giving credence to each of the unique languages. When using the group teachers strategy it is important for the teacher to understand the class’ personality. There will always be students who shy away from speaking in front of the group, and others who eagerly participate.
Over the course of the year it is important to make sure all students have an opportunity to be their languages’ representative, as being an ambassador for their language and culture inside an English context is essential in developing multiculturalism (Langman, 2014).

**Kid teachers applied to the curriculum.** There is a multitude of ways that the kid teachers strategy can be applied to the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum. For this example, we turn to the book *The View from Saturday* by E.L. Konigsburg (1998), also from theme three of the curriculum. In this coming-of-age novel, the main character, Nadia, experiences disillusionment with her grandfather’s recent marriage to her new step-grandmother, Margaret. The story takes place over the course of a summer that Nadia spends with her grandparents in Florida monitoring turtle nests on the beach. In the following excerpt there are many different vocabulary words that may be unfamiliar for bilingual students. Examples of words that may call for “kid teachers” are underlined.

Margaret was in charge of fifteen permitted volunteers. That means that if she could not do the turtle patrol, one of them could. Permitted volunteers were licensed to move a nest or dig out a nest after the eggs had hatched, but they had to be supervised by her.

(Konigsburg, 1998, p.36)

After reading this section, the words “volunteers,” “patrol,” “licensed,” and “supervised,” may stand out to the students. If the teacher decides to use kid teachers, he or she might give the students a short definition of each word, describing what it means in the context of the story. Then, the teacher would call for kid teachers and ask the students to find a different-L1 partner and turn and talk to one another.

To exemplify the strategy of partner kid teachers, I created the following sample classroom conversations. Student H is a Hmong speaker and is partnered with student S, who
speaks Spanish; student M, a Samoan speaker, is partnered with student E, an English-only student. In this example, the word that the students are working with is “volunteers” and the teacher decides to use partner teachers.

**Teacher:** “Volunteers;” that means someone that does something for someone else without getting paid, just like Grandma Margaret’s volunteers helped with the turtle patrol. Turn to your partner teacher and teach them how to say “volunteers” in your language

**Student H:** In Hmong, that word is “tuaj pab dawb”

**Student S:** Tuaj pab dawb. Cool! In Spanish, we would say “voluntarios”

**Student H:** Voluntarios.

....

**Student M:** In Samoan, instead of volunteers, we would say “volenitia”

**Student E:** Valenitia?

**Student M:** No, Volenetia.

**Student E:** Volenetia. Got it! My definition of volunteer would be someone that donates their time to doing something. I was a volunteer at camp last summer.

In the next sample conversation, the vocabulary word is “supervised,” and the teacher decides to use the strategy of group teachers.

**Teacher:** Supervised; that means someone with more experience watches over something to make sure it is done correctly. Grandma Margaret supervised her volunteers when they were working with the turtles. Everyone, can you think for a moment how to say “supervised” in your language? (Teacher gives think time.) Student H, can you come up
to the front and write “supervised” for us in Hmong? (Student H walks to the front of the room and writes “saib xyuas” on the board)

**Student H:** We would say “saib xyuas”

**Teacher:** Saib xyuas? Is that correct? Class, can we say that together? (Class responds)

Great! Thank you! Student S, can you come up and show us how to say “supervised” in Spanish? (Student S writes supervisado on the board.)

**Student S:** In Spanish, supervised is “supervisado.”

**Teacher:** Supervisado. Class, can we try that word together? (Class responds)

Wonderful! Thank you, Student S! Student M, can you teach us how to say supervised in Samoan? (Student M thinks for a moment and then writes vaavaaia on the board)

**Student M:** Vaavaaia means supervised in Samoan

**Teacher:** Vaavaaia? Is that how you pronounce it? Class, let’s say “vaavaaia” together”

(Class responds) Fantastic! Thanks for sharing, Student M.

Notice that the teacher is giving each language equal amounts of attention and encouraging the students to use all the languages inside the classroom. This helps students from all language backgrounds to feel included and appreciated. Additionally, when she introduces each word, the teacher uses the word in the context where the students first found it, in this case the reading passage. This helps bilinguals getting a more thorough understanding of the word’s meaning.

**Think-Pair-Share**

The intricacies between the immersion model of language education and translanguaging are highlighted in the strategy of think-pair-share. A commonly used strategy in all kinds of classrooms, think-pair-share is also a well-documented translanguaging strategy (Garcia et al., 2017). Allowing students to talk with a shoulder partner about a topic is a great way to engage all
students at one time, especially in a translinguaging classroom. In their list of translinguaging pedagogical strategies, Garcia et al. (2017) encouraged teachers to “provide an engaging discussion question in one language and ask students to discuss it in any language” (p. 112). This is where think-pair-share comes in. Students are given an opportunity to work with a same-language partner to have meaningful dialogue about a topic or set of questions. To help this strategy operate most efficiently, the authors also encourage teachers to “come up with a set of questions that can help students think critically about a text” (p. 112). These questions should be written in all of the students’ different home languages, as described above in the discussion of multilingual literacy resources. Think-pair-share is also an example of teachers operating as both facilitators and initiators as described by Canagarajah (2011). They are facilitating students’ natural language use, while also focusing students’ discussion to the questions at hand. Think-pair-share can be used in almost any grade level, in any content area, at any point in a lesson. The versatility of this strategy and its use of oral language makes it invaluable in a linguistically diverse classroom. While kid teachers is used for vocabulary, think-pair-share is used to discuss larger topics more thoroughly. Instead of taking two to three minutes to complete, a think-pair-share session might take upwards of five to ten.

Key components of think-pair-share. There is one key component that makes think-pair-share in the translinguaging classroom distinct from traditional classrooms and that is language diversity. In the traditional classroom, think-pair-share would most likely take place only in English. In the translinguaging classroom, multiple different languages can be heard around the room during a think-pair-share activity. When doing think-pair-share in the translinguaging classroom, students should work with other students who speak the same first language when at all possible. This may mean that some students have to form groups of three
instead of two; that is perfectly acceptable. To begin this exercise, the teacher will provide the class with a prompt. The prompt could be a topic of discussion or even a question to answer; the teacher might even ask for students to give their opinions about something or to provide an example from their life. Each student takes a turn answering the prompt in their home language. Even if students do not speak the same first language as their partner(s), verbal processing is a crucial component of learning. In speaking aloud their answer to the prompt, the student garners a deeper understanding of the material for themselves which is crucially important. When students provide real-life examples from their lives, they are utilizing their funds of knowledge as outlined by Hall et al. (2016). The use of funds of knowledge in this capacity is a bona fide cultural resource for student learning (Hall et al., 2016). The honest dialogue that occurs in this type of sharing is an authentic mode of language learning.

Think-pair-share applied to the curriculum. To show how think-pair-share might look in conjunction with a curriculum, we turn again to *The View from Saturday* (Konigsburg, 1998). In the following excerpt from the Houghton Mifflin curriculum, Nadia is upset with her family members for going on an outing without her. She goes back the family’s apartment alone.

The telephone rang in the middle of the morning. I let the recorder get it. It was Margaret, telling me that she would come pick me up if I would call. I did not. Instead, I took [my dog] Ginger for a walk around the golf course. When we returned, I saw that there was a message on the machine. I played it. It was Grandpa Izzy asking me to please call. I erased the message. I sat out by the pool for a while and read, came back to the apartment for lunch, and that is when I ate the breakfast cereal that my dad had put out on the counter in the kitchen. He called while I was eating. I did not pick the phone up then either. (Konigsburg, 1998, p. 50)
There is a large variety of response prompts that teachers could ask students to talk about regarding this portion of the story. The teacher could ask the students to connect the excerpt to their own experience: “Have you ever experienced a time when you were upset and did not want to talk to anyone about it? What did it feel like? How do you think Nadia feels?” Or, the teacher could ask the students to predict what might come next. Perhaps the teacher wants the students to share their opinion: “Do you think it was a good idea for Nadia to keep ignoring the phone? Why or why not?” These questions should be presented in all of the students’ home languages as well as in English (Garcia et al., 2017). Questions like these open up an honest dialogue between students and prompt them to engage in back-and-forth discussion, both of which promote a language-rich environment.

**Individual Response**

As in all classrooms, translanguage teachers have to collect grades from students in one form or another. The primary way that they do this is through individual student assignments where students have a chance to respond. In the translanguage classroom, responding can take on a variety of shapes and sizes. There are two creative ways students can demonstrate their understanding inside the translanguage classroom. These strategies provide a break from conventional question-and-answer worksheets or multiple choice tests and quizzes used ubiquitously in traditional classrooms. The first strategy is to draw a picture and the second is to write a journal entry. Picture drawing is inspired by the need for visual and spatial learning that Makalela (2015) described as essential to language learning. Visual and spatial learning are also essential to forming the integrated linguistic system outlined by Canagarajah (2011). Picture drawing is also crucial in the development of the multiculturalism outlined by Langman (2014) as it allows students to draw from all of their cultural experiences in responding to a piece of
text. While picture drawing is a strategy adapted from and responding to a need identified in translanguaging research, García et al. (2017) specifically stated journal writing as an effective strategy for the translanguaging classroom. Journal writing is a form of responsive writing that enables students to use a variety of their cognitive resources. In her description of the translanguaging classroom, Makalela (2015) emphasized the need for emotional awareness in the development of student multiculturalism. Journal writing gives students space to think through and wrestle with the text they just read in a language most comfortable for them, which deepens their understanding of both the text and themselves. Picture drawing and journal writing help students connect their household knowledge to their school knowledge in authentic ways. Drawing a picture engages students’ visual and spatial modalities in their language learning while also allowing them to connect the text to personal life experiences in a low-stakes, non-threatening way; journal writing allows students to integrate their affective, social, and cognitive systems (Makalela, 2015) to connect to the material in a manner that fosters multiculturalism.

**Picture Drawing**

The strategies discussed already have shown that there are many ways to promote the multiculturalism that Langman (2014) suggests; but one of the most direct ways is through picture drawing. Whenever possible, translanguaging teachers strive to create classroom activities that are applicable to a variety of cultures and languages. This is especially important when it comes to student response strategies. Drawing a picture is one of the most linguistically neutral activities, and provides ample room for cultural expression. The famous saying “a picture is worth a thousand words” rings true in the translanguaging classroom. Students can express their emotions, their reflections, their experiences and even their opinions on a subject, all in a single drawing. However, this strategy is not a “free draw” or “doodling time.” When used
strategically and intentionally, picture drawing can be an adept way for students show what they know without having to write a single word.

**Key components of picture drawing.** One of the first things for teachers to remember when using picture drawing as a translanguaging strategy is that the teacher must structure it intentionally. This does not mean that the teacher tells the students what to draw; instead, the teacher directs the students’ drawing time by giving them a purpose and an end goal in their drawing. They may ask students to summarize events of the story in their drawing, to draw their prediction of what comes next in a story, or to respond to a question; the possibilities are endless. If having students respond to a particular set of questions in their drawing, Garcia et al. (2017) encouraged teachers to use questions that require critical thinking about a topic. The authors also noted that in translanguaging lessons, it is important for the teachers to provide students with an example of what they want them to create (Garcia et al., 2017); this is especially true when using the picture drawing strategy. Teachers must clearly define their expectations so that students have a thorough understanding of what they need to do. In order to engage students’ creative processing most adeptly, however, teachers should keep the requirements broad. As they develop as multilinguals, it is important for students to be able to express themselves as they best see fit (Langman, 2014). Students should use their creativity to craft their drawing in whatever way they want. They may choose to draw one large picture, or draw in comic strip form. Some students may draw intricate people with detailed features, while others may use stick figures. One question that arises when discussing drawing as a classroom strategy is whether students should include words in their drawing. The primary purpose of drawing in the translanguaging classroom is to provide students with a linguistically neutral medium of response. However, there may be students who want to use written words to add meaning to their drawing. There
may be times when this is acceptable. The teacher should make the decision on a case-by-case basis. If allowing students to annotate their drawing, teachers should encourage them to do so in whatever language is most comfortable for them (García et al., 2017). Another item for teachers to consider when using drawing in the classroom is how students will share their work. Some teachers may want the students to stand and present their drawing to the class – this could be done in homogenous- or heterogeneous-language groups. Other teachers might choose to leave the activity truly linguistically neutral and simply have students turn in their work; again, this depends on the individual class and content area, and should be clearly laid out before the activity begins (García et al., 2017). No matter how it is used, picture drawing can be a lens into a student’s mind that no other medium of communication can provide.

**Picture drawing applied to the curriculum.** The story *My Side of the Mountain* (George, 2001) from theme six of the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum is full of opportunities for students to respond in drawing. In the novel by Jean Craighead George, a young boy, Sam Gribley is living on his own in the wilderness. With creativity and cunning survival skills, Sam works to combat both hunger and loneliness. Near the beginning of the Houghton Mifflin anthology excerpt, Sam befriends a small bird that he calls Frightful. Frightful becomes his constant companion in the wilderness until one day, she takes off on her own.

I tossed Frightful off my fist and she flashed through the trees and out over the meadow. She went with a determination strange to her. “She is going to leave,” I cried. “I have never seen her fly so wildly.” I pushed the smoked fish aside and ran to the meadow. I whistled and whistled and whistled until my mouth was dry and no more whistle would come.
I ran onto the big boulder. I could not see her. Wildly I waved the lure. I licked my lips and whistled again. The sun was a cold steely color as it dipped below the mountain. The air was now brisk, and Frightful was gone. (George, 2001, p. 91)

This passage will conjure up a lot of emotions for students. Some students might worry about what is going to happen to Sam after this loss, other students might find themselves relating this passage to a similar experience they had losing someone close to them. No matter their outward reaction, when students come across passages like this, they are sure to make strong emotional connections. Some drawing prompts that teachers might use in response to this reading are:

- Draw the scene as you pictured it in your mind
- Draw how you think Sam is feeling in this moment
- Draw how you think Frightful is feeling in this moment
- Draw what it would feel like if you were in Sam’s situation
- Draw a time when you experienced the same feelings as Sam
- Draw what you think is going to happen next

The possibilities for drawing responses to this passage are endless. It is the teacher’s job to understand the class’ emotional maturity and also be culturally sensitive. Reflections such as these are also dependent on grade level. Every class will be different, but this sample passage and questions provides the teacher with an idea of how picture drawing can be used as a viable mode of individual student response in the translanguaging classroom.

**Journal Writing**

Journal writing is another non-invasive, low-stakes way to offer students an opportunity to reflect on material, while still being an effective medium for teachers to assess students’
language acquisition. Canagarajah (2011) regards journal writing as essential to the translanguage classroom. He states:

> Composition brings discourse and rhetorical issues sharply into focus. Effective writing is not a matter of stringing well-formed sentences. Authors have to do so with rhetorical effectiveness… the monitored and somewhat detached activity of writing involves strategic options and choices. Students have to develop a critical awareness of the choices that are rhetorically more effective. (p. 402)

Journal writing also engages students’ emotions by allowing students to process their own feelings about something they have read or a discussion in which they have just engaged. When writing freely, students are more likely to tap into a broader range of emotions (Heredia, 2001). Although journal writing must be completed in English for the translanguage teacher to use it as an assessment, it works in conjunction with many of the translanguage pedagogical strategies that Garcia et al. (2017) outlined that can be presented in students’ home languages. Some of these include showing short video clips, listening to podcasts, or having family or community members come in and share with the class in their native language. After engaging with one of these activities in their L1, students can respond by journal writing in English.

**Key components of journal writing.** The most important feature of journal writing in the translanguage classroom is that it is low-stakes and non-graded. Reflective writing should be a safe place for students to be honest about their feelings, opinions, or concerns about a topic. Cultivating a safe place requires the teacher to create a classroom atmosphere of respect early on in the year. Journal writing can be open-ended or directed. While many students may find it easy to free write, some students may need more focus. In these cases, the teacher can provide some structure for their writing. He or she may encourage students to write a poem, a letter to a friend
or family member, or even a letter to themselves in the past or the future. The teacher might tell students to predict what will happen next in a situation, or what might happen if some variable were to change in a story. The possibilities for journal writing are far-reaching. When students feel safe to be honest in their writing, their creative processes begin to flow naturally. In order to use journal writing most effectively, the teacher should encourage the students to use their funds of knowledge to connect themselves more authentically to their writing. The goal of journal writing is to broaden and diversify a students’ understanding of the world, which is a naturally resulting effect of using funds of knowledge in any learning context (Moll et al., 1992). For students to draw meaning from journal writing in a translanguaging classroom, they must utilize funds of knowledge.

**Journal writing applied to the curriculum.** To show how journal writing might be applied to the language arts curriculum for fifth and sixth grade, we turn back to *Where the Red Fern Grows* (Rawls, 1961) from theme three in the Houghton Mifflin curriculum. At the end of the excerpt, Billy, having traveled to Tahlequah on his own, finally arrives at the station to retrieve his dogs. The end of the excerpt is as follows:

> I wanted so much to step over and pick them up. Several times I tried to move my feet, but they seemed to be nailed to the floor. I knew the pups were mine, all mine, yet I couldn’t move. My heart started acting like a grasshopper. I tried to swallow and I couldn’t. My Adam’s apple wouldn’t work.

> One pup started my way. I held my breath. On he came until I felt a scratchy little foot on mine. The other pup followed. A warm puppy tongue caressed my sore foot.

> I heard the stationmaster say, “They already know you.” (Rawls, 1961, p. 41)
The teacher has many options in prompting the students to write reflectively in response to this passage. Some ideas for journal prompts are:

- Predict what might come next in the story
- Write a letter to Billy asking him questions about his journey to get his dogs
- Write advice to Billy about being a dog/pet owner
- Write about a time you had to work very hard to get something you really wanted
- Write about a time when you were so happy you could not move, just like Billy in the last paragraphs of the excerpt

To help drive their writing under any prompt, the teacher should remind students to keep in mind the idea of making connections to themselves or to other people or passages. No matter the prompt or the context, the most important factor in all journal writing is that students personally reflect on the topic in some way.

**Group Response**

After a teacher has introduced a lesson, reviewed vocabulary, and given students a chance to process the information, group response is a great way for students to demonstrate their understanding in a less-direct way. In the linguistically diverse classroom, allowing students to respond in groups promotes language development in a manner that encourages orality and cultural competence. Students glean insight about their varying cultures as they work with one another. The two group discussion strategies described here are both supported by García et al. (2017). One translinguaging strategy the authors provide is to act out a response to a piece of text with a group. This “performing,” as García et al. (2017) called it, can be done with or without words. Another strategy that translinguaging teachers can employ for group response is whole class discussion (García et al., 2017). In a linguistically diverse classroom, when all voices
have equal footing and are chiming in together, students’ multiculturalism is encouraged and their multilingualism shines (Langman, 2014). Opening up the class to discussing a piece of text can be an excellent way to formatively assess student understanding. Allowing students to respond in whatever language is most comfortable to them – whether through acting or discussion – creates a truly multicultural atmosphere.

**Performing**

There has been a funds of knowledge component in each of the translanguaging strategies so far, but funds of knowledge are applied specifically in the strategy of performing. There are many benefits to using performance as a form of group response inside the translanguaging classroom, one of the greatest is that it allows students to incorporate their culture into their responses. Performing also encourages the use of multimodalities, as students must incorporate their vast linguistic and cultural resources with their gestural, aural, spatial and visual resources during their time on “stage.” Performing is referred to multiple times in the lists of translanguaging pedagogical strategies compiled by Garcia et al. (2017). The authors encouraged teachers to have students write stories with bilingual characters or situations where other language practices have to be used and to turn these writings into performance pieces. The authors also encouraged using pre-written plays or readers’ theater that include translanguaging to give voice to bilingual characters. They stressed the importance of having students present collaboratively, with different students taking on different roles, which ties directly to performing (Garcia et al., 2017). The authors emphasized that these three strategies require students to “imagine” (p. 113). There is tremendous creativity required when using performance under any of these umbrellas; teachers should tap into the imagination of multilinguals at every opportunity. The creativity that the teacher can use in designing performance lessons is similarly
limitless. To help bring some more specificity to the strategy of group response for the sake of this project, I suggest two methodologies: skits and dance. When performing skits, students respond to a question or a prompt by showing expression, motions and movement along with active and engaging dialogue. When performance a dance, students can communicate their emotions and opinions about a topic without words, in a culturally focused way. Some students may come from backgrounds that do not use acting or dance frequently. Engaging in these types of performance can be a great cultural experience for these students, too. Performing is a direct way for students to incorporate their home knowledge not only with the content but also with their peers.

**Key components of performing.** When using performance as a mode of group response, the teacher must walk the fine line described by Palmer et al. (2014) of being both a facilitator and an instructor. Teachers must adequately prepare the students with expectations for their response, while also leaving room for creativity to flow. What makes performance in the translanguaging classroom so effective – whether through skits or dance – is the amalgamation of so many languages and cultures coming together. A teacher must capitalize on this diversity while still maintaining structure, as they may choose to take students’ performances for a grade. A second qualifier for using dance or skits in a translanguaging setting is the way teachers group students. Grouping students homogenously by culture may be a great way to start, as students may be most comfortable expressing themselves with people from similar backgrounds. However, there may be times when there is only one student from a certain linguistic background. It is unfair to put a single student on the spot simply because they are their culture’s sole representative in the class. Grouping students heterogeneously can help to avoid this problem. Heterogeneous grouping also helps to promote multiculturalism in all students, as
students get an opportunity to interact with different cultures on a deeper level. Through clear expectations, giving room for creative freedom, and using intentional grouping strategies, translanguaging teachers can use performing as a unique and imaginative form of group response.

**Performing applied to the curriculum.** A teacher must plan carefully when applying performance to a preset curriculum. So much of modern language arts curricula in publication today, including the Houghton Mifflin language arts curriculum, puts language arts in a “box.” They approach reading, writing, and language learning very two-dimensionally. Performance is three dimensional, as it requires emotion, feeling, and multimodalities, as mentioned above. As such, it does not always align perfectly with a standard curriculum. However, teachers should not shy away from using it simply because of the challenge. One example of a text that teachers can use with the performance strategy is the story *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 2006). Theme one of the Houghton Mifflin curriculum includes an excerpt from this Newbery Medal-winning book. The author, Gary Paulsen, describes a young boy, Brian Robeson, stranded alone in the wilderness trying to survive. In this story, Brian is specifically in the Canadian wilderness near a lake. These geographic features play into his survival story. Survival in other areas of the world would look very different. One way that performance could be used with this story is, after reading and discussing an excerpt, the teacher prompts the students to create a skit or dance depicting a survival story of their own. The teacher would put the students into groups and ask them to create their own survival story. The group must decide the geographical location that their story takes place in, what happened in their story to force a survival situation, and how the people use their natural resources to survive in such conditions. Then, the group must come up with either a
skit or dance to express their story. An activity such as this might take a couple of days to complete, with the culminating performance happening on last day.

The aforementioned activity is in response to a whole text – in this case the *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 2006) excerpt. In that situation, the teacher gave the students a prompt to respond to, e.g.: their own survival story. Performing can also be used in response to a question. Books such as *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 2006) inevitably spark emotional responses in students. Brian demonstrates emotions ranging from fear to courage to pride, and students may experience these same emotions as they read his story. Performing can be a great way to integrate emotional awareness into language arts. The translanguaging teacher can ask students to respond in skit or dance to questions like, “What emotions would you feel if you were in Brian’s situation?” or “Which emotion is stronger in this story, fear or courage, and why?” These questions are very open-ended and allow for maximum creativity in student expression.

It is important for the translanguaging teacher to remember that this activity might feel uncomfortable for many students who are accustomed to the read, write, and memorize form of traditional language learning. It may take weeks or even months of practicing this form of group response before students become comfortable with performing. In doing so, it is important that the teacher allow freedom to make mistakes. Like in many of the strategies mentioned above, it is crucial for the teacher to establish a community of respect, rapport, and freedom of expression in the classroom before launching into performing as group response. However, with practice and the opportunity to make mistakes, student performances have the potential to be both emotionally cathartic and keenly informative.

**Group Discussions**

The strategy of group discussion most acutely demonstrates how translanguaging is used as
pedagogy (Martin-Beltrán, 2014). There is arguably no better way to promote authentic, whole-

class engagement in a linguistically diverse setting. With careful planning and proper teacher 
engagement, class discussions can lead to some of the most genuine learning experiences. This 
final translanguaging activity comes from the Garcia et al. (2017) text as a way for students to 
learn what they really believe about a topic by expressing their opinions and grappling with one 
another. Group discussions, like think-pair-share, are a way for students to have “meaningful 
collaborative dialogue” (p. 112), but in a whole-group setting. Group discussions are not a free-
for-all however. In order to make them significant learning experiences, the translanguaging 
teacher must employ some foundational principles to help drive the discussion; again, walking 
the fine line between facilitator and instructor (Canagarajah, 2011; Martinez-Roldan, 2015). 
Group discussions also help translanguaging teachers develop the “multilingual spaces” 
described by Martin-Beltrán (2014), demonstrated below. When implemented correctly, group 
discussions can help students better understand themselves and broaden their understanding of 
others at the same time.

**Key components of group discussions.** There are four principles that must be 
implemented in order to have an effective group discussion in a linguistically diverse setting. 
The four principles are: defining the teacher’s role, encouraging student participation, identifying 
the type of discussion, and promoting multiple languages.

First and foremost, it is of the utmost importance that the teacher understands his or her 
role in a group discussion. The teacher is a facilitator, not an active participant (Martinez-
Roldan, 2015). The teacher should be the one prompting students to speak, and when 
appropriate, playing “devil’s advocate” to encourage deeper student thinking. The teacher should 
not try to be an active participant in the discussion. As a general rule, kids want to please adults;
this phenomenon is even more evident when cultural power dynamics come into play. Some students will say only what they believe the teacher wants to hear because they want to satisfy them. This is not the point of a group discussion. The aim instead is to get students to think critically and interact with one another. This requires the teacher to be a guide rather than a participant.

The second principle of a translanguaging group discussion is that the teacher must encourage all students to join the discussion. It can be easy to allow one or two students to dominate the conversation, but for a group discussion to be truly valuable, the teacher must encourage all students to participate so that all perspectives and languages are heard. García & Kleyn (2017) discussed how Mr. Brown uses group discussion in his linguistically diverse classroom in New York City, paying specific attention to how he helps students incorporate their funds of knowledge.

The back and forth, the question and answer rapport between Mr. Brown and his students goes on as students make connections between what they read earlier, their own understandings of slavery, injustice, unfairness, and other incidents of discrimination and inequities in other historical and current events. Mr. Brown uses each student’s response as a springboard to make a point about the content. When he asks students what they know about slavery, Andrés adds, “It’s like child labor, only with adults.” Mr. Brown acknowledges the strength of this connection and reminds the class that children were also slaves… Other students share examples of unfairness from current, personal, or historical events, and with each contribution, Mr. Brown draws it back to their focus on slavery. (p. 88)
Mr. Brown demonstrates that the translanguaging teacher, as a facilitator, should encourage all students to participate.

The third principle of a translanguaging group discussion is that the teacher must identify what type of discussion they are going to use. While some discussions may be students sharing their experiences of something, like in Mr. Brown’s example, others may be debates where kids have to defend their perspectives. Still others may require all the students to work together to define a word (i.e.: what does “culture” really mean). Each discussion will look different, depending on the topic at hand.

The fourth and final principle, and the most defining aspect of a translanguaging group discussion, is the variety of languages represented. Students should be encouraged to chime in using their home languages. Some students may even help translate for one another, as in the example of Benjamin and his friend in Mr. Brown’s classroom described earlier (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). In a group discussion, many students may switch back and forth between their home language and English. Language diversity is encouraged in group discussions, as it demonstrates that every culture has a voice. In a translanguaging group discussion, students will not only draw upon their various linguistic resources, but will incorporate their household funds of knowledge to help add depth to the discussion. The cultural multiplicity of a linguistically diverse classroom will shine in a well-executed group discussion. All of these principles contribute to making group discussions a valuable translanguaging strategy.

It is important to note the distinction and connection between group discussion and questioning techniques. Teachers should draw upon the questioning techniques described above to help formulate their questions for group discussions. The teacher uses questioning techniques to build their own translanguaging questions or to adapt curriculum-provided questions to fit a
translanguaging stance, then they use those questions to help drive a group discussion. The group
discussion strategy focuses on how a teacher can encourage discussion amongst their students,
walk the fine line of facilitator but not participant, and ensure that all voices are heard.

**Group discussions applied to the curriculum.** Almost any text can give birth to a wide
variety of group discussions. Group discussions can be held as a form of pre-teaching before
reading a story, as a check-in in the middle of stories, or as a form of reflection after reading a
text. In the *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 2006) excerpt in the Houghton Mifflin curriculum, we find
multiple opportunities to stop for class discussion. While it is nearly impossible to predict what
students will say and how the discussion will unfold, I have provided a variety of discussion
topics, showing how this technique can be applied to different parts of reading instruction.
Again, the teacher should draw upon the questioning techniques strategy to help formulate their
questions.

Before reading *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 2006), the teacher could explain some of the driving
themes of the story: survival, mental strength, and courage. From here, teachers can ask pre-
reading group discussion questions pertaining to these themes. They might ask students to share
their own experiences with survival, to grapple with what the word “courage” really means, or
when and if survival situations can be seen as an opportunity for growth. In holding a group
discussion, the teacher must pay keen attention to allowing all students to share their experiences
and ensuring that all voices are on equal footing. If one student is monopolizing the conversation
and sharing their own opinion on what “courage,” means, the teacher should call upon other
students to share their opinions as well.

In the middle of the story *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 2006), the teacher may stop periodically and
guide the class in group discussions about how the story is unfolding. One example of a place a
teacher might stop is right after reading the selection about Brian being stuck by a porcupine.

This portion of text appears near the beginning of the Houghton Mifflin excerpt:

The slithering moved again, he thought toward him at first, and terror took him, stopping his breath. He felt he could see a low dark form, a bulk in the darkness, a shadow that lived, but now it moved away, slithering and scraping it moved away and he saw or thought he saw it go out of the door opening.

He lay on his side for a moment, then pulled a rasping breath and held it, listening for the attacker to return. When it was apparent that the shadow wasn’t coming back he felt the calf of his leg, where the pain was centered and spreading to fill the whole leg.

His fingers gingerly touched a group of needles that had been driven through is pants and into the fleshy part of his calf. They were stiff and very sharp on the ends that stuck out, and he knew then what the attacker had been. A porcupine had stumbled into his shelter and when he had kicked it the thing had slapped him with its tail of quills. (Paulsen, 2006, p. 30)

Following this passage, the teacher might hold a discussion about whether or not Brian’s fear was a healthy fear. Students might engage in what denotes a “healthy” fear versus an “unhealthy” fear and share times when they were afraid of something in the natural world. During this discussion, the teacher should continue to probe students to keep the discussion going, but keep his or her own opinion out of the discussion. Again, the teacher acts as a facilitator not an active participant.

Discussions that take place after reading a passage look distinctly different from those that happen before and during reading. In after-reading discussions, the students have a lot more information to draw on. After the porcupine incident described above, Brian spends the night in a cave and has a dream about his father. In the morning he finds a hatchet and goes through the
slow process of creating fire. The excerpt in the curriculum ends with Brian finally creating fire and relaxing in the fact that the fire will keep him alive for a little bit longer. Of course this is not the end of the book, but the “cliffhanger” ending of this excerpt could also lend itself well to a group discussion. There are a multitude of questions that the translanguage teacher could ask following the *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 2006) excerpt. The teacher might split the group into two groups and hold a debate about whether making fire, or finding shelter was more important for Brian’s survival. This encourages all students to participate, as they work in smaller groups and then share out in larger groups. The teacher might also lead a discussion about what is necessary for survival, and whether meeting physical needs is enough. Students can draw from one another’s responses to build a definition of survival as a class. Again, the teacher must create an environment of respect and rapport in their classroom to ensure that all students feel that they have a voice and that their perspective has value – this is central to an effective group discussion.

In each of these group discussions, students draw from their funds of knowledge. Again, the aim of these discussions is to get students to think critically about a piece of text. When executed correctly, group discussions can be rich learning experiences in linguistically diverse classrooms.

**Application for Teachers**

The five categories provided above and the eight strategies within them are intended to be building blocks that a teacher can use to create each translanguage lesson. For example, a teacher might choose to begin the lesson by reviewing vocabulary with the students and have them create shades of meaning cards for unfamiliar words. Then, the class might read the story together and use the independent processing strategy of close reading in whatever language is most comfortable to them. After processing the information in this way, the teacher might lead
the class in a group discussion in English as a form of group response. In another lesson, the translanguaging teacher might pose an investigative question to assess what the students already know about a topic and then read a story together. Throughout the story, the teacher might have students stop and think-pair-share in their home languages about an interesting portion of the text, and wrap up the lesson by asking students to write in their journal in their home language about a prompt using the strategy of reflective questioning. Still another lesson could begin by reading a text together and asking students to define difficult words in their own language with the whole class using the strategy of kid teachers. After reading the text, the teacher might pose a reflective question to the class and ask students to respond to it by drawing a picture to turn in for a grade.

In juxtaposing these strategies with the literature review, it is necessary to address the one criticism that I, and many teachers may have, to translanguaging. That is time. The time it takes to translate materials, research cultures, track down multilingual resources, create a multilingual library, and lesson plan in multiple different languages incorporating activities that activate multiculturalism, draw on funds of knowledge, and promote multilingual spaces is far from simple, and adds to the already heavy burden that many teachers carry. In its effort to “fill the gap” between theory and practice, this project also hopes to be a tool that teachers can use to help lessen that burden.

The combinations of the strategies presented above are endless. When a translanguaging teacher masters these strategies, he or she can use them in whatever way they see most effective for their group of students as a simple way to create a translanguaging lesson. As explained above, these strategies are intended to be applicable across a wide variety of grade levels and content areas. Questioning techniques are directly applicable in almost any classroom with
minimal adaptations. The processing and response strategies can be made applicable to almost any grade level with a few adjustments. By giving students the freedom to use whatever language is most comfortable to them in a variety of different activities, the translanguage teacher encourages their multilingualism. The strategies presented above hope to make that process more seamless.

**Discussion**

In applying the strategies described above to their group of linguistically diverse learners, teachers have a usable way to promote not only the integrated linguistic systems and multiculturalism in students as described in the literature review, but also a greater holistic understanding of students’ selves as bilingual citizens through translanguage. I began writing this project when I was still teaching in my linguistically diverse classroom at Mountaintop. Through the research and writing process, I began planning how I was going to implement these strategies into my own classroom, but two weeks before school started I transferred to a German immersion school that subscribed verbatim to the immersion model I explained above. This transfer eliminated the opportunity for me to use the translanguage principles that I describe here. I took instead to journaling about any translanguage practices I could find in my classroom. I found little evidence of any. What I discovered in my personal journaling was that the differences between the immersion model and the translanguage model that Garcia et al. (2017) described were accurate.

The immersion program at Treetop School is identical to that of the immersion program at Mountaintop Elementary in that students have two teachers: an English teacher who teaches reading, writing, spelling and math and a German teacher who teaches German language arts, science, and social studies. While I observed the immersion classrooms at Mountaintop from my
vantage point as a neighborhood teacher, and assumed that translanguaging practices did not occur inside of them, it was until I became an immersion teacher myself that I confirmed this. I came to three conclusions after keeping a classroom observation journal in my new context. The first pertained to behavior. I observed connections between the immersion model and student behavior, and I saw opportunities for the translanguaging model to mitigate those behaviors. The second observation centered on students’ inquisitiveness about language in general, even languages that they don’t speak at all, and how translanguaging might capitalize on this curiosity. My third observation was that profound changes would have to occur in order for translanguaging to become commonplace in Anchorage language immersion classrooms. In the following descriptions, it is important for me to emphasize that the teachers and administrators at the immersion schools in Anchorage are in no way “at fault” for encouraging the language practices in students that they do. They are simply enforcing the tenants of the immersion model that the Anchorage School District world language program has adopted.

The first conclusion that I drew from my classroom observation journal was that language use has a significant impact on student behavior. In performing the research for this project, I did not find much about behavior and its ties to translanguaging, but when I began seeing my new context through the lens of translanguaging, behavior and its connection to language restriction was one of the biggest themes that stood out to me. I wrote multiple journal entries describing it. The first of these entries was from August 25:

Last night I had a realization about the reason my afternoon group is way more chatty and misbehaved than my morning group. They spend all morning in German, in a room where they are penalized for speaking their home language, as per the immersion guidelines. Upon walking into my room, they all of a sudden have the opportunity to
speak in English, a language they are most comfortable with (none of my students are German L1 speakers). The moment they walk into my room they explode into conversation because it is “safe” to do so. I asked them what it felt like to walk into my room and suddenly be able to speak in English and they responded with a resounding chorus of words and sighs expressing they felt “relief.” So today I tried giving them 3 minutes to get their “chatty” out. They were able to talk amongst themselves in whatever language they wanted, and it didn’t get out of control. I found that I had more control with them for the rest of the day overall as well. These experiences and observations make me think about the behavioral impacts of the restrictions that we place on students’ language usage.

After this realization, it stood to reason that if language restriction elevated misbehaviors, giving the opportunity to mix languages would improve student behavior. My journal entry from September 5 supported this conclusion:

Today I was teaching a math lesson with my fourth graders that involved subtracting multi-digit numbers to the hundred thousands. Our answers were also in the hundred thousands and we were practicing saying the large numbers in word form. After practicing a couple, I asked my students if they could tell me how to say one of the numbers in German. They came alive and all shouted it out in unison. They were very excited to teach me how to say it, and loved watching me try (and fail) to pronounce it correctly.

While previously in the lesson, multiple students had been talking to a neighbor and not paying attention, all students were instantly engaged when I asked them to translate the numbers into
German. The opportunity to mix the two languages inside the classroom was foreign to them and they jumped on the opportunity.

A second conclusion that I came to throughout my journal writing process was that translanguaging can be practiced in a classroom even when the second language is not a language that the students are trying to learn. Simply exposing students to new languages throughout the school day has benefits. Incorporating language learning in bits and pieces throughout the day is exciting for students. This realization began with an interaction I had with one of my students’ parents at open house, and blossomed into a now common classroom practice. The following was my journal entry from August 30:

Tonight was open house and I got a chance to meet the mother of one of my afternoon fourth graders. This student always seems like she is trying diligently to pay attention, but has a hard time following along. Her mom told me that at home they speak Romanian (father’s native language) and Spanish (mother’s native language). This student then goes to school and speaks in English and German all day long. No wonder she is struggling in multiple areas – she’s learning everything in four languages! I spoke to the student in Spanish the next day and she came alive. I saw the opportunity to connect with this student and I capitalized on it. Her countenance changed that day and she has opened up more and more ever since. I saw an opportunity to help her with her L2 of English by using one of her home languages – Spanish. While the interaction was only relating two of her four languages, I believed it was still a worthwhile connection to make.

A week later, I wrote the following in my journal:

I have since continued to speak to this student in Spanish throughout the school day. I have noticed that many other students will listen in to our conversations and ask about
what we are saying. I now sometimes give instructions to my whole class in Spanish, and
then translate them into English. The rest of the class loves hearing a new language so
much that I do it now for them as much as for her.

In introducing my students to these languages, I use their native language (English) to help teach
them the new words, which in itself is translanguaging. The kids delight in learning new
languages, and try to use their new words with each other and with me as much as they can.

My final conclusion about translanguaging inside an immersion classroom was that for
translanguaging to be applicable in an immersion classroom, the teacher and district must
specifically encourage it. Parents, teachers, and students must concurrently work together to
foster translanguaging in every aspect of the school day in order for this method of learning to be
truly effective. In the current immersion program, it has been so ingrained in students to never
cross over in their languages that translanguaging has become nearly impossible. My journal
entry from September 25th demonstrates this:

Today while lining up in the lunchroom to pick up my students from lunch, I overheard a
teacher reprimanding a student in their class. They said, “Student S, I wonder if you’ll act
out for your English teacher as much as you did for me this morning. Do you speak
German on the English side, too? Because you obviously were very excited about
speaking in English on the German side and not following our directions or protocol.”
The student was called out for speaking his native language during a time when he was
not supposed to. When I thought back on the interaction, I realized how opposite of
translanguaging it really is. This student was corrected for using his native language to
help him in the acquisition of his second language – which is exactly what
translanguaging teachers encourage their students to do.
I want to reiterate that the teacher is not at “fault” in this situation; they are simply following established guidelines for the language immersion model that the school subscribes to, i.e.: do not cross over between languages. The program, not the teachers, has ingrained the idea of language separation in students since kindergarten. My journal entry from September 8 explains a school-wide language incentive program that our school uses further supporting the immersion model of language acquisition.

Our school has a system called the speech master – this is a school-wide language award incentive given to students who only speak in German on the German side. For every 25 days that they do not utter one English word on the German side, they earn their speech master award. There are six of these awards – they follow the progression of the flags of the five countries that speak German. The first award is a German flag, the second is an Austrian flag, the third is the Swiss flag, the fourth is the Luxembourg flag, and the fifth is the Liechtenstein flag. The sixth and final speech master award is the flag of the European Union, and it is given to students who have completed all of their speech master levels (150 days). While this is a fun incentive for the students to earn, and I can see the rationale behind it, it is interesting how contrary it stands to translanguaging. This award system is literally incentivizing the opposite of translanguaging, and punishing the use of translanguaging.

It must be restated that the school administrators and teachers are not at fault for incentivizing this type of language use in students. They simply came up with a creative way to encourage the use of the immersion model of language use that the school subscribes to. After juxtaposing these two journal entries, I came to the conclusion that, while my project has shown that encouraging translanguaging inside immersion classrooms would be beneficial for student
language growth, in the case of the immersion schools in Anchorage, this would require significant program change approved by the school’s or district’s governing bodies. However, district policy change can only go so far. In order for translanguaging to truly take effect, students, parent’s teachers, and administrators alike have to work together to create not only a policy but a culture of translanguaging. Encouraging this particular type of language learning is not enough; all parties involved must understand and support the ideas presented here in order for a true translanguaging culture to take hold in a school or district.

Conclusion

Analyzing translanguaging from the perspective of theory into practice has demonstrated that it is not only an effective pedagogical strategy for learning a second language, but has far-reaching implications into students’ multicultural development and self-perspective as multilingual citizens. Reflecting on this project as a whole brought me to four big questions. The first was how my ideas have grown throughout this process. In asking myself this question, I realized that I began this project with a very simplistic understanding of translanguaging. I knew it meant incorporating a student’s first language into the acquisition of their second language, but what I didn’t realize was that the very foundation of translanguaging is seeing language as a system in students, with many different parts and pieces working together. Encouraging students to use all of their languages and promoting the “language ecologies” that Creese & Blackledge (2010) described requires going to the very core of how a student thinks and learns on a cognitive level. This is a paradigmatic shift, one that a teacher must understand before being able to fully integrate a translanguaging model into their classroom.

Answering the first question pushed me a step deeper, and forced me to think about what I learned throughout this process. Juxtaposing translanguaging to my new context at the German
immersion school was extremely eye opening. I noticed that what I had observed at Mountaintop Elementary was extremely similar to what I saw at Treetop School in terms of behavior and native language. In my observation, students almost always behaved better when speaking, and being spoken to, in their native language. This was true with my Samoan student and Latino cousins learning English as their second language at Mountaintop and with my English-speaking students learning German as a second language at Treetop School. The idea of home language being the most powerful language for behavior management was a continuous theme from the conception to conclusion of this project. I also learned that translanguaging is not a classroom model that can be adopted overnight. The intentionality and specificity required from the translanguaging teacher cannot be overstated. It takes a thorough understanding of what translanguaging is and a concerted effort from the teacher to apply it to a classroom. It is also not a one-size-fits-all theory; every classroom must adapt the model to fit the unique needs of its group of students. The aim of this project was to provide strategies that are easily adaptable for this very reason.

One of the most essential questions for writers to ask themselves is: “Why?” “Why is this important? What is the purpose of doing this project at all?” This was my third question. The answer lies in my dual identity as both a graduate student and a teacher. As a graduate student, I spend my time researching and reading through theories and models of pedagogy. I analyze, criticize, and reflect on these theories. But I have noticed that as a teacher, when I read professional development books and attend professional development seminars (pertaining to these same pedagogical theories), I receive very little classroom application for them. As I sit with my colleagues at these trainings, we’re told that a theory or strategy is “evidence-based” and is “best practice” but are seldom given a concrete example of how to actually apply it in our
classroom, with our students. This project sought to fill this gap and connect theory to practice. Not only does this project provide workable strategies, but it also includes specific application to an already-adopted reading curriculum, demonstrating exactly how these strategies can be used in the classroom.

The fourth question I asked myself was how my project contributes to the current published literature on this topic. In answering this question, I realized that it builds on the need identified in question three. What my project contributes is the critical application piece. My project expands on the current theoretical publications on translanguaging and applies them to workable strategies for the linguistically diverse classroom, demonstrating how translanguaging strategies can be specifically applied to curriculum. For example, while Garcia et al. (2017) provided a list of translanguaging strategies, they did not demonstrate how they could be applied to the curriculum. Teachers are left to build that bridge themselves. This project is a board in that bridge.

The final question I asked myself was “What now? Where does this go from here?” Every project leaves room for future questions, discussion, research, and application; this project is no exception. One idea that specifically drove this project was the fact that Anchorage is home to the most linguistically diverse school district in the nation but has not yet been a site for published translanguaging research. The statistics behind the diversity of my school district and my own experience in a linguistically diverse classroom came together to confirm the need for this project and for future research and application of translanguaging in both Anchorage and Alaska at large.

One could argue that multilingual students hold the greatest hope for our country in bridging the gap between the cultural and linguistic barriers that divide us. The harsh reality is
that many multilingual students are falling through the cracks under current dual language pedagogy. The aim of this project was to take translanguaging principles and make them applicable to classrooms where many languages are represented in an effort to promote multiple languages in our diverse classrooms. My hope is that by combining newly researched translanguaging principles with tried-and-true instructional strategies, this project helps to bridge the gap for these future leaders.
References


