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A Teacher's Guide to Plurilingual Pedagogy

Elisabeth Wichser-Krajcik

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Elisabeth N. Wichser-Krajcik

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IPP Advisor: Dr. Elka Todeva

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Student name: Elisabeth N. Wichser-Krajcik

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Abstract

Language teaching practices have been dominated by monolingual, deficit approaches in which students are expected to compartmentalize languages, ignore prior knowledge, and emulate how natives speak the target language—though there have also been many teachers who have challenged these approaches through the years. Plurilingualism and plurilingual pedagogy reject such ideas and practices and instead seek to cultivate linguistic repertoires (including partial or uneven skills across languages), engage prior knowledge and lived experience, and develop metalinguistic and metacognitive competencies. Drawing on decades of research in applied linguistics and associated fields, plurilingual pedagogy aims to teach language in a way that is more reflective of how it is used in real-world settings. While it has been widely discussed in academic circles, it has yet to be fully incorporated into educators' practices, especially outside of Canada and Europe. As both an approach and a practice, this pedagogy allows instructors to bring equity into the classroom by valuing students' linguistic and cultural identities while also building student confidence. After introducing plurilingual pedagogy, comparing it to other language teaching approaches, and exploring its benefits, this paper explores four associated teaching practices. Finally, the Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, and Awareness framework for teacher development (Freeman, 1989) is adapted to help teachers link the larger goals of plurilingual pedagogy to specific learning objectives. The goal of this paper is to synthesize current research on plurilingual pedagogy and promote its ideas in a way that is pedagogically and methodologically useful for practitioners in the field.

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Descriptors

Plurilingual pedagogy, plurilingualism, teacher education, deficit approach, monolingualism, language learning

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Introduction

The purpose of this project is to serve as a bridge between the theoretical and the practical. It is for all teachers—of all subjects—who want to update their pedagogy based on current research.

There is a rich literature surrounding plurilingualism, plurilingual pedagogy, and associated ideas like translanguaging (e.g. Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009; Canagarajah, 2011; Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Cook, 2016; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Cummins, 2020; Dooly & Vallejo, 2019; Ellis, 2016; Galante et al., 2019, 2020; García & Otheguy, 2020; Hall & Cook, 2012; Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020; Lin, 2013; Moore et al., 2020; Ollerhead et al., 2018; Ortega, 2014; Piccardo, 2013; Slaughter & Cross, 2021; Todeva, 2015; Vallejo & Dooly, 2020; Van Viegen & Lau, 2020). Research in plurilingualism and translanguaging shares many commonalities, though they explore language learning and teaching in different scopes. See, for instance, Cummins (2020) and García and Otheguy (2020) for more information on similarities and differences of plurilingualism and translanguaging. Others have also taken up the call to link theory and practice and to make plurilingual pedagogy more known to educators and practicioners. Texts such as Lau and Van Veigen's *Plurilingual Pedagogies: Critical and Creative Endeavors for Equitable Language in Education*, and Choi and Ollerhead's *Plurilingualism in Teaching and Learning: Complexities Across Contexts* include teachers' voices and provide a much more comprehensive review of plurilingualism and plurilingual pedagogy. Plurilingual pedagogy is not new. Though it was around before the Common European Framework of Reference

(CEFR) attempted to institute it in 2001, it has yet to be implemented as practice in most teaching contexts (particularly those outside of Europe and Canada).[1] However, the tide is shifting rapidly. There has been an explosion in research and resources in plurilingual pedagogy in recent years. With this explosion in research, numerous terms have been proposed to encompass similar ideas (Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming; Moore et al., 2020). I use plurilingual pedagogy, as opposed to other terms, as I feel it represents the philosophy and practices that I aim to promote (Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming; Moore et al., 2020; Van Viegen & Lau, 2020).

Yet despite the fact that plurilingual practices have been around for a long time and are common in some contexts, there is a serious need for plurilingual teacher training. However, the point of this guide is not necessarily to "train" you. As Freeman (1989) points out, an important goal of teacher training is affirming what teachers are already doing!

The goal of this guide is to touch on all elements of the Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, and Awareness (KASA) framework for teacher development originally posited by Donald Freeman (Freeman, 1989). We will certainly discuss important knowledge and skills that are integral to plurilingual pedagogy. But while having knowledge and skills related to plurilingual pedagogy and its implementation is important, what is more important is a teacher's attitude and awareness. Without a certain attitude toward language learning and teaching, plurilingual pedagogy will be ineffective. Without an awareness of how to bring knowledge, skills, and attitude together and without an awareness of how your ideas about and understanding of language learning and teaching influence your teaching, implementing plurilingual pedagogy will be ineffective. It is only through the synthesis of knowledge, skills, attitude, and awareness that we can make decisions in the classroom that will pro-

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[1]As a note, I use the CEFR's level descriptors (A1 through C2) to refer to students' levels, so if you are not yet familiar with these levels, you can familiarize yourself here: https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale

mote plurilingual pedagogy. Figure 1 from Freeman (1989) is useful in conceptualizing

how the different components of KASA interact:

FIGURE 1
Descriptive Model of Teaching:
The Constituents

AWARENESS triggers and monitors attention to:

ATTITUDE
a stance toward
self, activity, and others that
links intrapersonal dynamics with
external performance and behaviors

SKILLS ———————————————— KNOWLEDGE

the *how* of teaching: the *what* of teaching:

method   subject matter
technique   knowledge of students
activity   sociocultural/
materials/tools   institutional context

Knowledge-Transmission
View of Language Teacher Education

Figure 1: Freeman's (1989) descriptive model of teaching

As Freeman (1989) summarizes,

> Blurring the distinction between language teaching itself and the areas of in-
> quiry on which it is based (e.g. applied linguistics, second language acquisition,
> methodology) leads to two major misconceptions that have often jeopardized
> the success of language teacher education. The first misconception is that
> language teacher education is generally concerned with the transmission of
> knowledge, specifically about applied linguistics and language acquisition, and
> of skills in methodology and related areas. The second misconception which
> follows closely from the first is that transmission of knowledge will lead to
> effective practice. (p. 30)

Chapters one, two, and three will take an overview of what plurilingual pedagogy is,

where it came from, and how it benefits teachers and students. Chapters four and five will look at how to practice plurilingual pedagogy by examining associated teaching methods and strategies, and discussing how to connect the goals of plurilingual pedagogy to lesson objectives.

Chapter 1

What is plurilingual pedagogy?

1.1   Plurilingualism and plurilingual pedagogy

> **Reflect:** What have you heard about plurilingualism? What are some questions and/or assumptions you have about plurilingual pedagogy? Use the Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, Awareness (KASA) model explained in the introduction to help structure your thoughts.

In recent decades, many researchers and educators have rejected ideas associated with monolingualism, instead promoting plurilingualism (Lau & Van Viegen, 2020).

As we will explore further, monolingual models of understanding language learning and teaching fall short in explaining how we learn and use language. Additionally, Van Viegen and Lau (2020) argue that "the monolingual, monocultural assumptions that tend to dominate education are predicated on a narrow perspective of the purpose of education and the resources available for teaching and learning" (p. 327). Plurilingualism instead emphasizes linguistic repertoires and plurilingual language competencies, language synthesis and

code-switching[1], and multi/pluriculturalism. In plurilingualism, a student's entire linguistic repertoire is considered and developed—including uneven or partial skills in a language (Dooly & Vallejo, 2019; Lin, 2013; Piccardo, 2013).

Plurilingualism encompasses the development of linguistic *and* cultural competencies, recognizing that proficiency in these areas will increase or decrease over a lifetime (Galante et al., 2020; Grosjean & Li, 2013; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020).

Piccardo (2013) argues that plurilingualism is supported by shifts toward a social and cognitive understanding of second language acquisition. The brain of someone who is bi/multilingual is no longer viewed as "the sum of monolingual brains but rather [is] considered as a complex and distinct system," as we will discuss in chapter 2 (p. 603). Socially, language acquisition is no longer viewed as occurring in a vacuum. The classroom cannot be an enclave, separated from the real world of multilingualism and multiculturalism. Instead, plurilingualism recognizes that language development is inherently tied to the social situations in which languages are used (Larsen-Freeman, 2015; Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming; Vygotsky, 1978).

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) has promoted plurilingualism since the early 2000s. It describes plurilingual speakers as having an uneven and changing competence, an ability to switch languages, an understanding and awareness of the process of language use and learning, and a plurilingual competence which includes their entire linguistic repertoire (Council of Europe, 2001).

There are several dimensions and objectives of plurilingual pedagogy. Pinho and Andrade (2009, p. 315) have laid out several. Plurilingualism and plurilingual pedagogy:

- highlight the development of linguistic and communicative knowledge and skills

- value learners' previous knowledge and understanding

- build skills such as problem-solving and negotiation of meaning

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[1]We will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of this term in chapter 4

- prepare students for language use in social situations

- see language learning as a life-long process of development

- develop procedural knowledge (the knowledge you need to do a task)

Further, Piccardo (2013) summarizes,

> [i]n a plurilinguistic vision, mixing, mingling, and meshing languages is no longer stigmatized, but recognized as a naturally occurring strategy in real-life communication; languages are not seen as kept in separate mental compartments with their use reserved for separated contexts and purposes. (p. 11)

Galante et al. (2020) describe plurilingualism and pluriculturalism on an individual level, stating,

> A plurilingual person is someone who knows two or more languages but does not necessarily speak them at the same proficiency level; for example, one language can be more fluent than the other. A plurilingual person is also someone who knows variations (dialects) in the same language, for example, the way a language is used in different regions of the country or in other countries.
>
> A pluricultural person is someone who knows about two or more cultures but does not necessarily adopt them at the same level. A pluricultural person is also someone who knows about differences and similarities between cultures even in the same country/city, for example, the way people behave in different regions of the same country. (p. 13)

Reflect: Many teachers already use some aspects of plurilingual pedagogy in the classroom. Can you think of a lesson or interaction in which you promoted or enacted these ideas? How did you feel? How did your student(s) feel?

Boeckmann (2012, p. 267) lays out some of the broader aims and underpinning values of plurilingual pedagogy. These are:

- developing interest in and respect for languages and cultures

- increasing motivation and engagement for language learning as it will better reflect language use in the real world

- challenging prejudices

- being inclusive of learners with different proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds

- sharing linguistic and cultural knowledge in the classroom

- increasing confidence and developing learner autonomy

As we will discuss further, it is essential that teachers examine their attitudes toward language use, learning, and teaching before embarking on implementing plurilingual pedagogy. While there are many practices that promote the goals of plurilingualism, they will be hindered if teachers do not fully believe in the philosophy behind them. As Ollerhead et al. (2018) outline, a plurilingual teacher typically agrees that:

- multilingualism is both normal, and an accomplishment.

- the prior knowledge our students possess is an asset that should be used to link new knowledge and skills with existing knowledge and skills.

- developing a students' entire linguistic repertoire, encompassing the language(s) they already speak with languages they want to learn, should be the goal of language education.

- engaging with students' linguistic and cultural identity enriches the classroom and contributes to the collective knowledge and skills of the class

- the teacher is not the authority on knowledge in the classroom; rather, students and teachers work together to construct knowledge

Plurilingualism is very beneficial to both learners and teachers (as we will discuss in chapter 3), but it has yet to be fully adopted in the classroom. Teachers who want to practice plurilingualism (or do it more frequently) often have difficulty concretizing these goals. For example, Ollerhead et al. (2018) note that many "mainstream" teachers

interviewed in Australia "were positively disposed toward students' plurilinguality as a resource for learning but lacked strategies to engage this in the classroom" (p. 6). How can we measure "development of linguistic resources?" What would a plurilingual lesson plan look like? A plurilingual curriculum?

Even though plurilingualism is rooted in a reflection of reality (the reality of how we learn and the reality of the multilingual and multicultural world we live in), it has been difficult for teachers to abandon the teaching styles that are supported by monolingual ideologies because of their prevalence in teacher training programs, mandated curricula, and the classrooms that teachers themselves were in as students (Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming; Piccardo, 2013). As we will discuss, there are associated ideas, notably translanguaging, that help us practice plurilingualism in the classroom.

1.2 Plurilingualism versus multilingualism

Multilingualism is obviously the more well-known word, so why not call it "multilingual pedagogy?" Plurilingualism, though it is gaining popularity, is still not widely known. Pluri- and multi- may both mean "many," but there are certain connotations associated with multilingualism that plurilingualism seeks to challenge.

Multilingualism suggests more than one language, but is often used to mean many languages spoken in one society or a person who speaks many languages—though their language competency is viewed segmentally as it relates to each language. When assessing the linguistic repertoire of a multilingual speaker, the first thing that comes to mind is determining the quantity of languages spoken. Plurilingualism, on the other hand, seeks to assess linguistic repertoire based on holistic use of all language and communication skills. In a way, multilingualism is about quantity whereas plurilingualism is about quality.

In multilingualism, languages are viewed as being separate. They do not interact with one another. A multilingual speaker may speak English at school, Spanish at home, and

Portuguese with their grandparents. But a plurilingual speaker is a skilled code-switcher, able to synthesize linguistic knowledge and develop a communicative repertoire (Piccardo, 2013). Figure 1.1 is helpful in understanding these differences.
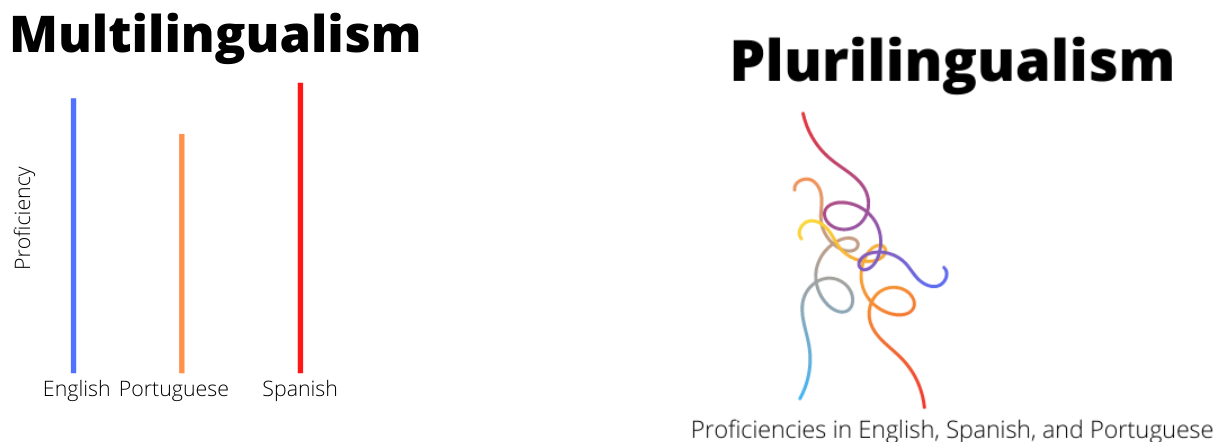
Figure 1.1: Representations of multilingualism and plurilingualism

In a multilingual view, it is assumed that these languages were or are being acquired in a linear fashion, with a speaker's skills constantly progressing toward "fluency" as language skills progress and regress overtime. (For a critical review cf. (García, 2009; Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming).)

However, a plurilingual view is a much better reflection of reality. It looks a bit messy, but that is because learning and using languages can be a messy process. In Figure 1.1, all three languages in plurilingualism are interacting. The speaker can draw off of the connections between words or grammatical structures.

Even languages that are apparently very different, like German and Chinese, interact through the brain's natural tendency to compare and contrast. For example, let's say we have a hypothetical English classroom with only German and Chinese speakers in it. The students are learning medical terminology and come across the word *pediatrician*. They will probably automatically contrast this word with the word for pediatrician in their

languages. In German, it is *Kinderarzt* (literally: 'children doctor') and in Chinese it is 儿科医生 (literally: 'child subject of study doctor'). What connections can you make about all three of these words? What do you notice?

Immediately, I notice that in German and Chinese, the word for *pediatrician* is (roughly speaking) a compound word. Is that the case in English? Students might compare and contrast how these words came about. With more investigation, connections, and manipulation, this word is more likely to be cemented into students' memory (Thornbury, 2013).

Even if you have never spoken German or Chinese, you probably made connections between the words, their literal meanings, and compared them to English or other languages you know. The brain does this automatically—and not just with languages. Comparing and contrasting is a way of organizing incoming information and synthesizing it with previous knowledge.

In plurilingualism, you use your existing linguistic knowledge to make connections, inquire about new languages, and develop metalinguistic skills. Proficiency in languages ebbs and flows over a lifetime in a plurilingual speaker as they work on a communicative repertoire that can include languages, dialects, and gestures. Plurilingualism is based in how we learn, how languages are used, and how languages and cultures interact in the real world.

1.3   How do we learn?

> Knowledge emerges only through invention and reinvention.
>
> (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 72).

Plurilingual pedagogy is supported by social and cognitive understandings of how we learn. Bransford et al. (2000) lay out three criteria for successful learning:

1. Engaging prior knowledge

2. Integrating facts into a conceptual framework

3. Taking active control of the process of learning

A learner's prior knowledge must be connected to what they are currently trying to learn. One of the biggest problems with monolingual teaching methodologies is that it ignores this prior knowledge, urging students to only use the target language. However, in doing so, students' rich prior knowledge is ignored, opening up more opportunities for confusion, alienation, and frustration.

If you are about to embark on a study of calculus, you wouldn't leave all your knowledge of algebra behind. Without your understanding of algebra, calculus would be incredibly difficult and unenjoyable! Like math, language learning is a cumulative process. Asking someone to not use the language(s) they already know is like asking them to attempt calculus without their knowledge of algebra. Asking someone to forget all they have already learned is not only unhelpful but also very difficult. The mind loves making connections, especially to things we already know and understand. It is the same with language learning.

Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009, p. 67) point out that students come into the classroom already having learned:

- how to conceptualize their world and fully grasp the symbolic function of language

- how to communicate

- how to speak and use their voice

- intuition about grammar (what sounds "right")

- reading and writing (to differing degrees of proficiency)

As Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) put it, "we only learn language once" (p. 67). Instead of viewing students as *lacking* knowledge, teachers should recognize and make use of what students already know—because it is a lot!

As Cummins (2007) describes,

> monolingual instructional approaches appear at variance with [a key] principle of learning, [prior knowledge,] because they regard students' L1 (and by implication the knowledge encoded therein) as an impediment to learning the L2. In cases where monolingual approaches do acknowledge the role of prior knowledge, they are likely to limit its expression to what students can express through their L2. (p. 67) [2]

A cornerstone of plurilingual pedagogy is making use of learners' prior knowledge and skills rather than viewing the learner as deficient, like most mainstream pedagogies do. Fighting back against the deficit model—or a model of teaching that views students as lacking knowledge or skills—is not new. The influential educator and philosopher Paulo Freire was a leading critic of the deficit model—or as he termed it, the banking model of education. Freire (1970/2000) explained that in the banking model of education,

> knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. [Thus] the teacher's task is to 'fill' the students with... contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them... and [which] could give them significance. (p. 71–72)

Thus in the deficit model of education, students are seen as empty and the teacher is seen as the bringer of knowledge. Yet students already bring so much knowledge into the classroom. The teacher's job is to facilitate the application of that knowledge to new ideas and concepts and to help the learner develop skills and strategies that allow them to take ownership of their learning (Ortega, 2014). Van Viegen and Lau (2020) explain that teachers can better understand students and their needs once teachers focus on "what they CAN do, rather than focusing on what they cannot do" (p. 327).

Plurilingualism is also supported by cognitive research. For example, different languages generally are not conceptualized separately in the brain. Kim et al. (1997) found that in bilingual speakers, the L1 and L2 have no separation in Wernicke's area, the area of the brain that processes and understands speech. As Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009)

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[2]This quotation alludes to Cummin's (2007) interdependence hypothesis which we will discuss more in chapter 3

state, "all languages seem to tap a common conceptual system. To put it in a nutshell: It is one mind, several languages" (p. 67).

Many teachers already use these principles in classroom activities. For example, an important skill for learners to develop is decoding. Decoding a text allows learners to not only understand a message, but it also aids in processing language to understand the rule or pattern at play. It helps learners understand encoded meanings and unlock language patterns that they can then use to produce new meanings (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009; Hall & Cook, 2012). Decoding is a great classroom activity because it makes use of the three criteria for learning: engaging learner's prior knowledge, integrating what they see into an existing conceptual framework, and taking active control over the learning process.

> **Reflect:** Do you agree with these ideas about how people learn? Why or why not? How do these ideas relate to your own experience as a learner? What are some activities that you have done that can be improved by implementing all three criteria for learning?

But "mainstream" lessons typically do not follow these criteria. Instead, many rely on the behaviorist[3] idea of *presentation, practice, production* (PPP). Let's now look closer at this idea.

1.4 PPP: A vestige of the past

Many TESOL certification courses (like TEFL or CELTA) will still teach presentation, practice, and production (PPP) to new teachers as a go-to model for lesson planning. In these types of lessons, a teacher will first present the information that they want the students to learn. This could be a grammar structure, vocabulary, or a way to write something. Then the teacher will allow the students to practice with this information, perhaps with a worksheet or task that they do individually or with peers. Lastly is the

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[3] Behaviorism is the idea in psychology that human or animal behavior can be explained or manipulated through conditioning.

production stage, in which students demonstrate fluency and ability to use the information freely, without the training wheels used in the practice stage.

Let's look at this sketch of a lesson plan:

Topic: What did you do over the summer?

Presentation stage: The teacher will write on the board, "What did you do over the summer?" and "Over the summer, I _____." The teacher will present some flashcards with summer activities like "go to the beach" or "read a book" with pictures. The students will repeat after the teacher. The teacher will drill the flashcards and correct pronunciation.

Practice stage: The teacher will ask the students to tell the class what they did over the summer. They will make a list and see who did what. The teacher will ask the students to mingle with peers and ask what they did over the summer.

Production stage: The students will write an email to a friend explaining what they did over the summer.

There are several problems with this. First, it maintains strict teacher-student roles in which the teacher bestows knowledge and the students are deficient. Second, it views language as a product—a thing to be acquired—that can be acquired within one lesson. This is not how second language acquisition actually works. PPP "follows the premise that knowledge becomes skill through successive practice and that language is learned in small chunks leading to a whole" (Maftoon & Sarem, 2012, p. 31). It is divorced from real-world language use—how often do you need to send an email to your friends talking about what you did over the summer? It's also boring and does not allow for spontaneity or creativity where students can interact with *language* as a whole, not the little chunks that are presented and closely monitored here.

Therefore the conditions in which students are using and learning the language in the classroom are not congruous with how language is used in the "real world" (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 1988).

This teaching model propagates the very ideas that plurilingualism is in opposition to.

As a new teacher, I desperately wanted lesson plan templates and lesson ideas, yet all I could find were resources that followed the PPP model.

Chapter 2

Where did plurilingual pedagogy come from?

Plurilingual pedagogy is many things, but perhaps most importantly, it is an attitude, a state of mind, and a state of being in the classroom. So to truly understand how we arrive at thinking about a pedagogy as a state of being, rather than a state of doing, we must trace some of the larger ideas that plurilingual pedagogy is steeped in. These include ideas like language development as opposed to language acquisition (Larsen-Freeman, 2015) and a rejection of the monolingual bias (Gogolin, 1997; Ortega, 2013). We will also discuss associated ideas like the "ideal native speaker" (Canagarajah, 2013; Cook, 2016; May, 2014) and complexity theory (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming).

2.1 Monolingualism is not the norm

Reflect: What comes to mind when you hear the word monolingual? Do you consider yourself a monolingual? Why or why not?

It is difficult to find hard data on how many people in the world speak more than one language, but it's probably around half. One of the reasons it is hard to find this data,

in my opinion, is because of the tricky nature of classifying what it means to "speak" a language. As Todeva (2009) expresses,

> One of the questions that I always find difficult to answer is 'How many languages do you speak?' Often asked this question, I find myself prefacing my answer with 'Well, I have formally studied quite a few languages and have a high level of comprehension in still more.' Then, as a rule, I explain that English and Russian are perhaps the only languages I speak fluently, in addition to my L1, of course. I often wish people would ask instead 'How many languages can you read in?' or 'In how many languages do you have decent listening comprehension?' (p. 68)

Even if you consider yourself a monolingual, you have surely been exposed to other languages. Are you still monolingual? I'm sure you know how to say at least "hello" in another language. Are you a monolingual still? Let's say that you are. You have no idea what *hola* or *marhaba* (مرحبا) means. You are a native English speaker living in the U.S. who has never been exposed to another language (assuming said hypothetical person exists). What if everyday you code-switch between Black English and "Standard" English. Are you still monolingual? Or maybe you speak Mandarin Chinese at work and Cantonese at home. Are you a monolingual Chinese speaker?

The problem is, in order to define monolingualism, we have to define what is and is not a language. Are dialects different languages? What about regional accents—are those different languages? What about the formal language you would use in more serious situations versus the informal language you use with your friends—are those separate languages?

Linguists and other language researchers need criteria for what is and is not a language to do research—mutual intelligibility is a good place to start—but these rigid boundaries between languages are not as helpful in the classroom.

From a cognitive perspective, you as a "monolingual" use the same communication and comprehension strategies as everyone else. As Canagarajah (2011) states, "even the so-called 'monolinguals' shuttle between codes, registers and discourses" (p. 4). Sending an

email to your boss will sound a lot different than sending a text to your friend. And even though it is in the same "language," you're using **pragmatics** to code-switch. **Pragmatics** is the branch of linguistics that deals with how people use language in context. **Register**, or changing how you speak based on who the recipient is, falls under pragmatics.

The point of all of this hypothetical musing about who is and isn't a monolingual is to say that trying to separate languages is *difficult*. Language separation is what makes the conception of "monolingualism" possible. For example, many bilingual speakers use all of their linguistic knowledge to communicate, regardless of the strict boundaries between languages. We can look at "Spanglish" (Spanish and English) or "Chinglish" (Chinese and English) or "Frangol" (French and Spanish) as examples. As Piccardo (2013) put it, we are all plurilingual. We all have the capacity to learn "languages," however we define them. Instead of building competencies in individual languages, building meta-competencies, for example skills like using previous knowledge to decode or make connections, is a much better use of class time. With more linguistic information at students' disposal, the language learning process can be expedited because of the rich resource of prior linguistic knowledge (Cenoz & Todeva, 2009; Todeva, 2009).

2.2   Rejection of language separation and language purity

Making sense of linguistic data, making connections, and learning to decode using previous knowledge and context clues are important skills for successful language learning. Cummins (1980) developed the idea of "common underlying proficiency" through his work with bilingual children to explain how language learning is a cumulative process, building on all linguistic knowledge that one person has, not just their knowledge or skills in one language. In other words, common underlying proficiency means that one system of thought underpins the understanding and use of multiple languages. Let's look at this example,

found in Cummins (2007):

> In concrete terms, what this principle means is that in, for example, a dual language Spanish-English bilingual program in the USA, Spanish instruction that develops Spanish reading and writing skills is not just developing Spanish skills, it is also developing a deeper conceptual and linguistic proficiency that is strongly related to the development of literacy in the majority language (English). In other words, although the surface aspects (e.g., pronunciation, fluency, etc.) of different languages are clearly separate, there is an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is common across languages. This common underlying proficiency makes possible the transfer of cognitive/academic or literacy-related proficiency from one language to another (p. 68).

This holistic view of language stands in contrast to monolingual teaching methods. Such methods forbid students from using their knowledge of other languages in the classroom. When asked about the best way to learn a language, a teacher interviewed by Freitas (2018) explained the best way to learn a language as,

> kind of shutting down your brain to your first language and letting this new second one flow into your brain, and it's almost like you have to become obsessed with it to almost perfect it. If you're willing to put the time into it, it can be done, there's no reason not to, but if you keep flip flopping between your first, you know, trying to learn your second language, it will be just like [sic] mishmash of the two. I think that it was like [sic] from my personal experience, that was the biggest thing, just shutting off my brain in English and really opening up to the French. (p. 56)

This idea still prevails in "mainstream" classes. For example, a huge proponent of this idea was Maximilian Berlitz (the creator of the Berlitz method, which advocates for complete immersion in the target language and forbids the L1). But let's look at a concrete example of the limitations of "shutting off" or forbidding the first language. Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009, pp. 75–6) provide various examples. The first is of a language researcher learning Japanese:

> One long morning my teacher tried to put across three verbs, *kinasu*, *yukinasu*, and *kaerimasu*, with the aid of paper and pencil drawings of pathways and persons and loci, and by much moving of herself and of me – uncomprehendingly passive as a patient in a hospital. But I could not grasp the concepts. I feel Mr. Berlitz would have suffered no great dishonor if [the teacher] had said to

me that the concepts in question sometimes go by the names come, go, and return (Brown, 1973).

Or this example of a German student learning English:

In the end, I got it wrong to the point where Mrs. X wanted me to give the meaning of the sentence: "Can you see the man?" I interpreted the sentence as: "Kennst Du diesen Mann?" [Do you know this man?] My classmates laughed in a subdued manner. Obviously, they knew better. I was deeply embarrassed and I hated the teacher for that. After all, the sentence "Can you see the man?" sounded to me perfectly like the English version of "Kennst Du diesen Mann?" I took the sound of "see the" for "diesen" and "can" for "kennst." - Jochen

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Reflect: Can you think of any examples of when you felt frustrated as a student in the language classroom? Why? What could have made the situation better?

Banning the first language in these situations can cause learners to feel confused, frustrated, embarrassed, and upset. We do not want our students to feel that way in the classroom!

By forbidding the first language, teachers promote the idea that learning more than one language at a time is bad, when really the human brain is more than capable of doing just that! There are many language teachers who recognize that banning the first language is not wise. The examples above offer support for that conclusion.

There is a myth that if you learn more than one language at a time, you will be worse off in both languages. Evidence suggests that that is not true. For example, Korkman et al. (2012) summarized findings that learning two first languages at the same time poses no major disadvantages (in "typically developing" children). Even in children with specific language impairments, they found that in both the group with specific language impairments and the control group of "typically developing" children, whether or not a child was a simultaneous bilingual did not have a statistically significant effect on their language skills. As De Houwer (2018) argues, core language difficulties cannot be (solely) attributed to learning more than one language at a time.

Language separation is not really based in evidence, but rather in myths about how we learn language. Instead of separating languages, language education should work to help students develop metalinguistic skills—basically the ability to discuss, reflect, and analyze language and use all of their linguistic knowledge.

Yet typical monolingual curricula do not focus on developing this system of thought. Most monolingual programs artificially separate languages, losing an important opportunity to develop students' meta-linguistic competencies and ignoring the fact that "languages don't function separately but [they] work as one singular linguistic system shaped by social context" (Slaughter & Cross, 2021, p. 41). Even many bilingual programs give into thinking along monolingual lines. In such programs, the two languages are kept rigidly separated—what Cummins (2007) has termed the "two solitudes." Yet this separation is not natural. For example, researchers studying two-way bilingual immersion programs found that many students will spontaneously focus on similarities and differences between the two languages. Despite the program's attempts to separate the languages, many students engaged in informal contrastive linguistics (Cummins, 2007, p. 72). In classrooms I've been in, students often spontaneously exchange greetings, idioms, and profane language (though this last one has mainly been with teenagers). The point is that even programs that allow for two or more languages can easily give into the fallacies of monolingual teaching by keeping languages separate.

By keeping languages separate and asking students to leave their L1 at the door, educators are creating a false monolingual reality. In the real world, languages interact. It is impossible to keep them separate. So instead of creating an artificial environment, disconnected from reality, the classroom should mirror reality and help students navigate an increasingly multilingual world.

Additionally, separating languages leads to the creation of language hierarchies and language purism. Because of complex political, social, and cultural factors, some languages and/or dialects are seen as more prestigious than others. Labov (1986) laid out two different

types of language prestige: **overt** and **covert**. Overt prestige is typically the "standard" dialect, formal language, and the language or register that expresses power or status. Covert prestige, on the other hand, is related to using words, structures, or accents to be in solidarity or community with those around you; it places a high value on non-standard dialects.
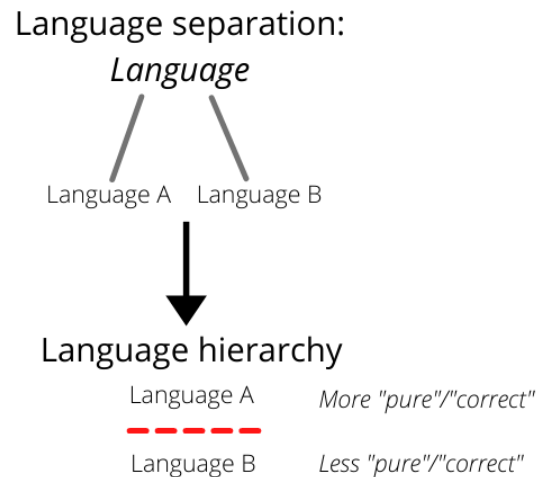
Figure 2.1: How language separation and language hierarchies are related

For example, a teacher interviewed by Freitas (2018) strongly advised against going to Québec to learn French because they have "a terrible accent and also have a mishmash of English and French words" (p. 4). Instead, she argued, you should go immerse yourself in France because "their French is perfect and [you] would learn it correctly" (Freitas, 2018, p. 4). So already we can see some problematic ideas in this line of reasoning. It holds up one dialect of French while putting down the other. And in order to have this language hierarchy, the concept of "correctness" was used to elevate the French in France and denigrate the French in Québec. Here French (from France) is being held up as the overtly prestigious language. Yet in Québec, the Québécois variety will likely be more prestigious.

Many students come into the classroom wanting to speak "correctly." But "correctness"

is not a useful measure of language development. Correctness is constantly changing based on prescriptive rules. Prescriptive rules are "grammar laws" like those you learn in school: never end a sentence with a preposition, don't use the passive voice, or never start a sentence with "and" or "but." But people don't always use language according to prescriptive rules. For example, one day in my classroom, a student wanted to ask who he needed to go speak to about arranging his classes. When he translated his question from Spanish to English, the translator gave him the sentence, "to whom do I speak to about this?" He was very confused because he hadn't ever heard or seen the word *whom* before. A more natural, but less "prescriptively correct" way of asking his question would be, "who do I speak to about this?" As I explained to him, people don't typically use *whom* in spoken English, though it is prescriptively "correct" in this case.

Another example, this time from French. When listening to the French song *Chanson sur ma drôle de vie*, I noticed that the singer said "*et je fait ce que j'ai envie*" 'and I do what I want.' I immediately had a flashback to the French class when we started learning about the use of *dont*. I won't get into French grammar here—or maybe you've already spotted the "problem." According to prescriptive rules, the lyric should be "*et je fait ce **dont** j'ai envie*." But that's not what the singer, a native speaker of French, sings. The way people speak is not always in line with what is "grammatically correct." The use and acceptability of new words or forms is constantly shifting and is highly dependent on the social context in which language is used.

What is more important than speaking in a prescriptively correct manner is being able to use the totality of your linguistic knowledge to communicate, to be understood, and to understand. We all understand the question "Who did you go out with?" even though it ends in a preposition and doesn't use *whom*. And in most situations, saying "With whom did you go out?" would make you sound *less* fluent, not more.

2.3   Challenging the idealized native speaker

We have all had students who come into the classroom with the goal of eventually sounding like a native speaker. I myself had this goal when I studied French. I studied in Paris and always got so upset when people deduced that I wasn't French from my accent or "weird" ways of saying things. I think I would have saved a lot of frustration by accepting that the goal of sounding like a native speaker was not a useful goal. Is it attainable? Perhaps in some circumstances. But to expect that all learners will or should eventually sound like native speakers is a mistake.

Who is the native speaker we aspire to sound like? Let's look at an example of an exchange between a student and teacher that I witnessed at a high school in the U.S.

Teacher: So what is something that makes you frustrated?

Student: Well when teachers give too much work I be mad.

Teacher: No, you are mad. When teachers give you too much work you are mad.

Student: Okay, okay, I are mad.

This high school is predominantly Black, and Black English is spoken by most of the students—even some of the non-black ones. Black English is covertly prestigious and many of the ESL students speak Black English with their friends or want to learn it to fit in. [1]

In Black English, using the invariant/habitual be (e.g., *Those shoes be hurting my feet*) is grammatically correct. [2] Using the invariant/habitual be in this case highlights the ongoing nature of feeling mad when teachers give too much work. The student, with no explicit instruction, learned the rules surrounding habitual *be* usage in Black English. The teacher, who is not a speaker of Black English, corrected the student despite the fact that this sentence is grammatically correct, just not in "standard" English. The first

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[1] I use the term Black English, but it is also called African-American English (AAE), African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), or African-American Language (AAL).

[2] If you're interested in knowing more, check out the Yale Grammatical Diversity Project: English in North America and their page on invariant/habitual be.

sentence the student said is grammatical, but the second sentence he uttered, after being corrected, is not grammatical. (That being said, "correctness" is frequently less important than intelligibility. The sentence "I are mad" is still intelligible.)

Instead of correcting the student, the teacher could have done a few things. She could have continued with her lesson, recognizing that everyone understands what the student is saying and that it is grammatical in other dialects of English. She could have used this as a teaching moment, instructing students on different dialects of English. But correcting the student in this case plays into the idea that a student should want to sound like a native speaker—and in many cases the native speaker in mind is white, middle class, and a monolingual speaker of standard English.

As we see, emulating native speakers is a political issue (Canagarajah, 2013). In terms of learning English in the U.S, Englishes like Black English or Chicano English are deemed "incorrect," despite both of these dialects having their own grammatical rules and patterns.

Looking more globally, English is not a monolith. The English spoken in Scotland, the English spoken in South Africa, and the English spoken in India are not the same. This means that as people learn English as a Lingua Franca, "native-speaker models of English and the goal of cultural integration into English speaking countries are no longer needed, or are even desirable" (Hall & Cook, 2012, p. 272). For example, a native English speaker from India may say something like, "*Today morning I went to the bank.*" As an English speaker from somewhere else in the world, you may pause at the use of /today morning/, as this isn't really grammatical in North American Englishes. But in Indian English, this is a grammatical sentence. Plus, we all know what the speaker is saying. This morning, the morning of that date, this person went to the store. /Today morning/ may lead you to believe that this person isn't a native speaker of English, but they are! Just not your type of English.

Even we as teachers are harmed by the idealization of the native speaker. Native speakers of English often make more money and have better job prospects in the field of

English language education than non-native speakers (Ellis, 2016). The thinking is that teachers who are "native speakers" will be able to correct students because they have a sense of what sounds right or wrong. But as Ellis (2016) argues, you can't equate a competent speaker with a competent teacher. She argues,

> It's often assumed that the native speaker makes a better teacher because they provide a better model of the language (more fluent, more idiomatic, more correct and with "better" pronunciation). They have more experience as language users, but non-native teachers have better experience as language learners. (p. 73)

By rejecting the idealization of the native speaker, we are able to open our minds to more varieties of English. This ultimately allows us to embrace cultural and linguistic diversity and enrich our classroom by taking a global perspective. It empowers students by giving them the necessary tools to use language in prescriptively correct ways while also developing their confidence and ability to be creative with language and use it in a more fluid way (Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming).

2.4 History (and future) of second language acquisition

Reflect: What have you learned about second language acquisition? Are there any ideas that you strongly agree or disagree with? Are there any ideas that influence your teaching?

Let's begin by looking at the early field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). At the beginning, the Grammar-Translation method and Direct method predominated in the United States. The Grammar-Translation method had an emphasis not only on grammar and translation, but also on reading and appreciating foreign literature (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Typically a lesson would consist of some sort of translation exercise. Eventually, the Grammar-Translation method fell out of favor because of its lack of real-

world, communicative application, its strict teacher-student roles, and its rigid view of language.

Stemming from the methodology of Grammar-Tranlsation was the practice of contrastive analysis. Contrastive analysis sought to explain "interference" by comparing and contrasting two languages. However, the interference it sought to explain was negative interference, or learner error arising from their L1. Stockwell (1968) explained that contrastive analysis is done either

> by collecting lists of errors students have made, and then trying to describe the conflicts between the systems that give rise to such errors, or by setting up a systematic comparison which scans the differences in structure in search of sources of interference, and predicting that such-and-such errors will occur from such-and-such conflicts. (pp. 18–19)

At a surface level, this idea actually has some merit within plurilingual pedagogy—a pedagogy which seeks to utilize learners' previous linguistic knowledge and which uses approaches like language comparisons to heighten metalinguistic awareness. However, prevailing ideas at the time meant that contrastive analysis was not a tool to be used to heighten linguistic awareness, but was used as a reason to separate languages to mitigate "interference." Some researchers (Cummins, 2007; Hall & Cook, 2012) call for teachers to take another look at contrastive analysis and translation activities given what we now know about language separation.

Following the Grammar-Translation method was the Direct method. This approach forbade the use of any language other than the target language in the classroom (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Additionally, it "imitated the way children learn their L1, avoiding translation" and exclusively using the target language (Cummins, 2007, p. 66). However, there are some crucial differences between learning your first language and learning an additional language. Learning your first language requires little effort. Children learn to use language just by being immersed in a language. Nor does it require any explicit instruction. Additionally, virtually everyone learns their L1—to varying degrees of literacy

and communicative ability. Researchers believe that there is a critical window of time in which you learn an L1—as suggested by a few tragic historical examples of feral children living in isolation who struggled to learn language after they hit adolescence (Fromkin et al., 1974). And importantly, when you begin learning a new language, you already have linguistic knowledge from your L1 that you can draw from.

First language acquisition and second/additional language acquisition are apples and oranges—both describe language learning, but they can't be equated or inform teaching methodologies equally. Strategies for teaching the L2 cannot be based on first language acquisition. Therefore the Direct Method is not very effective because it is based on the fallacy that first language acquisition and additional language acquisition are the same.

Early SLA held ideas that were influential in justifying monolingual approaches. Firstly, we have the idea that the natural order of acquisition (what learners learn and in what order) is universal (Krashen, 1982). Put differently, your first language doesn't really matter because you will learn the target language in the same general trajectory as your peers, regardless of their first language. This isn't necessarily wrong, for example: most teachers will observe that many students understand and use the *-s* ending for plural nouns much earlier and with much more success than the third person present *-s* marker (e.g., *He buy apples at the store.* But a student learning English with a linguistic background in Cantonese and Korean will have different strengths and challenges than someone learning English with a background in Spanish and French. Yet the prevailing idea at the time was that you could treat all learners as a "blank slate," devising the same English syllabi for speakers of Korean and speakers of French.

However, the idea of natural order acquisition doesn't support comparing and contrasting languages despite the fact that comparing and contrasting are normal cognitive strategies that we do basically automatically (Hall & Cook, 2012). Instead, people came to the conclusion that language separation is better for learners. Indeed, as Hall and Cook (2012) put it, we can "trace the attempt to compartmentalize and separate the learner's

own language and the new language back to the theories of transfer such as contrastive analysis in which learners' own language is seen as the major source of difficulty and interference in new language learning" (p. 281).

Although transfer is used as a neutral word in the scientific community, it came to develop a negative connotation because the focus was most often on the negative effects of the L1 rather than features of the L1 that facilitate language learning. Indeed, Cenoz and Todeva (2009) give numerous examples of the power of positive language transfer in the development of additional languages, yet the focus is often on tracing "problems" back to students' L1. What is an example of negative language transfer? For example, if you're trying to say "I'm embarrassed" in Spanish you might say, "*estoy embarazada.*" The big "problem" here is simply a false cognate (*embarazada* = pregnant, not embarrassed, for which you would use the word *desconcertado/a*). But this example of "negative" language transfer could instead be turned into a learning opportunity for studying other false cognates, learning about relevant etymology, or just talking about differences in the two languages.

Perhaps someone who speaks Mandarin Chinese says 我每天早上吃 'I every morning eat'; this doesn't doom the learner to always have "incorrect" word order. This is an opportunity to compare and contrast how Mandarin Chinese and English order words, look for patterns, and develop a deeper understanding of *language* as a whole.

The comprehensible input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982) was popularized around the same time as the natural order hypothesis and the idea of negative interference. The comprehensible input hypothesis argues that the only thing students need for successful language learning is to be provided comprehensible language, either spoken or written, and they will intuitively "pick it up." This idea has been thoroughly criticized, yet it continues to influence dominant teaching ideologies like Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) in the US.

In reaction to the Grammar-Tranlsation method and the Direct method arose the communicative approach and task-based learning. The communicative approach sought to

narrow the gap between understanding form (grammar/syntax), meaning (semantics), and use (pragmatics). While this is a good goal, on the whole the communicative approach failed to challenge the monolingual bias inherent in language teaching of the time. As (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011) explain,

> Applying the theoretical perspective of the Communicative Approach, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) aims broadly to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching. What this looks like in the classroom may depend on how the principles are interpreted and applied. Indeed, Klapper (2003) makes the point that because CLT lacks closely prescribed classroom techniques... [it] is 'fuzzy' in teachers' understanding. (p. 115)

Esteve et al. (2017) explain that one of the major problems with the communicative approach is that it uses artificial, pre-packaged language, instead of developing the skills to invent new models or experiment with language. The communicative approach doesn't forbid the use of a student's first language, but rather it ignores it (Cummins, 2007).

Many of the flaws inherent in these teaching methodologies stem from a monolingual viewpoint and a misunderstanding of how we learn languages. These methodologies enforce the idea that "the goal of language teaching is to prepare students to communicate in monolingual environments and to emulate native speakers," yet as we have discussed, this is not reflective of reality nor is it useful for learners (Hall & Cook, 2012, p. 276). As the rest of this chapter will explain, we need to shift our conceptions of language learning and language use to be reflective of reality.

Reflect: What are your experiences with these ideas in learning or teaching a language? Reflect on how you learned language(s), what helped you, and what hindered you.

2.5 Language acquisition versus language development

The field of SLA has shifted away from outdated monolingual models and is now even questioning the very idea of second language *acquisition* (Larsen-Freeman, 2015; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020). As Hall and Cook (2012) explain, "early ideas about natural acquisition through attention to meaning have now been effectively discredited and early SLA research has been widely criticized for its asocial and apolitical approach to language teaching" (p. 277). Instead, many in the SLA community have embraced **complexity theory** and the idea of **second language development** as opposed to acquisition (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2015).

Complexity theory (also known as complex dynamic systems theory, among other names) is a way of viewing the world. It appears in numerous disciplines, from physics to computer science, but for our purposes we will examine its implications for language learning. First and foremost, complexity theory seeks to provide an alternative to "linear, reductionist thinking" (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). Whereas in the 1970s and 1980s, language researchers sought to create universal models of language learning (e.g. the natural order hypothesis or the comprehensible input hypothesis), complexity theory allows us to appreciate the chaotic and dynamic nature of language and language learning. Larsen-Freeman (1997) details the way in which language learning is a complex dynamic system. It can be described with adjectives such as: adaptive, nonlinear, chaotic, feedback sensitive, and sensitive to conditions.

Complexity theory can seem abstract and nebulous, but it has very concrete effects on how we view and use language. The assumptions in complexity theory are that:

- Language is always changing.

- Language is built from the sum of individual utterances/speech acts (bottom-up)

rather than from a collection of rules (top-down).

- Language is based on an interdependence of all of its component parts (syntax, morphology, pragmatics, phonology, etc.); when a change occurs in one, it affects the others.

- Language use cannot be explained by an algorithm or linear model that assumes a simple relationship between language input and output.

This way of thinking about language has important implications for how we think about teaching language. Our students' progress is not and will never be linear. Language is not a thing that can be neatly packaged and presented. Language cannot be separated from the social situations in which it is used. Complexity theory gives us a theoretical framework to question the ideas embedded in mainstream second language acquisition and teach in a way that is more reflective of reality (Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, forthcoming).

We will now look at some dominant ideas in SLA, their consequences, and how they're being challenged. All of the information in Table 2.1 comes from Larsen-Freeman (2015), with some of my own synthesis.

Old Idea	Consequence	New Idea
Language as a "thing" to be acquired	Language learning is linear. Once a learner "has" a form or a word, then they won't forget or misunderstand it.	Language is a complex dynamic system and language learners' capabilities are not static. Language is constantly changing depending on how it is being used. Language is not a set of rules but a system of patterns and idiosyncrasies.
Acquisition cannot be undone	Language learning can become a stressful experience, where mistakes are seen as shameful rather than an opportunity for growth.	Development better describes the process of language learning as sequences of progress and decline across multiple languages, during a person's entire life.

Acquiring a language implies there is an endpoint.	Language learning is a process that one can finish (once one has reached native-like fluency).	Language learning never stops. Even within a person's first language, one can continuously learn new words, new grammar structures, and new dialects. Language development is never complete.
The endpoint of language acquisition is sounding like a native speaker.	There is a "native speaker" that language learners should sound like. Learners must compare themselves to native speakers, often coming to see themselves in terms of a deficit in knowledge or skill.	Who is the ideal native speaker? What is standard English and who defines it? Students should seek to develop the entirety of their linguistic repertoire, rather than compare themselves with native speakers or wish to emulate them.
Language can be neatly packaged, presented, acquired, and used.	Learners are to be filled with knowledge, rather than take an active part in the language learning process. Language learning is an asocial process.	Language is a complex system that is messy. Learners take an active participation in synthesizing linguistic knowledge, decoding and problem solving, and adapting to linguistic innovation. Language use is inherently social.

Table 2.1: Old ideas in SLA, their consequences, and new ideas

How do these old ideas reflect in teaching practice? Let's look at an example from a lesson focused on vocabulary learning. The following is an interaction that I witnessed working in a public high school between an ESL teacher and her class:

The teacher began the lesson by saying that the students would "learn some new words." These words had been taken from a level-appropriate reading. The teacher presented the words, their definition in English, and their translation in Spanish, French, and Arabic (using Google Translate) and asked the students to repeat, correcting pronunciation as she deemed fit. The teacher then had students practice memorizing the words and their definitions in a Quizlet set. The next day, the students took a quiz where they had to fill in the blank with the appropriate word. Many students complained that the quiz was too

hard.

What are some of the underlying ideas in this lesson and how did they result in students feeling frustrated?

Let's start at the beginning. The teacher began the lesson by saying that the students would "learn some new words." But what does this mean? A more honest objective would be that the students would be able to put the words in a sentence, after all, that's what the assessment was measuring. This shows a misunderstanding of how we actually learn, as discussed in chapter 1. Additionally, the teacher provides the students with words that she thinks they cannot understand in the reading. Instead of providing the words prior to the reading and having the students make predictions about what they mean or try to decode their meaning, the teacher presents the meaning for the students after they've already come into contact with the words. By providing the translations and the definitions, the teacher renders the students' powers of inductive reasoning and decoding useless. (Inductive reasoning is looking at numerous examples and trying to draw out a pattern or conclusion). The students focused on memorizing the definitions of the words but spent little time looking at how the words are used or how they fit into a sentence. They were also not provided the chance to *use* these words.

Although this classroom is not exclusively monolingual, there is no interaction between the other languages spoken in the class and English (outside of providing a direct translation, through Google Translate, for words the teacher hopes the students will "learn"). This is a great example of Cummins's (2007) conception of "two solitudes".

Additionally, Google Translate is frequently not nuanced enough and the teacher has no way of knowing whether the translation makes sense or not because she doesn't speak any of the languages of her students. The teacher could use the students as a translator, then compare their answers with what an internet-based translation service says and discuss any similarities or differences. This would allow students much more cognitive interaction with the vocabulary words, rather than just rote memorization. Thornbury (2013) shows that

vocabulary acquisition is enhanced and expedited by increased manipulation (cognitive depth), making connections (associations), and encountering the word in different uses (re-contextualization). Instead, in this lesson the students' prior knowledge is left untapped and these opportunities for enhanced vocabulary learning are missed.

In this example, we saw some ideas about language and language teaching that have been challenged in the field. These were: language as prepackaged and asocial, language as a thing to be acquired, and acquisition cannot be undone. These underlying ideas resulted in the students feeling frustrated and confused. Looking at language teaching through the lens of complexity theory will benefit everyone in the classroom as it is a better way to understand how we learn and use language.

2.6 Teacher identity and monolingualism

There is lots of evidence countering the dominant idea that monolingualism and mono-lingual teaching methods are optimal. This has yet to be entirely reflected in teaching practice. While we wait for policies to be changed from the top down, teachers can begin challenging monolingual teaching in their own classrooms.

Pinho and Andrade (2009) explain that "how the language curriculum is interpreted and developed depends on each teacher's personal and professional identity, professional project, and self-image as a language teacher" (p. 317). They go on to explain that a teacher's view of language teaching is often rooted in their experience as a language learner. Thus past methods are continued unless teachers receive training in new methods.

For example, a teacher seeking a TESOL certification in Canada argued for language separation. She also promoted the goal of training language students to sound like native speakers. Her ideas supported the view that "language [is] a stable and homogeneous system governed by a set of rules which individuals are born with" (Freitas, 2018, p. 57).

This teacher's training, which reinforced her belief of and experience in monolingual

ideas in the classroom, is an example of the propagation of the **monolingual bias**. Gogolin (1997) explained that the monolingual bias (or monolingual *habitus*) is the "deep-seated habit of assuming monolingualism as the norm in a nation." This bias is associated with the presumption that "children all grow up within the bounds of the same social class, culture or ethnic group and language" (p. 40).

She lays out that,

> this assumption has persisted despite all the evidence of the differences in living situations and roles in a functionally diversified, complex society. The very different living conditions and life experiences of the children in a de facto multicultural and multilingual society are thereby made invisible for a school philosophically dependent on the fundamental myth of homogeneity of language and culture in a national society. (p. 40)

In other words, the school creates a false monolingual reality. By not challenging this reality, teachers can leave some students at a disadvantage by assuming that all students share the same background knowledge. Additionally, the goal of language learning becomes preparing students to communicate in monolingual environments, like the false monolingual environment of the classroom.

It is important for teachers to break the cycle of the monolingual bias. Monolingual education can lead to negative effects for learners, particularly **language attrition** (losing a language), loss of culture, unnecessary difficulty in language learning, frustrations in the language classroom, and unfair comparisons between the learner and "native speakers." Indeed, as Hall and Cook (2012) contend, "monolingual teaching has inhibited the development of bilingual and bicultural identities and skills that are actively needed by most learners" (p. 273).

Therefore, teacher training has to change to better match what language research has found. Let's look at a couple examples of how teachers with either some knowledge of applied linguistics, other languages, or plurilingualism reacted to ideas about language learning. In interviews with language teachers in the United Kingdom and Australia, Galante et al. (2019) found that most teachers saw multilingual students as an annoyance,

having a negative effect on the class, whereas the small number of teachers with some training in applied linguistics viewed them as an asset (pp. 321–322).

In research with plurilingual and monolingual teachers, Ellis (2016) found a stark difference in how each group discussed language, language learning, and language proficiency. Whereas the plurilingual teachers spoke about language learning in "neutral, unemotional" words, the monolingual teachers often described language learning as difficult and frustrating. The plurilingual teachers "talked in a neutral way about their own level of proficiency, their attempts at learning languages, their failures, progress and lapses," whereas the monolingual teachers "used terms to convey failure, incompetence, shyness and embarrassment, and laughed frequently at their own expense" (p. 128).

These views on language learning are undoubtedly linked to teachers' experiences and beliefs. Note the connection between plurilingualism's rejection of native-speakerism and language purity and the plurilingual teacher's view of language learning as a normal, unremarkable process. We can contrast this with the monolingual teacher's frustration, as perhaps they (as learners) compared themselves to native speakers or became frustrated with monolingual models of teaching.

> **Reflect:** Do you think all language teachers need to speak another language or study applied linguistics? Is it enough to have an open attitude and awareness about what your learners may experience, or should teachers also have the knowledge and skills associated with being plurilingual?

Chapter 3

Why do we need plurilingual pedagogy?

> **Reflect:** What do you think are some benefits of plurilingual pedagogy? Drawbacks?

3.1   Plurilingual pedagogy benefits students and teachers

Although the CEFR has attempted to systematize it, plurilingual pedagogy has not been widely adopted, in part because of the challenges plurilingualism poses to ideas like nationalism, linguistic homogeneity, assimilation, behaviorism, and other out-of-date ideas in education. Because of the way it is conceptualized, based in learners' lived experiences, prior knowledge, and the language learning process, plurilingual pedagogy can be implemented anywhere. It can even accommodate teaching contexts with restrictions limiting teacher freedom and creativity, like assigned curricula or program-specific lesson plans (Galante et al., 2020). Indeed, "consistent with the idea that students' identities or identifications are neither fixed nor static, plurilingual pedagogies accommodate dynamic, fluid understandings of not only language use but also language learners" (Van Viegen & Lau,

2020, p. 327).

Fielding (2016) makes the point that, "the ability to use languages appropriately, within a variety of local contexts, and the capacity to move beyond those contexts more fluidly and with confidence is one of the most valued skills in our globalized world" (p. 2). We are constantly interacting with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds; this certainly includes people who speak different languages, but also people who speak different varieties of the same language. The development of these culturally-aware communication skills is at the heart of plurilingual pedagogy.

Shifting how we think about languages, language learning, and language teaching to a plurilingual frame of mind affords numerous benefits for both learners and teachers, and the world in general, as we become better intercultural and interlinguistic communicators.

3.2 Building confidence and creativity in the classroom

Teachers and learners report feeling more confident and self-assured in plurilingual classrooms than in monolingual classes (Fielding, 2016; Galante et al., 2020). This is because in a plurilingual classroom, both learners and teachers use their prior knowledge (of language, dialect, culture, etc.), thus increasing their confidence because the knowledge they already have is recognized and utilized, unlike in monolingual models that often start from the deficit approach.

Plurilingualism turns the traditional teacher-student role on its head, empowering students to become the teacher. Unlike the deficit approach, in which the teacher is seen as the bestower of knowledge, in a plurilingual classroom, all students have the power to teach their fellow classmates and teacher. Fielding (2016) included anecdotes from parents of children studying at a plurilingual school that exemplified how students took on teacher roles and gained the confidence to teach their classmates and siblings. This is also a great

way for learners to consolidate knowledge. Teachers also report feeling empowered in the plurilingual classroom. The teachers interviewed by Galante et al. (2020) reported feeling comfortable doing plurilingualism in the classroom because "teachers were able to draw on their experiences as language learners and users" (p. 14).

As Piccardo (2013) and numerous others have argued, by starting from what students already know and using their knowledge as a scaffold (as opposed to using teacher-supplied scaffolding), students' "senses of self-efficacy and autonomy" are increased (p. 13). Using learners' previously learned languages provides a ready-made scaffolding framework that not only recognizes the knowledge and skills that learners bring to the table, but also turns learners into teachers, giving them power in the classroom.

3.3   Reflective of how we actually learn and use language

Plurilingual pedagogy, from a cognitive or psycholinguistic standpoint, is based in how we actually use and learn languages. As we have discussed, a central goal of plurilingual pedagogy is to develop cognitive, metalinguistic, and metacognitive skills. Cognitive skills are the tools your mind uses to process, store, or retrieve information. *Meta-*, as a prefix, means to transcend or be more comprehensive. Therefore metalinguistic and metacognitive skills are skills that help us solve problems and manipulate language and linguistic data. Table 3.1 lists some examples of each.

Cognitive skills		Metacognitive skills	
reading	problem-solving	planning	mediating
writing	decision-making	setting goals	synthesizing
speaking	attention	evaluating	analyzing
listening	memory	reflecting	

Table 3.1: Cognitive and metacognitive skills developed by plurilingualism

Brain and behavioral research suggests that monolinguals and bi- and multilinguals approach linguistic tasks in different ways (Hall & Cook, 2012). Bi- and multilinguals have much more linguistic data that they can draw upon and typically have heightened metalinguisitc and metacognitive skills by nature of processing and using more than one language. For example, a study of students in an English as a Foreign Language program in Spain found that students who received instruction with plurilingual pedagogy showed greater cognitive and metacognitive skills and motivation compared to students who receive monolingual (English-only) instruction (Corcoll, 2011).

Additionally, Psaltou-Joycey and Kantaridou (2009) found that trilingual students outperformed bilingual students on measures of cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies, compensation skills (strategies used to compensate for a gap in linguistic ability), and social strategies. Both bi- and trilinguals in their study used cognitive and metacognitive skills, just to varying degrees. They argue, "when an individual develops a degree of competence in two or more languages, they also develop higher levels of communicative sensitivity, creative thinking, and metalinguistic awareness which facilitate the acquisition of language" (Psaltou-Joycey & Kantaridou, 2009, p. 446).

This is great evidence for Cummins's (1981) theory of common underlying proficiency, which we can further understand through the Iceberg Model of Language Interdependence, originally developed by Cummins (1981) and adapted in Figure 3.1.
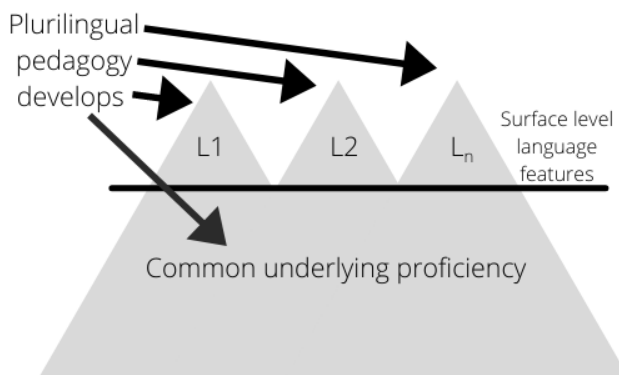
Adapted from Cummins' Iceberg Theory of Language Interdependence (1981)

Figure 3.1: Adapted version of the Iceberg Model of Language Interdependence (Cummins, 1981)

Cummins (2008) explains that once our prior knowledge, skills, and awareness—in this case conceptualized as "underlying attributes"—are engaged within someone's cognitive apparatus, these attributes are available for transfer across any number of languages, "if the sociolinguistic and educational context is conductive to, or supports, such transfer" (p. 69). Plurilingual pedagogy aims to create these exact conditions.

Using these underlying attributes as a scaffold will enhance what "learners notice about their environment and how they organize and interpret their observations" (Cummins, 2008). This brings us to a key influence on plurilingual pedagogy: Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, in this case as it applies to language development. He argued, "learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human psychological function" (p. 90). In other words, learning in a social and cultural environment is a precursor to the development of cognitive abilities. Hall and Cook (2012) expand on this, saying, "cognitive development, including language development, is a collaborative process driven by social interaction" (p. 291).

By creating a plurilingual (and therefore pluricultural) classroom, students not only

use their prior knowledge, but also compare it with incoming information about the target language(s) and their other classmates' knowledge. Corcoll (2011) sums it up as:

> bringing more languages into the classroom is essential to help develop plurilingual and pluricultural competencies, understood as the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience in several cultures. (p. 30)

Our most current understanding of the language learning process supports plurilingual pedagogy as opposed to monolingual pedagogy.

3.4   Engaging and inclusive

Language classes using plurilingual pedagogy are viewed as being more engaging and inclusive (Corcoll, 2011; Galante et al., 2020). Plurilingual classes typically have increased levels of participation and student engagement as they often require that students take an active role in their learning. For example, Ollerhead et al. (2018) note that "teaching practices that draw upon students' identities will lead to their investment in literacy learning" (p. 3). Llanes and Cots (2020) found that students in a plurilingual classroom had increased feelings of inclusion, participation, and mutual understanding. Additionally, the development of less formal or rigid relationships between the teacher and the students and among the students created a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

Llanes and Cots (2020) compared a monolingual English for Academic Purposes course and a plurilingual course, discovering that only students in the plurilingual course reported decreased feelings of helplessness, embarrassment, and lack of self-confidence at the end of the course (pp. 11–12). Llanes and Cots (2020) report that in the plurilingual classroom, there were "increased feelings of inclusion, participation, and understanding of [other] learners (especially those at less advanced levels)" (p. 3). Perhaps this can be explained by a phenomenon that Hall and Cook (2012) reported: they found that using students' L1s in the classroom "facilitates learning by reducing the processing load" and lowers feelings

of stress and alienation (p. 289). Fielding (2016) examined anecdotes from parents of young children in a plurilingual program in Australia. Parents reported that "the children exhibit enjoyment of learning through their different languages and [parents] believe that participating in a plurilingual learning experience ignited love of learning that they haven't seen with their other children" in monolingual programs (p. 11).

Some teachers have expressed concern over inclusion in non-English-only classrooms. For example, a teacher in Galante et al. (2020) expressed concern about allowing students to use other languages because the majority of students in her class were speakers of Mandarin Chinese. She was concerned that the non-Chinese-speaking students would feel excluded. However, in observing this class, they found that when Chinese speakers and non-Chinese speakers worked in small groups, English was the main mode of communication, though students also used other languages to help them. As they explain, "this flexible use of language allowed students to freely manipulate their own linguistic repertoire and exercise linguistic agency, challenging teachers' perceptions that an English-only policy was necessary for inclusiveness" (p. 21).

Plurlingual pedagogy is by nature inclusive because of its acceptance and promotion of partial competencies. This is particularly beneficial for a multi-level classroom or a mixed classroom with mono- and plurilingual students. The benefits of plurilingual pedagogy

extend beyond plurilingual speakers (Fielding, 2016).

Chapter 4

Practices in plurilingual pedagogy

4.1   Translanguaging

There is currently a debate in academia about what terminology (and ideas embedded therein) researchers and educators should use: plurilingual pedagogy or translanguaging (García & Otheguy, 2020; Vallejo & Dooly, 2020). Some proponents of translanguaging and/or plurilingual pedagogy strive to point out the differences in the two approaches. We will touch on those differences, but on the whole, the concept of translanguaging shares many commonalities with plurilingual pedagogy and I believe we should allow these ideas to be used in harmony instead of searching for discord.

Translanguaging has been defined in numerous ways. Schissel et al. (2018) describe translanguaging as "a dynamic approach to multilingualism that allows the simultaneous coexistence of languages in communication and supports the development of multiple linguistic identities" (p. 2). Vallejo and Dooly (2020) describe translanguaging as "the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to socially and politically defined boundaries of language" (p. 6). Galante et al. (2020) define translanguaging (in the pedagogical sense) as a "practice [that] engages students to use their entire linguistic repertoire flexibly and fluidly for meaning making across languages"

(p. 4).

Translanguaging sounds similar to code-switching, but is different from code-switching on theoretical grounds. Translanguaging is against the ideas of "named languages." Naming languages (literally calling languages by a name, like English or Japanese or Xhosa) is a socially—and therefore artificially—constructed phenomenon. Language is language. Because of this, "code-switching" is not considered acceptable terminology by some proponents of translanguaging since there are no discrete languages to switch between (García & Otheguy, 2020). Cenoz and Gorter (2017) explain, "translanguaging is different from code-switching because bilingual speakers construct complex discursive practices by using their complete language repertoire, and these practices cannot be easily assigned to one language or another" (p. 314).

Proponents of plurilingualism agree that language separation is harmful in education—and therefore that we should be developing language skills instead of skills in a language. But the practice of "naming languages," while it may be socially constructed based on non-fixed criteria like politics or ethnicity, is done by virtually everyone, including those who are translanguaging. While there are certainly dangers in separating languages, as we discussed in chapter 1, it is sometimes necessary, for example when linguists do research or in machine translation. Proponents of plurilingualism see the value in using accessible terms like "code-switching" and naming languages. We see the relevance of using terminology that is more familiar to students and teachers. Cummins (2020) argues that the idea that languages don't exist and that conceptions like code-switching are unfounded "are highly problematic from the perspective of both empirical adequacy and instructional usefulness" (p. 207).

For more information on the emerging debate between translanguaging and plurilingualism, see García and Otheguy (2020) and Vallejo and Dooly (2020). I have summarized some of their key points in Figure 4.1:

Translanguaging   Plurilingualism

Against concept of "code-switching"

Against "named languages"

Language competence is "always and at every stage complete" (Garcia and Otheguy, 2019)

General views on language use, language pedagogy, and individuals having a unique linguistic repertoire

Concept of code-switching relevant for analyzing language use

Against pedagogical language separation (i.e. monolingual teaching methods) but naming languages useful in other situations

Language competence is emergent and constantly changing

Adapted from Vallejo & Dooly 2019

Figure 4.1: Summary of differences between translanguaging and plurilingual pedagogy

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Reflect: What do you think about the similarities and differences of translanguaging and plurilingualism?

We can see an example of translanguaging in Hamman et al. (2018):

One day at recess, a distraught five-year-old approached me and proclaimed angrily, "Fulanito me tagó." Confused, I attempted to understand her meaning: "¿Te tocó?" ("He touched you?") She shook her head. "¿Te atacó?" ("He attacked you?"). No again, thankfully. Frustrated, the student replied, "Me taGÓ, like in tag, Maestra."

In that moment, I realized I had only been activating half of my linguistic repertoire, while my student had been leveraging all of hers, converting the English verb tag into a grammatically correct "Spanglish" phrase to express her outrage that a classmate had tagged her in the playground game. In this moment of clarity, I began to wonder about the real risks for my students if they were never exposed to the benefits of translanguaging as a resource for their language and literacy learning.

This is a great example of translanguaging—a spontaneous form of expression using all of a person's linguistic resources. Developing students' translanguaging skills and using translanguaging as a pedagogical tool in the classroom has many cognitive benefits. Cenoz and Gorter (2017), citing Lewis (2012), explain,

> translanguaging uses various cognitive processing skills in listening and reading, the assimilation and accommodation of information, choosing and selecting from the brain storage to communicate in speaking and writing. Thus translanguaging requires a deeper understanding than just translating as it moves from finding parallel words to processing and relaying meaning and understanding. (p. 311)

Similarly, Lyster et al. (2013) tested the efficacy of translanguaging in developing students' awareness and understanding of prefixes and suffixes in a bilingual French-English program in Canada. They found that students in the translanguaging group scored significantly higher than those in the monolingual control group on a test of morphological awareness in French and English.

Because translanguaging is a process that happens naturally and spontaneously, bringing it into the classroom makes the classroom more reflective of reality. And while many teachers are comfortable with allowing their students to translanguage or have space to experiment with their linguistic repertoire in the classroom, it is often not done in a methodological way (Vallejo & Dooly, 2020). Additionally, Creese and Blackledge (2010) state that, "research shows that code-switching [or translanguaging] is rarely institutionally endorsed or pedagogically underpinned. Rather, when it is used, it becomes a pragmatic response to the local classroom context" (p. 105).

We will now look at some examples of translanguaging in the classroom. Caruso (2018) offers some general suggestions of how you can translanguage in the classroom:

- read a text in a language and discuss it in a different language

- use content-specific words in the target language

- explicitly reflect about words or constructions in different languages

- repeat or translate

- take notes in various languages

But translanguaging and plurilingual pedagogy share a problem: how can we concretize general ideas, principles, and activities to ensure that they achieve a learning objective?

Hamman et al. (2018) created the **PIE** framework to help teachers use translanguaging purposefully and methodologically in the classroom. When planning a lesson or activity that will use translanguaging, teachers should ask:

<div align="center">

Is it **P**urposeful?

Is it **I**nteractive and **I**nclusive?

Is it **E**ngaging?

</div>

We can look at a small example of this framework in an activity developed by Hamman et al. (2018). In a classroom of bilingual English-Spanish elementary students, they designed an interactive read-aloud activity of a picture book. They thought carefully about the prompts they would use with their students, using the PIE framework as a guide. The first text in the story says "bath time, Bobo." Instead of asking their students to translate to Spanish, they asked them if they could say this in a different way. This allowed students to choose what parts of their linguistic repertoire to use. They reported that, "My students took on the translanguaging task with gusto, eagerly offering up ideas one after another: 'Hora de bañarse, Bobo.' 'Vamos a bañarnos, Bobo.' 'Time for your bath.'" She explains the rest of the lesson, stating,

> Throughout the activity, my students were excited and engaged in the dynamic languaging task of telling a story through multiple languages. I had strategically planned my prompts for each page of the book in order to elicit the most student responses and variety of language use.

Let's also look at a lesson reported on in Corcoll (2011). The lesson explained in Corcoll (2011) takes place in an elementary school in Catalonia, a region of Spain. Children are

using Catalan, Spanish, and English in this lesson. It begins by going over a chant in English; the teacher worked on the vocabulary with students in all three languages.

The chant goes:

> I don't like coffee
>
> I don't like tea
>
> I like lemonade
>
> Lemonade for me

After singing it together, the students were asked to create their own chant in English, Spanish, and Catalan. The teacher wrote on the board:

> I don't like _____
>
> I don't like _____
>
> I like _____
>
> _____ for me

Figure 4.2 shows two examples of what the students came up with. Students would self- or peer-correct as they worked collaboratively to create chants in all three languages. As Corcoll (2011) notes,

> one recurrent problem was the omission of the article in the Catalan and Spanish texts (as can be seen in example 2 in Figure 4.2), even though they said it when they were reading it aloud. In some groups, a child would realise the mistake and tell the others; in some others, the teacher would ask them to repeat the sentence again while following the written line with a finger. This made the children realise there was a word missing. (p. 32)

The students began spontaneously recognizing the similarities and differences in the three languages and used all of their linguistic knowledge to complete the task.

See Celic and Seltzer's (2013) guide to translanguaging for educators and García (2020) for more information on pedagogical translanguaging.

Table 1.   Chant: example of written results.

Example 1	Example 2
I don't like coffee	I don't like fish
I don't like tea	I don't like coffee
I like rice	I like pasta
Rice for me	Pasta for me
No m'agrada el café	No m'agrada [. . .] formatge
No m'agrada el té	No m'agrada [. . .] tèa
M'agrada l'arros	M'agrada [. . .] llet
Arros per mi	Llet per mi
No me gusta el café	No me gusta [. . .] yogurt
No me gusta el té	No me gusta [. . .] limonada
Me gusta el arroz	Me gusta la pasta
Arroz para mi	Pasta para mi

Figure 4.2: Example of students' writing from (Corcoll, 2011)

Guided Brainstorming: *How can you use translanguaging in your teaching practice?*

- What is your teaching context? Could you see using translanguaging as a beneficial practice?

- What languages or dialects could be used in your classroom?

- Is there a lesson that you have taught that already uses translanguaging?

- What are some ways you can measure the impact of translanguaging?

- Do you think it is possible to plan translanguaging in a lesson, or is it something more spontaneous?

- Do your students already translanguage? Do you?

- Are there specific learning objectives that can be achieved through translanguaging?

4.2   *Comparons nos langues*

Comparons nos langues, which can be roughly translated as "let's compare our languages," is a great example of the principles of plurilingualism in practice. Let's begin by analyzing an excerpt of a lesson featured in Auger's (2013) DVD "Comparons nos langues" (with my own translation).

Setting: In an elementary class in Montpellier with speakers of Arabic and Russian, the teacher and students look at how to create a negative phrase in French.

On the board, the teacher has written "*La gomme n'est pas sur la table*" 'The eraser isn't on the table'. On the board the teacher has also written a sentence in Russian and Arabic using the Roman alphabet to transcribe the sentences. The teacher reads the sentence in Arabic and the students help him pronounce it.

Teacher: Who can tell me which word means "not" in Arabic?

Numerous students—both speakers of Arabic and non-speakers of Arabic—raise their hands and a student points out the word.

Teacher: So there is a word in here that means no, correct?

Students nod their heads

Teacher: Now, who can say the whole sentence in Russian?

Numerous students,—both Russian and non-speakers of Russian—try to say the sentence.

Teacher: Who can tell me which word means "not" in Russian?

Again, numerous students (who may or may not speak Russian) raise their hand, attempting to guess using their knowledge of language. A Russian speaking student takes the time to explain that you can place the negative particle in two places, creating two sentences meaning approximately the same thing.

Teacher: So it seems like the systems are quite similar in the three languages. Who can come to the board and erase the negative word to make the sentence positive?

An Arabic speaking student

comes to the board and reads the sentence in Russian. The other students are consulted as to whether she pronounced it well. She erases the word meaning "not."

The teacher writes the rules of negation in the three languages. Ne *[verbe]* pas *in French,* ليس *(transcribed as la eissèt) in Arabic, and* не *(transcribed as né) in Russian.*

Teacher: So what is important to remember is that when you transform a sentence

from Arabic or Russian to French, you need to have a *ne* and a *pas* on each side of the verb. Sometimes students who speak Arabic will forget the verb *est* and may forget the *ne pas*. And it's understandable that Oleg [a Russian speaking student] will put the *ne* before the verb but will forget the *pas*!

> **Reflect:** What did you think about that lesson? How could you adapt the principles in this lesson to your teaching context?

The scene fades out with the image of numerous students staring at the board, looking engaged. Auger (2013) begins to explain what we just saw. She explains,

> *Donc, ce qu'il faut savoir, c'est qu'il existe des universaux du langage, c'est-à-dire que [sic] il y a des façons différentes, selon les langues, par exemple de marquer le pluriel, ou bien d'utiliser la prosodie pour exprimer la colère, ou le respect. Et donc ce qui est intéressant, c'est de comparer dans la classe, selon les langues des enfants quels sont les points communs et quels sont les points différents, selon les langues à tous les niveaux linguistiques et communicatifs. L'objectif, c'est vraiment que l'enfant puisse comprendre qu'il peut s'appuyer sur le scripte maternelle pour aller vers le français.*
>
> So it's important to know that there are universals of language, that is to say, there are different ways [of doing things] depending on the language, for example, marking plurals or using prosody to express anger or respect. And so it's useful to compare students' languages in terms of the commonalities and differences at all linguistic and communicative levels. The goal is really for the student to be able to understand that they can rely on their native [language or] script as they go from their native language to French. (Auger, 2013)

Setting: We will look at another lesson excerpt, this time in a classroom with mainly middle school-aged children who are all Arabic speakers. This lesson excerpt is about the different alphabets and pronunciation in French and Arabic.

Teacher: How many letters are there in the French alphabet?

Student: There are 26 letters

Teacher: Voilà, there are 26 letters. And in the Arabic alphabet?

Student: There are 28 letters.

Teacher: And what is the alphabet made up of, what sort of letters? What do we call them?

Student: There are vowels and consonants.

Teacher: Yes, there are vowels and consonants. How many vowels are there in Arabic?

Student: There are 3 vowels in Arabic.

Teacher: Okay, there are 3 vowels in Arabic. What are they? What are these vowels?

Student: a (as in /far/) u, (as in /soon/) and i (as in /see/)

Teacher: So these are the vowels that exist in Arabic. How many consonants are there?

Student: There are 25 consonants.

Teacher: There are 25 consonants in Arabic. Can you say them?

Many students raise their hands.

Student: All the consonants, oh that's difficult, that's difficult!

Teacher: Just say a few then.

Student: says three consonants, likely: [x], [ɣ], *and* [ʃ]

Teacher: Okay, let me try. [Tries to pronounce the consonants, students politely smile and try to help]

Teacher:, Eh, that's hard! That's hard for me, I have trouble with that! For me, if I were to go learn Arabic, what would be something difficult for me?

Student: Well, if someone says those consonants [with a distinction in meaning], you don't understand

Teacher: Exactly, I struggle with distinguishing them and therefore I'll have a hard time pronouncing those sounds

The teacher makes notes of what the students told her on the board regarding vowels and consonants.

Teacher: Okay, now in French! Vowels, but careful, how many written vowels?

Student: A, e, i... euhhh

Teacher: Some help?

Another student: o

Previous student: *u!*

Student: *y*

Teacher: *writes vowels on the board under the Arabic vowels (transcribed in the Roman alphabet)* So what do you already notice about Arabic and French?

Student: In Arabic it's—there are 3 less than in French because in French there are 6.

The video then fades into another interaction.

Reflect: What did you think about that lesson? How could you adapt the principles in this lesson to your teaching context?

In both these excerpts, we see the underlying principles of plurilingual pedagogy in action. The students and teachers work together to create and discuss knowledge—what is often termed the **co-construction** or **co-creation** of knowledge. The students' knowledge is relevant and integral to the success of the lesson. They work with each other and with the teacher to enhance everyone's knowledge. Students are engaged and eager to participate, likely because the use of their own language(s) lowers feelings of stress and gives them an opportunity to show what they already know. The role of the teacher is much more like that of a learner or facilitator, whereas in traditional education the teacher is seen as the infallible provider of knowledge and lesson content. The principles of plurilingualism, namely highlighting prior knowledge, inclusivity, creativity, and linguistic pluralism are evident in these lessons.

The main idea of *comparons nos langues* can be described as a modern take on contrastive analysis. As we discussed in chapter 2, contrastive analysis was a tool used with the Grammar-Translation approach to teaching. The tool itself is not bad—linguists, language teachers, and really everyone does contrastive analysis naturally by comparing languages (at various levels). Contrastive analysis was eventually thrown out with the Grammar-Translation approach—a baby-with-the-bathwater situation—with the advent of theories like the Natural Order hypothesis (Krashen, 1982).

So much of plurilingual pedagogy is taking things that we already automatically do—like code-switching, translanguaging, and comparing and contrasting languages—and doing them in a much more conscious, pedagogically motivated way. This way, not only are students using familiar and natural-feeling processes to learn, but teachers can help students actively develop these skills which will serve them far beyond the language classroom.

Guided Brainstorming: *How can you use* comparons nos langues *in your teaching practice?*

- Have you done a lesson that took a more contrastive look at languages?

- Do you think these types of lessons would be beneficial in your teaching context?

- Do you think a teacher needs to know the language of their students? Why or why not?

- How can we measure the effects of *comparons nos langues*?

- What are some ways we can use *comparons nos langues* to achieve specific learning objectives?

4.3   Intercomprehension

Reflect: In your language learning experience, what has developed faster: receptive skills (listening, reading, understanding) or productive skills (speaking, writing, pragmatics)?

Intercomprehension (IC) is the process by which (1) each person (or locutor) in a conversation speaks the language they are most comfortable in and (2) understands the language spoken by the other person (or people) (Bonvino et al., 2018; Pinho & Andrade, 2009; Zamunaro, 2018). IC "requires that students use their entire repertoire to understand (and not to speak or write) another language" (Galante et al., 2020, p. 4). This practice is common in multilingual societies and has been practiced for a long time—we can trace it to the middle ages when traders would communicate without a lingua franca. It is currently used in many African and European countries where languages share many features and

regional dialects are quite distinctive (Zamunaro, 2018). A key idea integral to IC is that people have passive competence in other languages without having studied them extensively (Zamunaro, 2018).

In contrast with *comparons nos langues* and other contrastive-based pedagogies, IC looks at the proximity between languages, particularly from the same family, and how understanding this proximity will aid in comprehension and learning (Zamunaro, 2018). It has been adopted especially among Romance languages. As of now, there seems to be a gap in the literature detailing its use among other languages and language families. But as Zamunaro points out, "*par conséquent, nous pourrions penser qu'il suffirait d'apprendre à parler une seule langue d'une autre famille pour être compris par tous les locuteurs de cet autre groupe linguistique*" [Therefore, in many cases it may be enough to learn how to speak only one language in a different language group to be understood by all the other locutors of this other linguistic group] (p. 24). For example, thanks to my knowledge of French (a Romance language), I can understand many other Romance languages (particularly in writing) and have found that I am learning Spanish at an accelerated speed because of my knowledge of another Romance language. Yet as Zamunaro explains, IC can work not only with proximal and neighboring languages, but it can also work with languages that are quite distant. Say, for example, you're an English speaker learning Russian. By understanding the Cyrillic alphabet and certain features of Russian, you have also unlocked the ability to understand written (and possibly spoken) forms of other languages that use the Cyrillic alphabet, like Bulgarian, Ukrainian, or Serbian. Additionally, a knowledge of Latin can aid in understanding **case** [1]in more distant languages like Russian or Zulu (Todeva, 2009; Wildsmith-Cromarty, 2009).

Plurilingualism, particularly its focus on partial competencies, previous knowledge,

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[1] Case shows how nouns grammatically relate to the verb and other nouns in the sentence. While case exists in English, it is less robust than in other languages, like German. For example, German uses case markers like *den* and *der* to show which noun is the subject and which is the object. Hence *Der Mann sieht den Hund* (the man sees the dog) and *Den Mann sieht der Hund* (the dog sees the man).

and inductive approaches to learning, is central to IC. In a typical IC lesson, students are presented with a language that they must try to decode. Thus IC uses a problem-solving approach in which the students use their prior knowledge and language strategies to understand as much as they can (Bonvino et al., 2018).

In Catalonian schools, for example, there are three compulsory competencies that students actively develop in the classroom. They are: (1) to identify words that have been borrowed from one language to another, (2) to identify similar words among languages and to try to figure out meaning using hypotheses and inference, (3) and to recognize words coming from other languages in content areas (e.g. science or history) (Daryai-Hansen et al., 2015).

In Zamunaro (2018), French students looked at a text in Italian and used intercomprehension to understand it. These students spoke French fluently, had some knowledge of English and Spanish, and were now working on understanding Italian. Table 4.1 shows some of the connections they made at the lexical-level that aided their understanding:

Italian	Filter	Cognate	French
Unica	French	(unique)	Unique
Scuola	Spanish	(escuela)	École
Il paese	Spanish	(el país)	Le pays

Table 4.1: Table adapted from Zamunaro (2018)

IC makes use of reading and listening strategies that students may already use in their L1 or additional languages. Table 4.2 shows some of the strategies that IC uses and seeks to develop.

Pre-Reading/Listening	During Reading	Post-Reading
Looking at the title, subtitles, and discussion/comprehension questions for clues	Making annotations and taking notes	Assessing hypotheses
Making hypotheses	Global (gist) understanding	Discussing the reading with others

Table 4.2: Skills developed by IC

In IC, much like in many other plurilingual pedagogies, the main role of the teacher is to act as a facilitator. This isn't to say that the teacher should leave students to teach themselves or struggle when they face demoralization or frustration. A teacher's "main task is perceiving the real difficulties in comprehension, as well as encouraging, inciting, and stimulating participation... the main goal is not to teach but to guide the comprehension process" (Bonvino et al., 2018).

Let's look at a few more examples of IC activities. Galante et al. (2020) suggest that students could watch a short clip in another language and try to understand the gist of it using their repertoire to mediate knowledge. Another example is Chain Story (www.chainstories.eu/), an EU initiative in which schools collaborate to create a story. Designed for students aged 8–12, the school receives the unfinished story that other schools have worked on. Students must use intercomprehension to understand the main parts of the previous chapters so that they can then write an additional chapter that continues the story. Ideally this book would be passed around schools whose languages are within the same family (like Romance or Germanic or Slavic). This project could potentially be adapted for schools in other locations as well.

Another activity, this time focused on listening comprehension, could be looking at songs that have more than one version or are in two or more languages. For example,

comprehension activities could use *Somos Sur* by Ana Tijoux and Shadia Mansour (which is in Spanish and Arabic) or the 80s hit *99 Luftballons* by NENA (which has a German and English version).

Intercomprehension is a useful classroom tool as it helps students develop comprehension skills and strategies across languages.

Guided Brainstorming: *How can you use intercomprehension in the classroom?*

- Have you used IC (or something similar) before? How did it go?

- Do you think intercomprehension would be useful in your classroom?

- What are some ways you could bring intercomprehension into the classroom?

- Do you think intercomprehension skills are important? Why or why not? If yes, how can we develop them systematically?

- What do you think about the role of the teacher in IC? How do you think your students can lead IC lessons?

4.4   Grammaring

Reflect: Do you teach grammar explicitly or implicitly? What do you think the role of grammar is in the language classroom? How comfortable do you feel with grammar?

Grammaring is a pedagogical practice whose approach to teaching has many commonalities with plurilingual pedagogy. Entire books have been written about grammaring and it would be difficult to fully explain it in the space I have. However, as it is a related pedagogy, I would like to overview its commonalities with plurilingual pedagogy and suggest some key resources regarding its conceptualization and practice.

Plurilingual pedagogy takes a holistic look at the development of the learner. A learner's entire communicative repertoire is developed in a holistic and systematic way. Plurilingual pedagogy starts with what students already know and uses this rich prior knowledge as a built-in scaffold, giving the learner agency to become the teacher and recognizing and

utilizing their knowledge. In this way, the teacher and the students co-create knowledge. Students are no longer thought of in terms of deficiencies, but rather are thought of as important contributors to the classroom environment and shared knowledge of the class. This can be contrasted with other pedagogies in which the teacher is seen as the only truly knowledgeable agent who disseminates their knowledge to the students. Plurilingual pedagogy, from a conceptual standpoint, is rooted in how we learn and use language, based on the most current evidence drawn from many disciplines like psychology, neuroscience, linguistics, and sociology.

Grammaring is also rooted in much of the same philosophies of education as plurilingual pedagogy. At its foundation, grammaring is built on recognizing prior knowledge, reflecting how language is used in the real world, creating a shared co-construction of knowledge between the teacher and students, and making the classroom an authentic space for language experimentation and exploration.

For more on how grammaring is conceptualized, see Larsen-Freeman (2000) and Larsen-Freeman (2003). For resources on how grammaring can be practiced, see Todeva (2015) and Todeva (2016).

4.5   Summary of plurilingual practices

In this chapter, we have detailed three plurilingual practices and overviewed one related practice. These practices share many common features, namely:

- the teacher is a facilitator who works with students to co-create knowledge that benefits the entire class

- prior knowledge is valued and is integral to the success of these lessons

- metalinguistic skills across languages are developed, ensuring that students' language development is holistic and well-rounded, valuing their linguistic and cultural knowledge and identities

These practices are useful in concretizing the goals of plurilingual pedagogy, providing teachers a starting point to begin practicing plurilingualism.

Translanguaging affirms students' lingusitic and cultural identities, and can be used methodologically to not only work toward goals like increased student confidence and autonomy, but also toward the development of holistic literacy and language abilities.

Comparons nos langues takes a modern look at contrastive analysis, focusing on students' knowledge of their previously learned languages and using pedagogically-motivated comparing and contrasting to help students develop skills in a new language. Together with the teacher, students co-create collective knowledge and skills in the new language while using their previous knowledge and skill to guide them.

Intercomprehension focuses on developing passive competencies in namely reading and listening across languages that students may or may not have studied explicitly. It appreciates students' partial competencies across languages and seeks to help students develop metalinguistic skills. It takes an inductive approach to learning, allowing students to take charge of their own learning by using their problem-solving skills to guide them.

Grammaring is a relevant pedagogical practice that seeks to develop learners' inductive reasoning skills and metalinguistic awareness. It utilizes students' prior knowledge and is based on how language is actually used.

As Van Viegen and Lau (2020) state, "at the core of plurilingual pedagogies is the idea that teachers can draw on students' communicative resources as both a scaffold and a

resource" (p. 331).

Chapter 5

Linking plurilingualism to learning objectives

5.1   Goals and objectives of plurilingual pedagogy

Reflect: What are some other goals of plurilingual pedagogy that you can think of?

So far, we have looked at what plurilingualism is, contrasted it with monolingualism, talked about its benefits, and explored some associated teaching practices. We will now explicitly look at the goals of plurilingualism with a focus on how we can link them to specific learning objectives.

Of the many goals of plurilingualism, I think some of the most important are:

- developing a communicative repertoire

- activating prior knowledge

- increasing cultural awareness and intercultural skills

- integrating communication skills and strategies

- strengthening metacognitive and metalinguistic abilities

- highlighting the importance of creativity and human connection

- building students' self-esteem

- language learning being reflective of language use

All of these are important goals, but how can we synthesize them in a curriculum, or even in a lesson? Let's take a look at a professional development workshop led by Dooly and Vallejo (2019) that took 15 European teachers and introduced them to plurilingualism. The majority of these teachers (10 out of 15) had never heard of plurilingualism. They were split into groups and each group had to come up with a plurilingual lesson plan.

The first group planned a board game where students met different people (from different language backgrounds) and had to communicate with them. Of note, many of these teachers were English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and argued that they should only use English in the classroom. Eventually, they agreed that bringing other languages into the classroom was important because "their students would be more likely to communicate with other 'non-native' speakers in the world" (Dooly & Vallejo, 2019, p. 6). Dooly and Vallejo (2019) summarized how this group explained the game:

> Avatar Nib-nob has rolled a 5. In square five, Nib-nob lands on 'short greetings'. Nib-nob draws a card from the 'short greetings' pile and reads: As you walk along the road, you meet Li Pang. Think of ways to greet her. Remember you can only use gestures (without talking) twice before you have to go to language school!
>
> In this case, Nib-nob has already used her two allotted gestures (waving) and has to go to the nearest language learning centre. Once there, Nib-nob misses two turns while she practices greetings in the language that she thinks Li Pang speaks (this is supported through google translate [sic] audio feature).
>
> According to the creators, the game aimed to (a) raise students' awareness of and ability to recognize other languages through gradual exposure to names and places; (b) improve students' strategic competences through mobile translation apps; (c) encourage students to learn chunk languages (greetings, questions) in several different languages. (p. 6)

> **Reflect:** Using what you have learned about plurilingual pedagogy, analyze this lesson. Do you think it would be effective? Why or why not? How can it be improved?

The next group's lesson centered on their students' interest in DJ-ing and the fact that most techno- or house music is plurilingual, thus providing an authentic model for the project. Students were asked to compose a techno-house song and create a music video. This project would be in coordination with the school's music teacher(s), technology teacher(s), and art teacher(s). The students would work in groups to analyze various techno-house songs and to develop their own chorus. The chorus had to include at least two languages and had to convey a message or idea.

The main objectives of this lesson were to encourage students to combine multiple languages and meaning-making resources, technology, music, and art in the goal of creative individual expression. It would connect prior knowledge and topics students were genuinely interested in and bring them into the classroom. It would also support interdisciplinary learning and promote creativity.

In the post-design discussion, the teachers talked about how they felt out of their comfort zone with this lesson because of its heavy reliance on technology that they did not feel familiar with. They also talked about how the main goal of the lesson was to promote creativity but that it didn't have much in the way of concrete learning objectives. Indeed, the teachers "felt that the learning parameters may be too broad to implement in a constructive way and they may be caught 'off-guard' (ill-prepared with no specific learning objectives such as linguistic features of a target language)" (Dooly & Vallejo, 2019, p. 9).

> **Reflect:** Using what you have learned about plurilingual pedagogy, analyze this lesson. Do you think it would be effective? Why or why not? How can it be improved?

The final lesson centered on storytelling. Students would work collaboratively to create a story via a WhatsApp group chat. (WhatsApp is a popular messaging app.) The students would create the story using a Mad Libs-type prompt. Mad Libs typically starts a story and then has various blanks where you have to provide a word or words that fit

the category (e.g. noun, possessive pronoun, object, verb with *-ing*). The students could use any language or emoji that they wanted to. Figure 5.1 is an example that the teachers created.

Figure 5.1: Figures taken from Dooly and Vallejo (2019, p. 10).

In the post-design discussion, teachers debated the pros and cons of using a social media messaging platform for educational purposes. They also raised that the main goals of the lesson were to promote language creativity and to develop students' manipulation of meaning-making resources like emojis (Dooly & Vallejo, 2019, p. 10).

> **Reflect:** Using your understanding of plurilingualism, analyze this lesson. What does it do well? Where could it improve? What are your thoughts on using a platform like WhatsApp in the classroom?

What do all of these lessons have in common? They promote the use of multiple languages and creativity, but they don't do so in a systematic, measurable way.

These are important goals that are certainly worth pursuing, but we should try to make this pursuit focused on measurable objectives so we can assess how effective our lessons are and where they can be improved. Van Viegen and Lau (2020) propose that teachers view themselves as researchers in addition to teachers, using a process of planning, doing, and reflecting. In this process, "teachers generate evidence upon which critically informed decisions, strategies and initiatives can be cultivated, shared and acted upon" (p. 328).

Other than development of creativity and exposing students to other languages, it is difficult to identify lesson objectives from the above lessons. Developing creativity and being exposed to other languages are good goals, but it can be difficult to measure progress in these areas over the course of one lesson. This is a common struggle for teachers who are new to plurilingual pedagogy. The goals of plurilingual pedagogy can be fairly abstract and difficult to measure at first. How can we measure the development of a plurilingual repertoire? The use of prior knowledge? Cultural awareness and intercultural skills? Metacognitive and metalinguistic skills? Creativity? These are long-term goals that take months to develop, so how can we link a single lesson to these larger goals?

5.2 Linking the abstract to the concrete

In the introduction, we talked about Freeman's (1989) Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, Awareness (KASA) framework for teacher education. This framework is an excellent way of understanding teacher development: obviously we must have certain knowledge and skills to be effective teachers. But what ties everything together is the human component: our attitude and awareness.

Teachers don't become good teachers after one lesson. It is a career-long journey, a never-ending quest to be better than we were in the last lesson. So just as we have long-term goals for ourselves that we slowly work toward each class, our students' development of plurilingualism is a long-term project. I propose adapting the KASA framework to lesson-planning in the following template, Figure 5.2:

Plurilingual Lesson Planning Template

Overarching goals:
What larger knowledge, skills, attitude, and awareness are you looking to develop? What are the overarching goals of the course?

Goals of Plurilingualism:
- *Developing plurilingual repertoire*
- *Making use of prior knowledge*
- *Developing cultural awareness and intercultural skills*

- *Integrating communication skills*
- *Strengthening metacognitive and metalinguistic skills*
- *Developing creative skills*
- *Language learning reflective of language use*

Knowledge	Attitude	Skills	Awareness

Lesson-specific goals:
What should students be able to do during and after this lesson? What KASA will they likely already have before the lesson? How will the lesson-specific (short-term) goals help them reach the long-term goals?

Knowledge	Attitude	Skills	Awareness

Measurable Objectives:

How can you measure your students' progress? What KASA will they use during the lesson and how can you measure their understanding/progress?

Methods:

What methods, if any, will you use? How will they help students achieve the lesson-specific and long-term goals?

Lesson Sequence:

Template by Elisabeth Wichser, adapted from Freeman (1989)

Figure 5.2: A blank plurilingual lesson template

I used this template to re-work a lesson that I did with a mixed-level adult classroom (A1–B2 on the CEFR scale). The lesson centered on a YouTube video about coffee from

five different countries, focusing on a central message about coffee and culture. Figure 5.3 adapts the lesson to this framework.

Coffee and Adjectives

Overarching goals: What larger knowledge, skills, attitude, and awareness are you looking to develop? What are the overarching goals of the course?

Goals of Plurilingualism:

- *Developing plurilingual repertoire*
- *Making use of prior knowledge*
- *Developing cultural awareness and intercultural skills*

- *Integrating communication skills*
- *Strengthening metacognitive and metalinguistic skills*

Knowledge	Attitude	Skills	Awareness
Knowledge of other cultures and languages, knowledge of some reasons behind English grammar structures, development of partial competencies and repertoire	Openness to making mistakes and learning from them, openness to other languages and cultures, viewing language learning as fun and social, viewing language learning as an engaging and creative process	Ability to discuss other cultures respectfully, ability to translanguage and strategically use all linguistic resources available, development of communication skills like mediation, development of metacognitive and metalinguistic skills, maintenance of existing language skills	Awareness of how students are developing their knowledge, attitude, and skill, increased motivation, a focus on noticing, student-centered co-creation of knowledge as opposed to deficit education, making connections to other linguistic or cultural knowledge

Lesson-specific goals: What should students be able to do during and after this lesson? What KASA will they likely already have before the lesson?

Knowledge	Attitude	Skills	Awareness
Students will become familiar with how 5 different cultures make coffee. Students will manipulate adjectives that describe coffee and other cultures.	Students will take an active and respectful interest in other cultures' practices around coffee. Students will be motivated to engage in the discussion because they likely have an opinion on coffee.	Students will discuss what they understood from the video, students will be able to manipulate adjectives, students will be able to compare how adjectives are used in the language(s) they already know with how they're used in English.	Students will engage in peer discussions with the aim of noticing how adjectives are used in English, students will be guided to be aware of how they think about or talk about other cultures, students will be aware of how their prior knowledge and lived experience is relevant to the lesson.

Measurable Objectives:

How can you measure your students' progress? What KASA will they use during the lesson and how can you measure understanding/progress ?

Vocabulary: Have students make a list of words they don't recognize when watching the video for the first time. On the second pass through the video, pause it and have students work together to try to figure out the meaning. If needed, use a dictionary or pictures. At the end of the lesson or for homework, ask students to write a reflection on the video or the discussion using some of the new words they encountered.

Cultural awareness: Before watching the video, have students reflect (either by writing or speaking about) their views of coffee. For example: is coffee important? Why or why not? Who drinks coffee? How do they drink it? How is coffee culturally important? What would they do if they couldn't drink coffee? At the end of the lesson or for homework, ask students to reflect on what they learned about coffee and culture. What do they think about some of the ways that coffee was made? Would they try it? Why or why not? Perhaps have students do peer-editing or discussion on these questions during the next class.

Attitude: Ask students to discuss or write about the lesson, reflecting on what they liked or didn't like. Ask students to reflect on some of the larger themes of the video, namely that there are universals across cultures and that it is interesting to learn about how other cultures do things.

Use of adjectives: After watching and taking notes on the video, ask students to describe the coffee made in each country. What was it like? How was it made? After discussing students' answers, write some adjectives on the board and ask if students recognize a pattern with adjective use, specifically where it is located. Compare this with how adjectives are used in other languages spoken in the classroom.

Methods: What methods will you use?

Comparons nos langues (compare how adjectives are used in different languages)

Grammaring (inductive approach to discovering how adjectives are used in English

Communicative approach (authentic materials and organic discussion)

Lesson Sequence:

Total time: 1 hour 35 minutes (Though it can be broken up across multiple days)

Warm-up: Ask students to write for about 5 minutes on the topic of coffee. They can write about whether they like it, how often they drink it, how important it is to them, whether it is important in their culture, etc. Then ask students to share what they wrote with the class and discuss for about 10 minutes. Keep notes of some of the ways students use adjectives by writing sentences they say on the board or in a notebook for later. 15 minutes.

Video and vocabulary: Explain that we will watch a video a couple times that explores how 5 different cultures view and make coffee. Tell students that it will be in 5 different languages with subtitles. (I played the video at .75 speed so there was more time to read the subtitles. All the languages spoken in my classroom were spoken in the video!). Ask students to make notes of new words they don't know. Once you have finished watching the video, ask students for the words they did not know and make a list on the board. Ask if anyone has any guesses as to what they mean or if they can explain the meaning. For all other words, explain that we will watch the video and pause it to try to discover the meaning of the words. If students have a hard time, use a dictionary or Google Images to clear things up. After watching the video 2-3 times, begin a class discussion of the video. What did students find interesting? What questions do they have? Then move on to the grammaring/comparons nos langues part of the lesson. 30 minutes.

Grammaring: Using the list of sentences from earlier (or eliciting sentences now), write a series of sentences on the board and underline the adjectives. Ask students to brainstorm in small groups what they notice about the adjectives (and perhaps direct them toward noticing their placement). Go through the grammaring cycle and help students discover the pattern. Then, ask them to discuss how they like coffee (trying to use as many adjectives as possible). 20 minutes.

Comparons nos langues: Next, ask students to translate some of the sentences they said into another language they know. Ask them to write it on the board and underline the adjective. This process will be organic and will depend on what languages are spoken, but ask students to make comparisons with some of the languages spoken in the classroom. 20 minutes.

Wrap-up: Finish the lesson by asking students to write about their thoughts on the lesson. Did they enjoy it? Why or why not? What did they learn? What did they think about the video? Then assign homework if relevant. 10 minutes.

Figure 5.3: An example lesson for a mixed-level class

Reflect: What are your thoughts on this lesson? Is it something you could use in your classroom? Why or why not? What does this lesson do well? What improvements can you suggest?

This next lesson is geared toward A1–A2 level students. It was inspired by an interaction I had with an A2 student. At the beginning of class, I asked him "how's it going," and he didn't know what that meant or how to respond. This made me reflect on how many beginning courses only teach "how are you," or "what's up," when in reality there are hundreds of ways that we greet each other. When I lived in France, I struggled with greetings a surprising amount. It took me a long time to get used to *la bise* (the kiss on the cheek) and to stop asking strangers "how are you" in French. Therefore, this lesson seeks to make real-world connections, activate prior knowledge, and develop pragmatic competencies in an accessible way for beginners.

How do you say hello?

Overarching goals: What larger knowledge, skills, attitude, and awareness are you looking to develop? What are the overarching goals of the course?

Goals of Plurilingualism:
- *Developing plurilingual repertoire*
- *Making use of prior knowledge*
- *Developing cultural awareness and intercultural skills*

- *Integrating communication skills*
- *Strengthening metacognitive and metalinguistic skills*
- *Developing creative skills*
- *Language learning reflective of language use*

Knowledge

Knowledge of other cultures and languages, knowledge of some reasons behind English grammar structures, development of partial competencies and repertoire

Attitude

Openness to making mistakes and learning from them, openness to other languages and cultures, viewing language learning as fun and social, viewing language learning as an engaging and creative process

Skills

Ability to discuss other cultures respectfully, ability to translanguage and strategically use all linguistic resources available, development of communication skills like mediation, development of metacognitive and metalinguistic skills, maintenance of existing language skills

Awareness

Awareness of how students are developing their knowledge, attitude, and skill, increased motivation, a focus on noticing, student-centered co-creation of knowledge as opposed to deficit education, making connections to other linguistic or cultural knowledge

Lesson-specific goals: What should students be able to do during and after this lesson? What KASA will they likely already have before the lesson? How will the lesson-specific (short-term) goals help them reach the long-term goals?

Knowledge

Students will become familiar with various greetings and how they are used. Students will make connections to prior knowledge of English greetings.

Attitude

Students will be engaged by making real-world connections throughout the lesson. Students will be exposed to various greetings, spanning languages and dialects (and thus hopefully developing intercultural awareness).

Skills

Students will be able to use greetings in socially appropriate situations. They will be able to differentiate between formal and informal speech.

Awareness

Students will develop pragmatic awareness. Students will monitor their responses to social stimuli based on whether the situation is formal or informal.

Measurable Objectives:

How can you measure your students' progress? What KASA will they use during the lesson and how can you measure their understanding/progress?

Activation of prior knowledge: As a warm-up, ask students to list all the ways they know to say hello. Emphasize that this can be in any language or through gesture. Then, discuss what students came up with and write a list on the board.

Sorting task: to what extent can students already recognize formal or informal speech based on their prior knowledge? Have students perform a sorting task in small groups where students must group greetings based on whether they are formal or informal. Include greetings from other languages that are commonly used in social situations (e.g. *hola* in the US). Review concepts of formality if necessary.

Pragmatic competence: After discussing different ways to say hello, give students different social stimuli and ask them to think about how they would respond. For example, "You see someone walking past you in the park." Or "You meet up with a friend whom you haven't seen in a long time." You can have students write on a piece of paper or say it out loud.

Real-world connection: For homework, ask students to note different greetings that they hear, see, or use before the next class. They could be on TV, at the store, or over email.

Methods:

What methods, if any, will you use? How will they help students achieve the lesson-specific and long-term goals?

Role-playing

Communicative approach

Improvisation

Lesson Sequence:

Total time: 45 minutes

Warm-up: Begin by asking students to make a list of all the ways they know how to say hello. Emphasize that this can be in any language, or with gestures or emojis. Once they are done, make a class list and review any new ways. Add other expressions as needed. Discuss any social norms or faux pas (e.g. kissing strangers on the cheek in the US -- whereas that practice is normal in other places). **15 minutes**

Sorting task: Either as a class or small groups, hand out pieces of paper with different expressions on them (or use the list on the board and ask students to make a table in their notebooks). Ask students to classify them as formal or informal greetings. Then, come together as a class to discuss. Spend time discussing the different implications of each greeting (e.g. formal "how are you" means they don't really want to know how you are versus an informal "how are you doing/how's it going"). **20 minutes**

Role playing: In small groups or as a class, ask students how they would respond to different social stimuli, like "greet your boss," or "send a text to a family member." This could be turned into a longer activity through skit creation or creating a board game. **10 minutes**

Wrap-up: For homework, ask students to note down different greetings that they observe being used or that they themselves use.

Template by Elisabeth Wichser, adapted from Freeman (1989)

Figure 5.4: An example lesson for a beginning level class

The goal of this template is to link the abstract, long-term goals of plurilingualism with the short-term objectives necessary to measure the effectiveness of a lesson. This template should be paired with teacher reflection, again using the KASA framework, to assess what went well and what can be improved.

Conclusion

> **Reflect:** What does plurilingualism mean to you? How does this compare to what you wrote or thought about it previously?

In 2013, the journal TESOL Quarterly dedicated an entire issue to plurilingual pedagogy. In it, Piccardo (2013) argued that "the foundations have been laid for a substantial paradigm shift" in language teaching (p. 602). This shift constitutes a move away from outdated ideas like language purism, the ideal native speaker, and placing a high value on monolingualism (over multilingualism). The shift toward plurilingualism seeks to synthesize the most current research on language acquisition and education to improve outcomes for teachers and students.

This research has suggested that forbidding languages that students already know can result in negative student outcomes, like increased stress, frustration, and language attrition (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009; Cummins, 2007; Hall & Cook, 2012). Instead, we should not only allow students to use all their linguistic knowledge, but seek to develop their language repertoires—all the linguistic and communicative skills they possess (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Dooly & Vallejo, 2019; Galante et al., 2020; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020; Lin, 2013; Piccardo, 2013). This will require a shift in how we think of ourselves as teachers; rather than being a French teacher or Thai teacher or English teacher, we should think of ourselves as language teachers.

Additionally, plurilingualism represents a shift in the goals of language learning. In plurilingualism, the goal of achieving native-like proficiency has been replaced with the goal of developing a repertoire of communicative skills and strategies (Ellis, 2016; Lin, 2013). In a plurilingual view, language skills will wax and wane over the course of a lifetime and language learning is viewed as a complex process that cannot be represented linearly (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Piccardo, 2013).

Many teachers are already doing at least some aspects of plurilingual pedagogy. And in contexts where teacher autonomy, creativity, and license are limited, we can still implement plurilingual pedagogy through adopting these attitudes about language learning and an awareness of how they impact our teaching. Implementing plurilingualism confers many benefits like decreased stress and frustration, inclusion of different levels and cultures, and being reflective of reality outside of the classroom.

While we have detailed four associated methods, there are many more that teachers can employ to achieve the goals of plurilingual pedagogy. The goals of plurilingual pedagogy can be difficult to concretize within a single lesson—or even in an entire curriculum. As such, the framework outlined in chapter 5 attempts to guide teachers through thinking about the longer term, more abstract goals of plurilingual pedagogy, linking them to measurable lesson objectives, and connecting the dots in a lesson plan.

By embracing a plurilingual attitude and awareness, coupled with the knowledge and skills that we already have, we can open new doors for our students and ourselves.

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