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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Reframing language allocation policy in dual language bilingual education

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Abstract

This article addresses language allocation policies in what is increasingly called “Dual Language Education” (DLE) in the U.S., offering a challenge to the strict language separation policies in those programs and a proposal for flexibility that transforms them into “Dual Language Bilingual Education” (DLBE). The article offers a historical review of policies and practices in bilingual education and the ways in which the present language policies for DLE have come about. It then provides a critical assessment of those policies, which focus on teaching two languages, rather than educating students bilingually. We argue that the rigid language allocation policies of DLE ignore the sociolinguistic realities of bilingual learning for all students, especially for language-minoritized bilingual students. The main part of the article sets forth a new alternative policy proposal for language allocation that more coherently reflects the dynamic nature of bilingualism and reclaims the criticality of bilingual education and its social justice purpose. The proposal embodies an understanding of bilingual education through a translanguaging lens to open up spaces where students develop not only their bilingualism and biliteracy, but also a criticality that resists social arrangements of language normativity that differentiate and exclude. The translanguaging allocation policy proposed here works with the existing spaces for English and the Language Other than English, but introduces three components that offer the flexibility and criticality needed to educate bilingual students for the future: (1) translanguaging documentation; (2) translanguaging rings; and (3) translanguaging transformative spaces.

Introduction

This article deals with language allocation policies in a type of bilingual program known in the United States as dual language education, offering a challenge to old policies and a proposal for new ones. This proposal stems from direct, on-site involvement with these policies by team members of what has come to be known as CUNY-NYSIEB (City University of New York - New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals). This article offers a historical review of language education policies and practices in bilingual education in the United States, focusing on what is now called dual language education. We then provide a

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critical assessment of these policies, arguing that for dual language education to fulfill its potential and engage all types of students, it would have to put bilingualism back into the mix. We then turn to the main part of the article, where we set forth a new alternative policy proposal for language allocation in dual language education that takes into account the dynamic bilingualism of all bilingual learners.

In the United States there has been a marked increase in *dual language education* (DLE, also called dual language immersion). Some of these programs are two-way, meaning that instruction in the same classroom includes English-speaking students developing a Language Other than English (LOTE) as well as those who are speakers of LOTEs and are developing English. Some DLE programs, however, are one-way, meaning that they serve only one language minority group, usually Latinx. But as the popularity of these programs has increased, so have the contradictions. First, DLE's stated goal is to make students bilingual and biliterate, yet the word *bilingual* is not found in its name. Second, DLE programs divide students into *English learners* and *English fluent*, a simplistic classification that ignores the complex gradient of multilingualism that characterizes bilingual students. Third, DLE programs are centered on immersion in two languages, regardless of student characteristics, and plunges students for extended periods of time into the isolating environment of a language they don't know.

More generally, DLE programs are limited by a stance toward bilingualism that is the product of a *monoglossic ideology* (García, 2009; Del Valle, 2000). This ideology sponsors the expectation that bilingual students ought to be two monolingual speakers in one (Grosjean, 1982). Consonant with this expectation, DLE programs have most often adopted language allocation policies that prescribe an exclusive space for English and another exclusive one for the LOTE. Instruction in English and the other language may alternate by day, time of day, week, academic subject, or teacher. The strict boundaries separating these spaces are sharply enacted when two different teachers in two separate classrooms use only one of the languages to teach the same group of students (this arrangement is often called "side by side").

In this article, we offer support for DLE programs and will propose, as part of this support, a reframing of their language allocation policy, advocating for a bilingual education that more coherently reflects the dynamic bilingualism of learners. The reframing, as we shall show, is *not* meant to replace existing language policies or to in any way work against DLE programs. Rather, it is intended to enhance them, to offer the flexibility that is required to tend to the social and academic needs of *all* students who are becoming bilingual. The proposal embodies an understanding of the education of bilinguals through a *translanguaging* lens (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014; Gort & Pontier, 2013; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012a, 2012b; Li, 2017; MacSwan, 2017; Palmer, Martínez, Mateus, & Henderson, 2014; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015).

Translanguaging stems from the position that bilinguals develop a unitary linguistic competence; that is, the two languages of a bilingual are not separate linguistic systems but manifestations of acts of deployment and suppression of linguistic features (words, sounds, rules) that society assigns to one or another language (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). Consequently, the language practices of bilinguals are never just additive but inherently *dynamic*, as bilingual learners use their developing unitary linguistic repertoire to make meaning and adapt to their sociolinguistic context (García, 2009).

A translanguaging conception of the language abilities of bilingual learners takes as its starting point the students' complete linguistic repertoire. The starting point, that is, is not the compartmentalized conception that reflects the society's named languages (English, Chinese, Haitian, Russian, Spanish, etc.). Seen from the perspective of the individual learner (rather than from the perspective of the society that gives names to languages), speakers "do" language with their own repertoire of linguistic features and not simply with the two societally named autonomous standardized languages (English and Spanish, English and Chinese, etc.). A translanguaging perspective focuses then on what bilingual learners *do* with language to produce and interpret their social and academic worlds. Learning to do bilingualism rests not simply on adding another autonomous named second language but on incorporating new features into one's developing repertoire. To be

sure, bilingual students at times can, and in some instances should, learn to suppress some of the features of their single linguistic system in order to speak “in only one language” or, as we would put it, in order to use language in the ways required in schools. In this process, the students’ translinguaging selves are likely to become less visible. But we do well to keep in mind that the reduced visibility of the students’ translinguaging selves is just that, a reduction in visibility, not a reduction in the relevance of their translingual selves to themselves and the educational process.

Languages are social constructions, inventions that have real-life consequences and that regulate and mediate access to social capital (Bourdieu, 1991; Heller, 2007; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). With this in mind, an uplifting and liberating language education policy for all bilingual learners must pay attention not only to the named languages that schools legitimize but also to the students’ ways of *doing* language, regardless of the language features that they deploy. Without an awareness of this at times contradictory interaction between the students’ internal unitary language repertoire and the external linguistic demands of schools for separate named languages, language education cannot succeed.¹

In what follows, we offer our understandings of how we can reframe the language allocation policy for DLE programs to make them true dual language *bilingual* programs (DLBE) that are attentive to dynamic bilingualism and translinguaging and that work for emergent bilingual learners along all points of the bilingual continuum, especially for language-minoritized students. To start, we reflect on how and why DLE programs have developed the strict language allocation policies that characterize them today.

The history

Schools in the United States have not been truly interested in developing bilingualism; in fact, public schools often operate to promote immigrant students’ shift to English. But in the mid-20th century, the country embraced bilingual education programs to provide an equitable education to language-minoritized students, mostly Latinx. Many of these programs were transitional in nature, but there were also those deemed to be developmental maintenance bilingual programs (for more on this history, see Crawford, 2004).

At the end of the 20th century, bilingual education for minoritized students came under intense attack, resulting in the prohibition of these programs in California (Proposition 227), Arizona (Proposition 203), and Massachusetts (Question 2). As part of this process, the term *bilingual* was slowly silenced, especially after the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002. Criticized as ineffective in getting language-minoritized students to perform academically in English in the standardized tests that the accountability system of NCLB required, both transitional and developmental maintenance bilingual programs started to be shut down.

At the same time, a type of bilingual education named DLE started to make inroads. Lindholm-Leary (2001) defined these programs:

DLE programs are similar in structure to immersion programs, but differ from the previously mentioned variations of immersion in terms of one very important factor: student composition. Unlike other forms of immersion, DLE includes native as well as non-native speakers of the target (non-English) language. In dual language programs, English-dominant and target-language-dominant students are purposefully integrated with the goals of developing bilingual skills, academic excellence, and positive cross-cultural and personal competency attitudes for both groups of students. (p. 30)

The DLE label was meant to signal a different type of educational program than the others. Whereas from its early U.S. beginnings, bilingual education had focused on more effective teaching of language-minoritized *students*, DLE programs were modeled after Canadian immersion programs, geared toward language-majority students and the teaching of two *languages* by separating languages strictly and following an immersion pedagogy. The difference between *teaching students bilingually* and *teaching two languages* lies at the heart of the change that took place almost surreptitiously at this time.

DLE programs included those Lindholm-Leary (2001) called *native English-dominant* and *target-language-dominant* students, exhibiting a monoglossic ideology that students could only be one or another and ignoring their complex sociolinguistic profiles. Gone was the specific focus on bilingually educating language-minoritized students. DLE did not address the lack of power of language-minoritized students and the unequal education they receive in English-only programs but instead viewed them only through their dominance in a *target language*. While this provided a positive lens to view minoritized students, their presence alongside those labeled as “native English-dominant” amplified the fact that they were *not* native speakers of English. The speakers of LOTE in DLE programs were welcomed as good models for the English speakers. The minoritized languages only acquired value because they served “as commodities that can be consumed by White, English-speaking students” (Pimentel, 2011, p. 351). The focus of DLE programs became the development of bilingualism among language-majority students (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000; Lindholm-Leary, 2005), whereas the attention to improving the educational opportunities of minoritized students that had always been so important to bilingual education became muddled or erased.

Two-way DLE became just a *language* instruction program. In 1997 Guadalupe Valdés issued a “cautionary note” to that effect, warning that attention to the needs of language-majority students instructed through LOTEs would trump educating language-minoritized students bilingually (Valdés, 1997). This criticism has only become more vocal in the last few years, as scholars decry the abandonment of an equitable education for language-minoritized students and the increased focus on bilingualism for economic interests and global human capital (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Flores, 2013; Martínez, Hikida & Durán, 2014; Palmer & Henderson, 2016; Palmer et al., 2014; Valdez, Delavan, & Freire, 2014; Varghese & Park, 2010).

As *bilingual* yielded its place to *dual language* and as the country turned its back on language-minoritized students, some minority communities found that this was the cover they needed to continue to teach their students bilingually. The label of dual language was extended to programs that once would have been considered *developmental maintenance bilingual education* programs (García, 2009). With the silencing of the word bilingual, committed educators started referring to these programs as (*one-way*) *dual language* education. These programs serve language-minoritized students whose language performances fall along different points of the bilingual continuum and not just those labeled as English learners. But ironically, and unfortunately, these one-way DLE programs gradually adopted the same language allocation policies and immersion practices of two-way dual language programs. Languages were kept strictly separated, and only standardized features of English and of the home language were legitimized. Many of these programs thus ended up with the same monoglossic ideology (and language separation practices) of Canadian immersion programs that were for language-majority students (Cummins, 2007). Gone was the goal of critically educating students from communities characterized by different language practices, lack of political power, low socioeconomic status, and debilitating racialization (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Dual language education has been accepted as the only way to continue to have bilingual education programs that are not remedial or transitional in nature. In comparison to transitional bilingual education programs that only offer temporary bilingual support to language-minoritized students until they can learn through English, DLE programs are said to be much more effective (see, for example, Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2002). But we argue here that DLE is being held back by the rigid language allocation policies that define the model, and we propose that we put back the B of bilingual into the DLE model.

Our introduction of what Crawford (2004) has called “the B word” into dual language bilingual education (DLBE) is purposeful. On the one hand, DLBE reintroduces the *bilingual education of students* and not simply the teaching and learning of two named languages (dual language) that are said to belong to different nation-states as the goal of the instructional program. Second, it links DLE to earlier efforts to equitably educate language-minoritized students. Third, it eliminates the confusion that has been created by reserving the word “bilingual” for transitional bilingual education, a program that does not develop bilingualism, while positioning dual language as something other than bilingual education that, nevertheless, leads to bilingualism. Lastly, by naming its bilingualism, it connects DLE to international

scholarship on bilingual/multilingual education and new understandings of how multilingualism functions in a globalized world and a neoliberal economy.

The purposes for insisting on the B in DLBE is not only ideological but also suggests that to fulfill its potential and to scale it up so that it is a viable educational alternative for *all* American students, the goals and structures of DLE programs have to change. Instead of focusing on teaching and learning two separate languages, a bilingual orientation would focus on educating *students* bilingually. Bilingual education is about the education of students, not simply the learning of languages. Instead of viewing two languages as entities that can be had and possessed, it would view language as a complex practice in which all learners engage to do school and life. Instead of valuing native-English speakers as providing the ultimate linguistic norm to be attained, it would respect and cherish bilingual norms of linguistic competence. Instead of being overly concerned with an enrichment education for language-majority students, a DLBE program would focus on providing an equitable enrichment education that includes language-minoritized students and that resists the hegemony of standardized English. Instead of excluding the language practices of bilingual communities, their translanguaging, it would leverage them. Finally, instead of teaching as if the two languages were what Cummins (2007) has called “two solitudes” (Cummins, 2017, talks about “active bilingualism” in order to disrupt these solitudes), it would adopt translanguaging pedagogies for all students. Throughout this article, we point to ways in which the language allocation policies of DLE programs would have to change to accommodate the B perspective.

In the rest of this article, we first briefly describe the traditional language allocation policy of DLE programs. We then introduce what we call a *translanguaging allocation policy* for DLBE programs that leverages the full linguistic repertoire of bilingual students and opens up spaces where translanguaging is valued. The proposed policy strives to educate *students* bilingually, regardless of who they are or how they language, and to make them critical of social arrangements that use language normativity to deny social capital to some.

Traditional language allocation policy in dual language education

DLE adopts strict language separation policies under the assumption that students have to be immersed in one specific named language at a time (see, for example, Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007 for guiding principles). This is the language education tradition that has been used not only in classical immersion programs like those in Canada in the 1960s and 1970s (Genesee, 1987) but also in traditional foreign language programs since the advent of direct methods (Rivers, 1981). Figure 1 represents the traditional language allocation policy of DLE programs.

Schools make decisions about what language to use when and where, as well as the time allotted to each, depending on their own external resources—budget, availability of teachers, accessibility of instructional material, convenience of space, and scheduling issues. In other words, these policies are

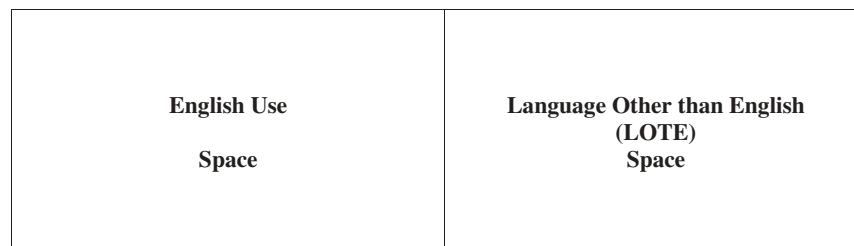


Figure 1. Traditional language allocation policy of DLE programs.

rarely formulated taking into consideration the students themselves, their language practices, their learning abilities and needs, or the communities from which they come.

One consequence of language education policies that separate two named languages strictly is that educators cannot view, assess, or leverage the students' full linguistic repertoire. This is especially so in DLE programs that have a "side-by-side" arrangement, where those who teach in only one language rarely have the time to plan and collaborate with the other teacher. When only monolingual performances are legitimated, teachers cannot see the translanguaging space that bilingual students inhabit. Thus, they cannot appropriately assess what students know how to do with language. They cannot assess whether bilingual students, for example, can find text-based evidence or write an argumentative essay; they can only evaluate whether the linguistic features they use fit the named language conventions that schools validate. This then prevents teachers from differentiating their teaching and appropriately scaffolding instruction to suit the students' true performances. Furthermore, these strict language allocation policies ignore or penalize the discursive norms of bilingual learners, their translanguaging, preventing them from demonstrating their creativity and criticality (Li, 2011). And they ignore the rich multilingualism of many students in these rigid dual instructional contexts. Yet another consequence of the traditional DLE language allocation policies is that bilingual students are expected to develop an English-speaking identity *and* a separate LOTE-speaking identity but never a bilingual identity (Lee, Hill-Bonnet, & Gillispie, 2008) that would make students feel at home in the different language ecologies they inhabit.

Translanguaging allocation policy for dual language bilingual education²

Poststructuralist sociolinguists have increasingly questioned the monoglossic ideology that is behind the construction of bilingualism as simply having two separate named languages (García, Flores & Spotti, 2017; Blommaert, 2010; Pennycook, 2010). More and more applied linguists are critical of educational programs that strictly separate and isolate languages. (See, for example, Cenoz & Gorter, 2015 and Cummins, 2007 for bilingual/multilingual education. See also B. Turnbull, 2016 and M. Turnbull & Dailey O'Cain, 2009 for foreign language education.) As traditional concepts of language, bilingualism, and language education are questioned and translanguaging theory takes hold, and as more multilingual students enter classrooms, the value of translanguaging pedagogical practices are being recognized (see, for example, Canagarajah, 2011; Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Li, 2017; Paulsrud, Rosén, Straszer & Wedin, 2017; in the United States, see Celic & Seltzer, 2013; García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; García & Kley, 2016; Gort, 2017; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Poza, 2016). Empirical studies have documented how specifically in dual language education programs translanguaging pedagogical strategies are being used successfully (see, for example, Esquinca, Araujo, & De La Piedra, 2014; Gort & Pontier, 2013; Palmer et al., 2014). Yet, the authority of the rigid language allocation structures of the dual language program model has not been challenged, leaving bilingual teachers thinking they are violating venerable principles and often having to close their classroom doors so that school officials do not view the translanguaging that is present. Martínez, Hikida, and Durán (2015) have documented how teachers in dual language classrooms negotiate their ideologies of language separation with the realities of translanguaging in the classrooms.

A translanguaging allocation policy for DLBE supports the allocation of the two named languages to separate times, spaces, subjects, or people, so that emergent bilingual students have the opportunity to hear and use one language or another exclusively (and so that the minoritized language is protected)—or, said another way, so that bilingual students learn, at appropriate times, to select and suppress features of their linguistic repertoire as called for by particular situations. But in addition, a translanguaging allocation policy in DLBE acknowledges that bilingual learners travel to different language ecologies with their expanding unitary linguistic system and practices, their translanguaging. This would provide opportunities for students to use all the features of their linguistic repertoire in strategic ways to deepen their understandings and enhance their linguistic and academic performances. At the same time, a translanguaging allocation policy would provide teachers with a structure that would enable them to do in full view what they often do behind closed doors.

Enacting a translanguageing language allocation policy that would enable teachers to legitimately provide students with translanguageing affordances would empower *all* students to meaningfully participate in classroom instruction, regardless of their types of language performances and learning abilities. It would guarantee inclusion of all the students in a community, not just those with the desired type of linguistic or learning profile, who are at present many times the only ones selected for such programs (for this criticism of DLE see, for example, Forman, 2016; García, Velasco, Menken & Vogel, forthcoming; Palmer, 2010). The translanguageing allocation policy we propose works for both two-way and one-way dual language bilingual education programs. And it works regardless of how named languages are allocated in instruction—that is, whether the program does the allocation by day, time, week, subject, content, or teacher. It also works whether the program employs bilingual teachers, or, as often occurs in a side-by-side model, a teacher who is bilingual coupled with one who is monolingual. What is important is that all teachers and administrators in DLBE program have what García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017) have called a *translanguageing stance*, firmly believing that all students' language practices work together, not separately, and are legitimate resources for their learning. Teachers who have a translanguageing stance promote collaboration across content, languages, and people, as well as home, school and community. Preferably, these teachers are also bilingual, but bilingualism in itself is not a sufficient condition to develop a translanguageing stance.

There are three components of a translanguageing allocation policy in DLBE that work in interaction with each other, as well as with the English and LOTE spaces:

- (1) Translanguageing documentation
- (2) Translanguageing rings
- (3) Translanguageing transformation

Figure 2 displays the components of a translanguageing allocation policy for DLBE, which we describe in greater detail in the following sections.

The basic spaces for English and the LOTE are now strategically accompanied by spaces in which translanguageing is used intentionally for three purposes: (a) to have a more holistic understanding of the child as learner (translanguageing documentation), (b) to scaffold instruction for individual students (translanguageing rings), and (c) to transform the normalizing effects of standardized language in school and the hegemony of English (translanguageing transformation).

In this translanguageing allocation policy, translanguageing rings support individual students by expanding their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978) in instructional spaces designated as English-only or LOTE-use-only and scaffolding instruction for students who need it to assist them

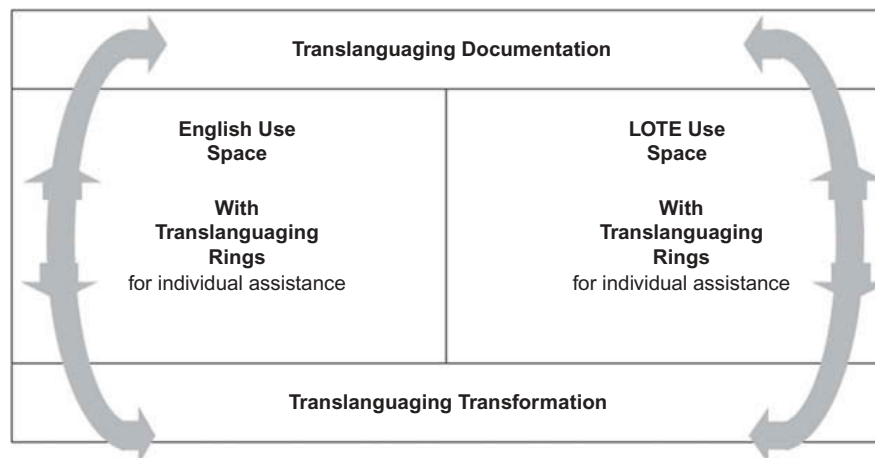


Figure 2. Components of a translanguageing allocation policy for DLBE.

in learning and performing through a new language. Besides the English- and LOTE-use spaces, now supported by the translanguaging rings, there are translanguaging spaces for documentation and transformation. These dedicated translanguaging spaces are meant to ensure that the teaching cycle of assessment and instruction validates and leverages the translanguaging of bilingual learners as important in their education. For example, a teacher who uses translanguaging documentation to assess students then understands how best to support students with translanguaging rings when the language of instruction is designated as solely English or the LOTE. Translanguaging documentation also enables the teacher to be more aware of the students' lived experiences, their identities and emotions, and their critical consciousness. This enables the teacher to construct the translanguaging transformation space to fit the particular sociohistorical context of the students, their families, and their community. The goal of the translanguaging transformation space is to produce new bilingual subjectivities that are critically conscious of the hegemony of English and its effects and that value their translingual selves.

All components of the translanguaging allocation policy are dynamically connected, as shown by the multidirection arrows that are *going through* the English- and LOTE-use space in Figure 2. Within the designated English- and LOTE-use space, teachers can strategically use translanguaging documentation as well as translanguaging transformation. DLBE classrooms always honor the bilingual learners' translanguaging and leverage it to assess, instruct, and transform. But at the same time, DLBE classrooms pay attention to the development of students' performances using only the features of their repertoire that correspond to the conventions of what is named one language or the other. All components are necessary in a translanguaging allocation policy—the separate spaces for each named language used in instruction, as well as the coordinated translanguaging spaces that leverage the dynamic bilingualism of learners and their translingual selves. We expand on the translanguaging components in the following.

Translanguaging documentation

Good teaching always begins with observing what students can do—that is, with assessing their understandings. But in DLE programs with a traditional language allocation policy, teachers rarely have a chance to gauge students' full conceptual or linguistic understanding because they are constrained by the isolated use of one language. Learners then do not have full opportunity to truly show what they know, and teachers cannot accurately assess their performances.

In classrooms with a translanguaging allocation policy, the careful documentation of students' translanguaging is an important step to assess, as well as validate, their dynamic ways of languaging. In addition, translanguaging documentation disrupts bilingual teachers' monoglossic misconceptions about the language use of their students because it makes their translanguaging visible, thus developing the teachers' translanguaging stance.

To better understand what bilingual students know, teachers need to assess their language performances holistically, regardless of the named language to which the features are said to belong. Otherwise, the language and academic profile of bilingual students will be woefully underestimated, which leads to perspectives of deficit. Is the student a strong speaker or a competent finder of text-based evidence? Does the student use argumentation successfully, both orally and in writing? Does the student make relevant inferences from reading? Can the student construct an argumentative text? With what linguistic elements do students construct their oral and written performances in school? Do the students understand the concepts being taught? Do they have the appropriate linguistic features to express what they know? Do they understand and can they use the appropriate language for the content of the lesson and the discipline? All these are important questions that DLBE teachers need to resolve. But to answer them, they need to have a space in which students can use their entire language repertoire.

We are proposing that a translanguaging allocation policy would allow DLBE teachers to determine three different things that teachers now do not always keep separate: (a) ascertain how

the student uses language for classroom communicative and academic purposes (and regardless of the appropriateness of language features the child has selected), (b) ascertain what the student knows, and (c) ascertain whether the student can express those concepts using only the features associated with one language or the other. Only when these three separate understandings about a student have been established can instruction (and assessment) take place in the separate English and LOTE spaces. That is, once these three pieces of information are at hand, teachers can plan units of instruction and lessons that would be relevant for the students in their classrooms.

Take the case of a teacher we will call Juana, who teaches in a two-way DLBE English/Spanish fourth-grade classroom, where instruction takes place in English one day and in Spanish the next. For her unit on Native Americans, Juana first does a read-aloud of an English-language book during the English day. She then leads a guided reading group of six students. She encourages the students to discuss the reading and take notes using their entire linguistic repertoire. Juana observes the discussion and note taking carefully and documents what students know about the topic of the book, the questions they raise, as well as their individual language use. Next, during Spanish day, Juana uses Spanish to orally summarize and discuss the main ideas explored by the students in the guided reading group. She then writes on the whiteboard some of the actual sentences that students had said the day before, some in English, some in Spanish, some containing features of both languages. She then asks the students to work in groups of four. They change the English sentences into Spanish, the Spanish sentences into English, and those with features of both languages into two separate English and Spanish sentences. The teacher then discusses the group's translations, using the language that naturally matches the sentences produced by the students, without insisting, during this portion of Spanish day, that only Spanish features be used. Students are free to join the discussion using any linguistic features they want. The main goal of this activity is for Juana to more deeply understand the linguistic performances of the students and their use of translanguaging, as well as what it is they really know.

In another school with a DLBE program, the fourth grade has a side-by-side arrangement. Luz is bilingual and teaches in Spanish. She is teamed up with Kate, who has learned Spanish but does not consider herself bilingual. Kate teaches in English, although she has a firm translanguaging stance that supports the children's varied bilingual practices. To work on their translanguaging documentation of the bilingual learners' linguistic performances, Luz and Kate need to collaborate intensively. The principal understands the need for this collaboration and provides Luz and Kate with meeting and planning periods where they can consistently analyze their students' work in both languages. Only by analyzing the translanguaging documentation together can they get a full picture of their students' linguistic and academic development.

Juana, Luz, and Kate document all the students' language practices, important for the next component of the translanguaging allocation policy—the translanguaging rings.

Translanguaging rings

Students in DLBE classrooms are not different from others. Some perform with ease in all modes (listening, speaking, reading, writing) in both instructional languages; but the linguistic performances of most students vary, with some speaking better than they write, others reading better than they speak, and so on. And because bilinguals are never balanced, and linguistic repertoires consist of different features, the performance of bilinguals in each of the instructional languages is never the same.

Armed with the translanguaging documentation, teachers in DLBE understand how each student negotiates and uses their linguistic resources in different language spaces. Teachers can then differentiate the design of instruction, learning experiences, and find instructional material and strategies that support each individual student. Teachers take into account that students who have not been socialized in the language of instruction may need assistance in engaging with learning.

They recognize the fact that learning is a social process and that instruction in a “new” language may be beyond their current level of independent capacity. Thus, they build around individual students what we call a *translanguaging ring*, expanding the student’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD, Vygotsky, 1978). The student can then use this scaffold (or not) for different tasks and when performing in the language that corresponds to the specific English or LOTE space. The translanguaging ring enables these students to engage in tasks that they still cannot perform without assistance.

These translanguaging rings are thus ways of scaffolding instruction—the core of bilingual pedagogical strategies, especially for emergent bilinguals at the beginning stages (Cummins, 2000; Walqui, 2006). And yet, because of the traditional language allocation policies of dual language programs, teachers are often robbed of the opportunity to use the students’ home language practices as scaffold to instruction. The translanguaging rings consist of ways of using translanguaging as scaffold. They include use of bilingual instructional material, technology assistance such as Google Translate, multimodal provisions including videos, collaboration with peers, and small groups that can offer translanguaging support, among others.

Translanguaging rings act as a temporary scaffold until bilingual students have acquired new features that expand their repertoire to the necessary level, and until they gain confidence leveraging their own translanguaging to perform with whatever linguistic features they do have in their repertoire. Although the translanguaging rings act as scaffold mechanisms, they are also transformative for the emergent bilingual students, giving them possibilities to learn and engage meaningfully and authentically with the lesson.

The teacher supplies or takes away the translanguaging rings for specific tasks and languages, depending on the ongoing assessment of the student’s performances. For example, back in Juana’s Spanish/English dual language bilingual fourth-grade classroom, Carlos has just arrived from El Salvador. Juana gives him a Spanish-language version of the novel they are reading, *Holes*. During the English day, Carlos reads *Hoyos*, but is tasked with comparing a paragraph from *Hoyos* with one from *Holes*, and with constructing his own bilingual journal, with the help of online translations. In his bilingual journal, Carlos notes new words and their meanings and questions features and constructions in the English text and how they are expressed in the Spanish text. Juana goes over Carlos’s bilingual journal at the end of the class period and answers his questions. Sometimes when Juana is very busy with others, she asks Carlos’s bilingual peers to go over the journal and answer his questions. This often evolves into long class discussions of how English and Spanish differ.

During the English day, Juana pairs Carlos with Mónica, who is fluent in both English and Spanish. Mónica offers Carlos translations into Spanish when he cannot follow the lesson. It is a peer who then provides the translanguaging rings.

It turns out that Carlos reads well—that is, he understands the story when he reads it in Spanish. However, when Carlos produces a paragraph in Spanish about *Hoyos*, Juana realizes that Carlos doesn’t write as well. Carlos needs the translanguaging ring during English reading but not during Spanish reading. However, he needs the translanguaging ring during English writing *and* Spanish writing. Based on the work of Escamilla et al. (2013), Juana decides to work on Carlos’s writing in English and Spanish in paired ways. Thus, regardless of the language of instruction, Carlos writes in English and Spanish, often with a partner, and always with technology support.

Unlike Juana, who can assess and assist the bilingual performances of all students in her classroom, Kate, the English monolingual teacher of the side-by-side-model, cannot do so on her own. Because Luz, the other teacher in her team, is not always present, she relies on peers, online translations using an iPad, and families and community members to provide her students with the appropriate translanguaging rings.

Juana, Kate, and Luz have to constantly assess whether each student in their classrooms needs a translanguaging ring, in which space, and for what task. They constantly have to ask themselves: “Can this student perform this specific task by selecting only the features of his unitary language

system that match the dual-named language space, or does the student need assistance?” Different students in Juana’s, Kate’s, and Luz’s classes need the translanguaging rings in different spaces. Brian, whose family does not speak Spanish at home, often needs a translanguaging ring to write on Spanish day. In contrast, Carlos, the newcomer, needs it to read on English day. And Cándida, who was born in New York of Cuban parents, needs to be encouraged to use Spanish when speaking; the translanguaging ring for Cándida consists of her assignment to a discussion group of students who prefer to speak Spanish.

Teachers who have a translanguaging stance understand that translanguaging is how students language and appropriate new features that correspond to another named language. Translanguaging is the norm, the natural condition for the bilingual learner. It is the selection of specific features of a named language, the forcing oneself to suppress translanguaging, to speak in one named language exclusively, that is conscious and deliberate. Bilingual youth do not need support to make meaning when the social interaction includes communal translanguaging. But in the separate monolingual spaces of school, DLBE teachers use translanguaging rings to expand the learning opportunities of emergent bilingual students.

Translanguaging transformation

Granted the importance of separate spaces for exclusive performance in one or another language, especially for the minoritized language, bilingual learners must nevertheless be given opportunities to work within an instructional space where their fluid language practices are made visible. A translanguaging allocation policy in a dual language bilingual education program is important not only because it provides opportunities for more valid assessments and for gauging individual students’ needs for instructional support but also because it can validate the translanguaging practices of bilingual communities, develop creative linguistic uses, and disrupt the linguistic hierarchies that are the product of reigning monoglossic ideologies in schools. A translanguaging transformation space makes room for sociolinguistic, socioeducational, and even sociopolitical transformations. Working within this space can transform the students’ stigmatized dual bilingual identities and construct new bilingual subjectivities that value their translanguaging selves.

Translanguaging transformation is planned and strategic. On the one hand, teachers bring the two named languages together for critical metalinguistic analysis, developing bilingual learners as *sociolinguists*. On the other hand, in encouraging students to use their full linguistic repertoire fluidly, bilingual learners become *creative language users*. Finally, the legitimization of this translanguaging use develops their *critical consciousness*.

As budding *sociolinguists*, learners analyze and reflect on how, when, and why they use certain features of their language repertoire. For example, Juana, the fourth-grade teacher, conducts an activity every two days, regardless of the language of the day, which she calls “Language/Detectives/*Lingüísticos*.” During this short activity, Juana focuses on a single feature or single use of English and *español*. She writes on the whiteboard an example in both languages and gives linguistically heterogeneous groups of students a magnifying glass to engage them as language detectives or *detectives lingüísticos*. Students are free to use all their language practices to discuss among themselves how the two languages differ. They then come up with other examples. Students become better at metalinguistic reflection—What is the word or phrase in Spanish for the English or in Spanish for the English? Are the nuances of the resulting messages different or the same? Why is it said differently? How does English and Spanish express past, third person, mood? Ironically, the bringing together of the two languages that this translanguaging transformation space enables make students into better language users of the two named languages.

A translanguaging allocation policy also makes space to transform students into *creative language users*. In this translanguaging transformation space, students are given the freedom to read in any language they wish or to write stories and skits using their entire language repertoire authentically to portray different voices or different linguistic realities. Teachers choose bilingual authors for

readings, immersing students in experiencing how published bilingual authors often use different linguistic features of their repertoire to deepen the meaning of a story, to make it culturally relevant, to give voice to different characters, and to express different realities (for a guide to Latino authors and translanguaging, see Pérez Rosario, 2014). For example, once a week, Luz and Kate bring their two groups together for a translanguaged read-aloud and discussion that allows for translanguaging. The objective is to encourage students to appreciate the creativity of translanguaged texts, both oral and written.

Finally, the translanguaging transformation space promotes the students' *criticality*. In Juana's DLBE class, assignments often require students to go out into the community to conduct interviews with other bilinguals, document linguistic practices, and become aware of the printed landscape of notices and signs that use different languages and/or scripts. Juana also encourages students to research topics on the Internet, visiting websites in their many different languages, going beyond English and Spanish. Going *beyond* the standardized language used in school, translanguaging encompasses the many different varieties spoken in the community and written on their walls. Students are then encouraged to consider all linguistic practices as a legitimate expansion of the school restrictive definition of appropriate language. Students discuss and reflect on how and why schools constrain language use in the way it does.

Luz and Kate use their transformative space to work with their students on writing and producing a multilingual play that will use all of the students' linguistic practices and the communities' linguistic and cultural practices. They plan to perform the play in front of a multilingual audience at the end of the school year. Because the multilingual play goes beyond the two languages of instruction, they have enlisted the families to help with some of the lines in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, and Fulani—the other languages of the children in the classroom. The objective is to transform the separation between home and school by bringing the language and cultural practices of the community into the school space.

The translanguaging transformative space constructs a different sociolinguistic reality in DLBE programs, transforming the ways in which bilingual practices are evaluated and acknowledging the appropriateness of translanguaging for academic purposes. We argue that this transformative translanguaging is essential in a DLBE program where students must develop bilingual subjectivities that are not truncated or devalued.

In short, the translanguaging transformative space is used to validate the students' multilingual practices and identities and to work against the linguistic hierarchy that posits English as more valuable than the LOTEs and school language as more important than the ways of languaging at home. In this unrestricted and equitable translanguaging transformative space, bilingual learners are allowed to be themselves, to speak in ways that reflect their developing bilingual lives, and to reflect on the differences between one named language and the other and on the ways of languaging in school and at home. Students learn to reflect on the sociopolitical context that has used language to create differences and the reasons for the hierarchies of language use that schools generally legitimize.

Conclusion

Dual language bilingual education (DLBE) is most important as a mechanism to educate students who will not only be bilingual and biliterate but also creative users of language and critics of oppressive language normativity. The potential of DLBE is great. However, without some changes to the present strict language allocation policy of traditional DLE programs, students will continue to be bilingually miseducated, and the programs will not achieve their full potential. The present rigidity of the language allocation policy of DLE programs makes it unlikely that it will ever be more than a "boutique" program for very few.

A liberating education for bilingual learners must be able to assess the use of their entire language repertoire, use translanguaging to scaffold instruction when needed, and provide a space of

transformation and freedom from the constraints of language normativity. A DLBE program emanating from a translanguaging allocation policy would show what bilingual learners, and especially minoritized bilingual children, know and can truly do.

A translanguaging allocation policy preserves the traditional space for each of the named languages. In addition, it fills these traditional spaces with possibility of meaning making and educational success through translanguaging rings as scaffolds, translanguaging documentation for authentic assessment, and translanguaging transformation to liberate bilingual learners' creative voices and critical consciousness.

Three components of the translanguaging allocation policy essential to DLBE programs were identified, each corresponding to different purposes: (a) Translanguaging Documentation to assess the student's entire language repertoire, (b) Translanguaging Rings to give emergent bilingual students the assistance needed to learn, and (c) Translanguaging Transformation to give students the freedom to perform creatively and critically and to go beyond the language normativity of schools.

A translanguaging allocation policy both acknowledges the societal existence of named languages as used in schools, as well as the unitary language system of bilingual students. It is time that we bring back the natural bilingual condition of DLBE programs and insist that the rigid language allocation policies of dual language education programs today are bad for both language-minoritized and even language-majority students, bad for education, and bad for language learning.

Notes

- 1 Notice that we are adopting here the translanguaging perspective offered in Otheguy, García & Reid (2015) that distinguishes between the *internal* linguistic system of the bilingual and the *externally* normed concept of named languages. Unlike MacSwan (2017), we do not believe that bilinguals have two compartmentalized linguistic systems that correspond to two named languages. We adhere here to the idea that the linguistic system of the bilingual does not neatly correspond to the categories of named languages and that when the bilingual chooses what is said to be one or two named languages, they are responding to external *social* factors.
- 2 The conceptualization of the translanguaging allocation policy emerged from a discussion between Sánchez, García and Solorza about the Translanguaging Unit Plans being developed by Solorza and his team: Gladys Aponte, Tim Becker, Tess Leverenz, and Bianca Frias (Solorza et al., forthcoming).

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