

Translanguaging and Multilingual Identity in the Language Classroom

Part I: Sept. 18, 2026



Overview

- Why this theme, now?
- Multilingual teachers
- Multilingual students
- Translanguaging and pedagogical translanguaging

→ Why this theme, now?

- Since our 2019 visit from Dr. Ofelia García, the field's understanding has continued to grow
- In Spring 2026, *The Modern Language Journal* Vol. 110, Issue 2 featured numerous articles on multilingualism and translanguaging

(see Davin, Kristin J. (2026). THE ISSUE: Re-envisioning language education for a multilingual world. *Modern Language Journal*, 110, 653–656. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.70055>)





Why this theme, now?

- The Faculty of A&S' Strategic Priority #3 asks us to:

“Build the Foundations of Human Knowledge to Form People Who Will Learn Their Entire Lives [...]

by **study[ing] the role of language multiplicity, language learning, cultural archives, and translation** [...] to create a modern strategy and identify priority areas for both research excellence and students' educational formation in the humanities and beyond.”



Why this theme, now?

Dr. Michele Back

Professor of World Languages Education
at the University of Connecticut's Neag
School of Education

October 2 Workshop
Translanguaging Strategies in
the Language Classroom





Why this theme, now?

- Many of our students have always been multilingual, and this population seems to be growing
- Pedagogical translanguaging strategies can support the acquisition of an additional language



Multilingual teachers

→ Which of these terms do you identify with, if any?

- ◆ Multilingual
- ◆ Emergent bi/multilingual (García, 2019)
- ◆ Polyglot
- ◆ “LEP,” second language learners
- ◆ Other?



Multilingual teachers

- How, if at all, does your language multiplicity come into play in your **teaching**?



What is translanguaging?

- In your own words, what is **translanguaging**?
- Vs. code-switching



What is translanguaging?

"Deployment of speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named languages"

(Otheguy, García, and Reid, 2015)

"The fluid integration of different modes of communication (speaking, listening, reading, writing, gesturing, etc.) and features (lexical, syntactic, phonological, semantic, etc.) of two or more languages in order to transmit and make meaning"

(Adolfini & Astruc, 2017; in Back, 2025)



Translanguaging

- Do you translanguage in your teaching?
 - ◆ Consciously or subconsciously?
 - ◆ Planned or unplanned?
 - ◆ In what moments?
 - ◆ For what purpose(s)?
 - ◆ If not, why not?



Multilingual students

- Do you have multilingual students in your classes? Do they talk about their identities?
 - ◆ Bi/multilingual
 - ◆ Heritage speakers
 - ◆ Polyglot
- Do your students translanguage in the classroom? If so, when and why, or why not?



Pedagogical translanguaging

- How does translanguaging support your students' learning?
- What are some of your concerns regarding translanguaging in the classroom?



Pedagogical translanguageing

ACTFL's "90% target language" guideline

Strategic translanguageing in the language classroom can:

- Improve oral skills (Shen & Yüzlü, 2026)
- Deepen conceptual understanding by accessing all prior knowledge (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022)
- Develop plurilingual/pluricultural competence (Galante, 2022)
- Encourage collaboration (Zhang et al., 2020; in Back, 2025)
- Enrich sense of self
- Increase participation (Elsherbiny, 2025)



Next steps

- Observe patterns of translanguageing happening in your classes (Who? When? Why?)
- **October 2, 1:15pm - Workshop with Michele Back**
- Two optional but suggested readings from Michele Back →





References

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Elsherbiny, H. (2025). Translinguaging in the Second Language Classroom: From a Fleeting Trend to a Paradigm Shift. https://www.thelanguageeducator.org/actfl/library/item/spring_2025/4267180/L

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