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Translanguaging in higher education: Using several languages for the analysis of academic content in the teaching and learning process

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Abstract: This article reports on research that questions the existence and use of translanguaging practices in higher education. On the one hand, the increase of mobility in Tertiary Education leads to the presence of various individual repertoires in the classroom and, on the other hand, the use of scientific texts, usually published in English, is more and more common. These two factors impose a language choice on professors. In some cases, they may choose to use a single lingua franca, most often English, or in other cases, they may choose to undermine the English language's hegemonic role by using what García refers to as translanguaging. This study sets out to analyse a case study in a *Language and communication policies* course at the University of Algarve, in Portugal. The course attendees were half local students and half Erasmus students. The professor of this course let students use their various linguistic repertoires, by using several languages during the lessons, in order to achieve a collective comprehension of the content, which in most cases was in English. In this manner, they reached what (García, Ofelia & Li Wei. 2014. *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*. Houndmills. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan) define as the “co-construction of knowledge” in a “co-learning classroom environment”. Furthermore, the professor asked the students to take a structured multilingual final exam, in three languages, in order to stimulate and develop their multilingual competence.

Keywords: translanguaging, multilingual classroom, co-learning, multilingual competence, higher education

1 Introduction

This article aims at studying the use of translanguaging in higher education, through the analysis of a case study at the University of Algarve. This study

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focuses on a classroom composed of local Portuguese students and Erasmus students from France and Italy, in which the professor decided to allow the use of different languages during the lessons and the use of various translanguaging practices for the syllabus development. The specific aim of this paper is to investigate translanguaging practices in a multilingual classroom, and in particular how they manifest themselves and their pedagogical consequences.

Despite the high number of international students and exchange programs provided both for incoming and outgoing students, the University of Algarve does not have an explicit language policy. The main teaching language is Portuguese, and English is taught in some Master's and doctoral courses (17 % of Masters and 24 % of PhDs are taught entirely in English and 8 % of Masters and 32 % of PhDs both in Portuguese and English (University of Algarve website). The decision about which language should be used as the medium of instruction is left mainly to the professors or the courses' management. Moreover, there are no shared criteria for such decisions, nor for the linguistic evaluation of the teachers. In many cases, teachers who deal with students from multiple linguistic origins would choose the use of a single common lingua franca, English in most cases.

In this unclear language policy landscape, the professor of the course analysed in this study decided to avoid the use of a single lingua franca, allowing the use of several languages and, in fact, encouraging their use, as this paper will analyse.

2 Theoretical framework on translanguaging in a classroom

The term translanguaging is relatively new and its definition has been expanding in the last two decades within the scholarly literature. It was used for the first time in its Welsh form *trawsieithu* by Cen Williams in 1994, referring to the practice of Welsh bilingual schools in alternating two languages in education, both for reception and production activities (García and Lin 2016).

Translanguaging is currently considered as “the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features of various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential” (García 2009: 140). It refers to the “constant, active invention of new realities through social action” and the *-ing* suffix emphasizes, then, “the act of meaning-making” (Mazak and Herbas-Donoso 2015: 698).

In this sense, the concept of translanguaging goes beyond the concept of code-switching, which designates the switch between two distinct linguistic codes, and it considers bilingualism not as the simple sum of two languages, i.e., an additive bilingualism, but as a dynamic bilingualism, as defined by García (2012: 1–4). Translanguaging is, therefore, the act of selecting strategically communicative features within the same linguistic repertoire and it is recognized as a norm among plurilingual speakers (García 2012: 1). In fact, recent theories on plurilingualism “ne considèrent plus les langues pratiquées par une personne plurilingue comme une simple addition de ‘systèmes linguistiques’ (plus ou moins approximatifs) appréhendés chacun pour soi mais comme une espèce de compétence intégrée” [they ‘no longer consider the languages spoken by a multilingual person as a simple addition of “linguistic systems” (more or less approximate) learned each for itself but as a kind of integrated competence.] (Lüdi 2011: 54). And, in addition, the notion of plurilingual people takes into consideration contemporary globalized society and new trajectories of speakers who are considered plurilingual, regardless of their level of language proficiency (Piccardo 2013).

The term translanguaging, since its first definition in Welsh, has been used in reference to education and, for this reason, it has had a specific development in bilingual and multilingual education studies. García et al. (2011: 389), indeed, define it as “the process by which bilingual students and teachers engage in complex discursive practices in order to ‘make sense’ of, and communicate in, multilingual classrooms”, that is to say, the various and multiple forms in which students and teachers use their language resources in learning and teaching. In fact, as García et al. explain later (2011: 389), translanguaging refers to bilingual performances in the various learning and teaching activities which include “reading, writing, taking notes, discussing, signing, and so on” and, in this sense, it includes code-switching and translation, but it is not limited to these two practices.

Baker (2001: 281–282) emphasises that strategic classroom language planning is necessary in order to ensure that the languages used during the educational activities are equally developed and have an equal status. This might mean, for example, an input in one language (e.g. reading a text) with the output in another language (e.g. the discussion around the text), during the same teaching/learning activity. Furthermore, he lists and discusses four potential educational advantages to the use of translanguaging and its importance as a pedagogical practice:

- it may promote a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter;
- it may help the development of the weaker language;
- it may facilitate home-school links and co-operation;
- it may help the integration of fluent speakers with early learners.

As noted by Canagarajah (2011: 401–403), the use of translanguaging is a naturally occurring phenomenon for multilingual students, even if it is often forbidden by teachers and takes place covertly. In the most proactive cases, however, teachers favour the use of the entire linguistic repertoire of their students for learning purposes, and they themselves use their linguistic repertoire as a resource. Nevertheless, Canagarajah also suggests that, precisely because translanguaging is a spontaneous practice among multilingual students, it should not be romanticized considering mistakes as positive interference from one language to another, but rather “practice is necessary for the development of competence and proficiency”.

Moreover, by using translanguaging as a pedagogical practice, students have the possibility to use their full linguistic repertoire in facilitating content learning. In this way, they also have the opportunity to experience and increase their multilingual identities (Celic and Seltzer 2011: 1) and to develop metalinguistic abilities and a deeper linguistic awareness (Mazak and Herbas-Donoso 2015).

Despite plurilingual students and multilingual classrooms being widespread from primary education to higher education, the use of translanguaging remains limited and it is often associated with a feeling of *guilt* by both teachers and students (Creese and Blackledge 2010: 103). Even in the types of education which declare themselves multilingual, the languages continue to be used in strict separation within the lessons, like “two solitudes”, as described by Cummins (2005: 588–590).

Studies on the use of translanguaging in primary and secondary education are very recent, gathered in the last decade and, although they are scattered around the various continents, in almost all cases one of the two languages concerned is English. The main studies in primary and secondary education are: Cummins (2005) who speaks about cross-linguistic transfer as teaching strategies; García (2009) and García et al. (2011) who studied in particular the use of translanguaging in US classrooms, by Spanish speakers in the first case, and by newcomer immigrants in the second case; Creese and Blackledge (2010) who analyse the use of translanguaging in Gujarati and Chinese schools in the United Kingdom; Canagarajah (2006, 2011) and Cenoz and Gorter (2011), both concerning the use of translanguaging in writing skills; and Kano (2012) who studied the use of translanguaging by Japanese students in New York.

In tertiary education, however, the studies are even more recent and still very few: Adamson and Fujimoto-Adamson (2012) studied how the use of translanguaging at a self-access language centre in a Japanese university has changed the students’ language learning; Andersson et al. (2013) and Kagwesage (2013) analysed the use of translanguaging in work teams at the University of

Rwanda; Madiba (2013) explored the use of translanguaging in an online glossary tool used by students at a South-African University; Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2014, 2015) focused on the study of translanguaging practices in science courses at a Puerto Rican University; Kyppö et al. (2015) analysed a university course at a Finnish University designed to develop the multilingual and multicultural competence of the students, including the use of translanguaging; and then there is the recent Mazak and Carroll (2017) which presents studies on translanguaging in various higher education institutions around the world, claiming to fill a gap in research studies.

Almost all the studies (except Kyppö et al. 2015), take as an object of study the use of translanguaging in English and another language. In higher education, this fact assumes particular relevance, since English is now considered the “international language of science” and the “taken-for-granted lingua franca of higher education”, also discussed in Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2014, 2015). In fact, given that English is the language medium of most science globally, university students have to deal with academic contents mainly in English. As Phillipson (2009) highlights, the dominant role of English puts non-English speakers at a disadvantage and, what is more, it is a socially constructed role; Phillips points out that “there is nothing inherently scientific about the predominance of English over the use of any other language”. It is not, then, a “natural” condition, rather, “it results from conscious choices made by the linguistically advantaged and by the lack of any coherent countervailing policy” (Tonkin 2011: 11). Very often the use of English texts thus leads to translanguaging practices in contexts where other languages are used as medium of instruction. This very use of texts in English and talk-around-text in another language is in itself a power play, by accepting multilingualism in science and by rejecting the assumed monolingual hegemonic position of English as the only language of science (Mazak and Herbas-Donoso 2014). Moreover, in their subsequent paper Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2015: 712) maintain that “this multilingual learning, far from being ‘confusing’ as a monolingual perspective would see it, actually opens up higher education to more discourses and has the potential to expand students’ academic mastery of those discourses”.

3 Case study

This case study aims to analyse the use of translanguaging in a given context. The research questions were specifically which translanguaging practices are used in the context of this case study, how they are developed, and their pedagogical outcomes.

3.1 The context

The study concerns the course *Language and communication policies* (*Políticas de língua e comunicação*) in the second semester of the academic year 2015/2016, of the third year of the Bachelor's degree *Línguas e Comunicação*, at the University of Algarve, in Portugal. This course provides a general introduction to the concepts of multilingualism, language policy and communication policy from a sociolinguistic perspective, proposing a number of academic and non-academic articles, mostly in English.

Participants in this course were 6 local students, 7 Erasmus students, including 6 from France and one from Italy, a professor and myself (Italian Ph.D. student) as participant observer, making a total of 15 participants.

Their individual linguistic repertoires were quite complex for a variety of reasons: the family origin of some students; half the participants' status as exchange students; but also the fact that all their Bachelor's degrees dealt with language studies. Figure 1 shows their individual linguistic repertoires, separating *1st Languages*; *Teaching Languages*, languages used as medium of instruction from primary school to secondary school; *Foreign Languages*, languages learnt in language courses from primary education to higher education (to at least an intermediate level); *2nd Languages*, languages learnt in immersion contexts (to at least an intermediate level); and, finally, other *Basic Knowledge* they could have.

As the figure shows, it was a multilingual classroom, composed of students possessing very varied linguistic repertoires. In fact, some of them claimed to have more than one mother language and all of them have studied or learnt at least two foreign languages during their life, albeit at different levels and in different learning contexts. The collective repertoire of the classroom is shown in Figure 2 below, in which a distinction is made between what are here called *complete repertoire* and *actual repertoire*. The first one includes all the languages known by the participants, while the second one shows only the languages at an intermediate or advanced level (B or C of the CEFR, Council of Europe 2001), since it is assumed here that in order to attend a university class and be able to understand and process the content, at least a B1 level of the CEFR is required. In this regard, there is no framework common to various European universities, but for example in the studies collected in Veronesi and Nickenig (2009), when explicitly requested, the minimum language level at university is an intermediate B1/B2. Therefore, the two collective repertoires are separated in Figure 2, in order to highlight the actual repertoire, i.e., the repertoire which actually enables participants to attend a university lesson.

Figure 1: Linguistic repertoires of classroom participants, including professor. y-axis indicates number of individuals.

The graph shows that all 15 participants, according to their statements, are fluent in Portuguese and English to at least an intermediate level, 11 of them also in French, 7 in Spanish, 2 in Italian and one each in German, Cape Verdean, Venetian and Sardinian.

Based on this multilingual arena, the professor proposed, for the language management of the course, to follow two *language rules*:

1. Everyone is free to speak their preferred language, on the condition that the teacher understands it (or that it can be translated for a collective understanding)

Figure 2: Collective repertoires of students and professor.

2. One of the final presented works will be done in three languages, chosen by the students:
 - A language for the PowerPoint presentation;
 - A language for the oral exposition;
 - A language for answering questions from the professor and other students.

Moreover, during the course the professor proposed scientific texts in English, which were read, analysed, and discussed in different languages.

On the one hand, given the multilingual context, by implementing the first rule, the professor wanted to give students the freedom to use a variety of languages within the course, a practice not usually followed on other courses at the University of Algarve. This first rule was the professor's way of encouraging students to use their full linguistic repertoire, while also promoting greater linguistic inclusion, rejecting the imposition of a single language. As for the final work, the professor's intention was clearly to stimulate students' ability to use translanguageing in a more structured and conscious manner.

Thus, the professor deliberately sought to promote the use of translanguageing through different strategies: the use of majority-learning materials in English, his own oral language choices (which we will see in the excerpts) and the two rules – one that looks to stimulate translingual practices during

classes and the other which is more structured, to be used in the final work. It was therefore expected that students would feel free to use several languages in order to facilitate cohesion in the classroom, while the use of their linguistic repertoires was also promoted and fostered. Since the course makes up part of a Bachelor's degree in Languages and Communication, the professor's decisions were aimed at students who study languages and, therefore, beyond the simple intention of teaching the content, the professor was also looking to actively employ elements being studied on the course syllabus. Thus, in this particular case study, both teachers and students were social actors who used their translanguaging practices and strategies, despite the absence of clear language planning on the part of the university. Therefore, as underlined in Madiba (2013: 386), in this case too they may both be "considered active agents in prying open the ideological and implementation spaces for multilingual education". It is precisely for all these reasons that this course was chosen as the subject of this analysis.

3.2 Methodology

To analyse possible translanguaging practices in this course, participant observation was held for a total of 17 hours, of which 11 hours were sound recorded and later transcribed. The information has been collected in a research template with a list of critical incidents, i.e., translanguaging practices which are target of the observation, divided between occurrences associated with the professor and students and occurrences within the various working groups, as well as a list of the difficulties and the possible solutions found. My own participant observation entailed my presence in the classroom, as well as a few content-based or terminological interventions on my part during the lessons.

Furthermore, two questionnaires were submitted. The first questionnaire, which involved the compilation of the individual linguistic repertoires, was submitted to all participants, including the professor and the researcher. From this first questionnaire, Figures 1 and 2 were obtained, while the second questionnaire, submitted to 10 of the participants, through questions in Likert scale, attempted to analyse the students' perceptions on three main themes: their perception of the use of several languages for the analysis of contents during the lessons; their perception of possible linguistic and terminological problems, and their perception of their linguistic and social inclusion. For the present paper, the data sources analysed are participant observation, the sound recordings, the first questionnaire and part of the second questionnaire.

3.3 Results and discussion

All of the factors mentioned so far – the broad linguistic repertoires, the analysis of texts in English, the freedom to speak in different languages and the proposal of producing a final work in three languages – have favoured a very wide use of translanguaging across various languages.

During the hours of observation, many languages were used in written or oral production, and they are summarized in Table 1 below, distinguishing between the *classroom space* and the *team space*, i.e., the several small working teams that were formed during the course.

Table 1: Languages used during classes.

	Classroom space		Team space	
	Writing languages (whiteboard or slide presentation)	Oral languages	Writing languages (notes)	Oral languages
Professor	English French Portuguese	English French Portuguese		English French Portuguese
Students	English French	English French Italian Portuguese Spanish	English French Portuguese	English French Portuguese

Table 1 shows that the students’ multilingual repertoires and the opportunity given to them to speak in different languages has led to a multilingual written and oral communication, meaning that students and professor communicated using various languages: in most cases, English, French and Portuguese, but also Italian and Spanish. Considering that the classroom was composed of almost half Portuguese students and half French students (even if two of the Erasmus students had particular backgrounds: one had Portuguese roots and the other Cape Verde origins, but both had lived in France for many years), it was to be expected that most of the communication occurred in these languages. As regards the use of English, it is a language held in all the participants’ repertoires and its presence in classroom was through texts and scientific terms, but its use was also observed as a language of communication in a team composed of a Portuguese and a French student. The use of Italian, however, is a different case, since there were only two

participants with an advanced Italian competence. Its use was possible only as a result of the incentive to use several languages (especially during the final presentation) which led to a minority language being used within the classroom. Spanish, however, was known to at least an intermediate level by half the participants and it was used on a few occasions, favouring, in this way, a broader and creative use of the various linguistic repertoires of the participants.

The use of languages in which not all participants had an intermediate or advanced competence, namely French, Italian and Spanish, was based on two principles. On the one hand, it was favoured by what is called “receptive multilingualism”, which is a “characteristic of interaction among multilingual speakers” and which “has been promoted as a way to increase mobility and improve communication among European citizens, but it is not common in school contexts yet” (Cenoz and Gorter 2011: 359). On the other hand, the professor always tried to make sure that there was a global understanding within the classroom, through possible translations or explanations.

The multiple translingual practices that occurred during the observation can be summarized in the following list:

1. Reading a text in a language and discussing it in other languages;
2. Use of English key scientific terms in discussion in another language;
3. Metalinguistic reflection about terms in different languages;
4. Use of multilingual repetition and translation across languages;
5. Taking notes in various languages;
6. Reciprocal linguistic assistance in written and oral production;
7. Use of multilingual communication between students and professor;
8. Use of the multilingual repertoires as a resource and as a negotiation for meaning.

Considering these translingual practices and the above discussion of theories, translanguaging is understood here as a set of learning and teaching strategies that students and professors adopt, using all their linguistic repertoires, in order to achieve a deeper shared understanding of the content and a co-construction of knowledge.

Some of the practices are requested by the professor (1 and in part 3, 4, 7, and 8), and others are the result of students' initiatives. Obviously, all these translingual practices have been put in place not separately, but rather mixed up into each other and have included the use of two, three or four languages within the same learning or teaching activity. For instance, in one of the first lessons, students had to read the text *Language Policy* by Bernard Spolsky (2005) in the original language, English, and had to answer a series of questions proposed by the professor in order to stimulate a discussion; these questions were written in Portuguese. Some of the

French students decided to answer the questions orally in French. It was therefore a learning activity in which students used a large part of their multilingual repertoire: reading a text in English, answering in French, questions posed in Portuguese. The analysis of the contents is thus a multilingual one and, precisely for this reason, all of these steps have always been combined with a metalinguistic reflection on the terms used in the various languages.

Speaking of the same text by Spolsky, the professor had asked students to find 5 keywords in the text while he wrote them on the whiteboard. Every student felt free to say the keywords in the language he or she preferred and on the board the following list (1) appeared (originals in italics):

- (1) *Multilinguismo* ‘multilingualism’
Policy
Language management
Ideologias ‘ideologies’
Interaction
Sociolinguistics
Comunicação ‘communication’
Modify
Purismo ‘purism’

This list on the whiteboard was created through the discussion reported below (2), where P is the professor and S are the students. More specifically, Student1, Student3 and Student6 are French students, while Student2 and Student5 are Portuguese students and Student4 is one of two Lusophone students living in France for many years:

[associated audio-1-caruso.mp3 with example (2)]

- (2) Professor [in Portuguese]: *Digam-lá então quais são as vossas palavras chave para sintetizarem um artigo tão complexo, tão grande [...] Então as palavras que vocês acham que são palavras chave.* ‘Tell me, then, what are your keywords to summarise such a complex, large article [...] So, the words that you think are keywords.’
 Student1 [in Portuguese]: *Multilingue.* ‘Multilingual.’
 Professor [in Portuguese]: *Multi?* ‘Multi?’
 Student1 [in Portuguese]: *Multilingue.* ‘Multilingual.’
 Professor [in Portuguese]: *Multilinguismo, foi o que disseste? Multilinguismo.* ‘Multilingualism, is that what you said? Multilingualism.’
 Student2 [in English]: *Policy?*

Student3 [in English]: *Language management.*

Student4 to Student3 [in French]: *Pourquoi en anglais?* ‘Why in English?’

Student3 to Student4 [in French]: *Parce que je ne sais pas.* ‘Because I don’t know.’

[...]

Professor [in Portuguese]: *Mais?* ‘Anything else?’

Student5 [in Portuguese]: *Ideologias.* ‘Ideologies.’

Professor [in Portuguese]: *Ideologias [...] Mais? Eram cinco. Portanto faltam muitas.* ‘Ideologies [...] Anything else? There were five. So many are missing.’

[...]

Student6 [in English]: *Interaction.*

Student6 [in Portuguese and English]: *Sociolinguistic...a. Sociolinguistics.*

Student5 [in Portuguese]: *Comunicação.* ‘Communication.’

Professor [in Portuguese]: *Mais? Nada? S3?* ‘Anything else? Nothing else? S3?’

Student3 [...] *Je dirais modify. Modify.* ‘I would say modify. Modify’

Professor [in English]: *Modify?*

Student3 [in English]: *Yes.*

Professor [in English]: *Why modify?*

Student3 [indistinct]

Student4 [in Portuguese]: *Purismo. Eu diria purismo.* ‘Purism. I would say purism.’

Professor [in Portuguese]: *Purismo.* ‘Purism’.

We see, therefore, that the choice to say the keyword in English, as in the original text, or in Portuguese, the predominant choice for discussion in the classroom, is purely personal. As reported in the discourse, one of the three French students said the keyword in Portuguese and the other two in English, while among Portuguese students one said it in Portuguese and the other in English. Finally, the bilingual student said the keyword in Portuguese and spoke in French with her colleague.

We note, then, total linguistic freedom in expressing themselves with the professor and other students. Most of the Erasmus students from France did not possess an advanced level of Portuguese, though it improved in the course of their stay in Portugal. In this short extract of the conversation, it is possible to observe how Erasmus students felt free to express themselves in French with the teacher, but also among themselves. We can talk, in this case, about what García and Wei (2014: 112–114) define as a “co-learning classroom environment”, which involves teachers and students in the “co-construction of knowledge” and which opens spaces of resistance and social justice, through the use of translanguaging as pedagogy, challenging unequal power relationships.

The process of learning content using several languages often led to confusion in terminology. During the course the word “language” caused some problems when it had to be transposed to Romance languages such as Portuguese, French and Italian, who have two different forms with different meanings corresponding to this English word: *língua/langue/lingua* or *linguagem/langage/linguaggio*. In fact, English terms that also caused problems were *language policy*, *language practices*, *language management* and so on. For this reason, there were many metalinguistic reflections, occurring whenever a terminological problem appeared. These metalinguistic reflections themselves contained translingual practices, with the aim of finding a meaning together. All the students’ multilingual repertoires were used as a resource for the entire classroom.

The following example (3), which is a continuation of the previous discussion, illustrates this collective and multilingual co-construction of meaning.

P is the professor, Student1 and Student3 two French students and Student2 and Student7 two Portuguese students.

[associated audio-2-caruso.mp3 with example (3)]

- (3) Professor [in Portuguese]: *Language management. Aqui havia uma dúvida. Alguém disse, disse em inglês e não sei como dizer em português ou em francês. Como é que se diz language management em português ou em francês?* ‘Language management. Here there was an issue. Someone said, I said it in English and I do not know how to say it in Portuguese or French. How do you say ‘language management’ in Portuguese or in French?’
- Student3 [in French]: *Management linguistique?* ‘Language management?’
- Professor [in Portuguese]: *Management em francês diz-se só management?* ‘Is management in French just management?’
- Student7 [in Portuguese]: *Gestão.* ‘Management.’
- Professor [in Portuguese]: *Diz?* ‘What?’
- Student7 [in Portuguese]: *Gestão.* ‘Management.’
- Professor [in Portuguese]: *Gestão. Portanto seria? Language management? Gestão de quê?* ‘Management. So what would it be? Language management? Management of what?’
- Student7 and Student1 [in Portuguese]: *Da língua?* ‘Of the language?’
- Professor [in Portuguese]: *Da língua?* ‘Of the language?’
- Student2 and Student7 [in Portuguese]: *Das línguas.* ‘Of languages.’
- Professor [in Portuguese and French]: *Das línguas. Gestão das línguas. Gestion des langues.* ‘Of languages. Management of languages. Management of languages.’

In this brief extract, we can see how the professor is concerned about all students' understanding of the terms and how he managed to give rise to a metalinguistic discussion with the participation of both French and Portuguese students (the Italian student was unfortunately absent on the day; on another occasion the professor also asked her how to say the term in Italian). The aim here is to collectively arrive at a meaning and understanding of the terms. Because of an initial terminological incomprehension (a student had pointed out that she did not know how to say "language management" in French), they undertook a metalinguistic and translanguaged reflection and achieved a deeper understanding of the terms. In this case, we can also notice how students felt free to express themselves in their preferred language, though not necessarily their L1. Hence Student2, the French student, presents in unison with Student3, a Portuguese student, a proposal for a keyword in Portuguese.

Thus, as also highlighted in Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2015: 708), "understanding science often requires understanding a set of interconnected concepts that demands specific vocabulary in order to comprehend these interrelationships, and translanguaging helps the professor teach that."

3.4 Final multilingual presentation

One of the three pieces of work for the final evaluation consisted of an oral team presentation in front of the whole class and the teams had to be mixed, composed of both local students and Erasmus students. This presentation included the use of three languages chosen by the students:

- A language for the PowerPoint presentation;
- A language for the oral exposition;
- A language for answering questions from the professor and other students.

In contrast to other translingual practices that occurred more spontaneously, such as the debate above, this learning activity entailed a well-planned and structured use of translanguaging.

As an initial analysis, it was noted that the language choice for each of the three parts of the presentation was not random. On the contrary, it was closely tied to fluency and proficiency in those languages. In fact, for the oral exposition the first language was used in all cases except one; for writing the PowerPoint presentation, the least fluent foreign language was used (which could be deduced during the observation), and to answer questions from the professor and other students, the most fluent foreign language was chosen. This was particularly evident in cases when the PowerPoint slides had been written in

different languages, depending on the student who was speaking at the given moment of exposition.

The ways students expressed their oral expositions in relation to the written PowerPoint presentations were slightly different. The following examples show the different strategies and linguistic implications that the presentation had for the rest of the classroom.

In some cases, students gave a simultaneous paraphrase of what was written in the PowerPoint presentation with a brief development of the information, as Table 2, an example of a Portuguese student, shows (language errors are uncorrected in all data extracts).

[associated audio-3-caruso.mp3 with example (4) in Table 2]

Table 2: Portuguese student: Oral exposition with a simultaneous paraphrase of the text in the slides.

PowerPoint presentation	Oral exposition
<i>What am I looking for in an Academic website?</i>	<i>Queríamos saber o que é que nós estávamos a procura por um site académico de uma universidade. Estas perguntas vão ser respondidas no fim do trabalho.</i> 'We wanted to know what we were looking for in an academic university site. These questions will be answered at the end of the work'
<i>As a foreign student, I can understand the informations given to me?</i>	<i>Como como estudantes estrangeiros podemos perceber podemos ler todas as informações que estão no site podemos percebê-las todas?</i> 'As foreign students, can we understand, can we read all the information posted on the site, can we understand it all?'
<i>As a foreign student, I can understand the informations given to me?</i>	<i>Quantas línguas é que estão no site e quantas é que poderemos... Imaginem se eu sou um aluno italiano se eu percebo mais ou menos inglês e mais ou menos francês, quantas línguas estão disponíveis para mim, para eu compreender as informações?</i> 'How many languages are there on the site and how many can we... Imagine if I am an Italian student, if I understand more or less English and more or less French, how many languages are available to me, as I can understand the information?'
<i>What are the requirements for accessing this kind of course?</i>	<i>Quais são por exemplo os recursos necessários para eu aceder a este tipo de curso e se estão explícitos?</i> 'What are for example the necessary resources to access this type of course and are they explicit?'

(continued)

Table 2: (continued)

PowerPoint presentation	Oral exposition
<i>Is there some kind of feedback (for my concerns and questions)?</i>	<i>E por fim se há feedback, se há emails, se há contactos, se há pessoas que eu possa contactar para medar informações e dúvidas que possa ter.</i> 'Finally, if there is feedback, if there is an email address, if there is contact, if there are people who I can contact to give me information and any questions I may have.'

Table 3: Oral exposition with paraphrase of the questions and their relative answers.

PowerPoint presentation	Oral exposition
<i>Quelle est la langue de l'enseignement?</i> 'What is the language of instruction?'	<i>Então no ensino das línguas, a língua de ensino é o português.</i> 'So, in language teaching, the language of instruction is Portuguese.'
<i>Existe-t-il une attention spéciale pour les élèves étrangers?</i> 'Are there any special considerations for international students?'	<i>Se é feita uma atenção especial por parte alvos face aos alunos estrangeiros é é feita. Os alunos, a UAAlg¹ disponibiliza aulas de português de apoio a estrangeiros, e por vezes também vê também vemos essa essa essa atenção especial por parte dos professores que às vezes eles próprios disponibilizam-se para fazer avaliações na língua materna ou em inglês de modo a facilitar a avaliação do aluno.</i> 'Is there special attention for foreign students? Yes, there is. Students, the University of Algarve offers Portuguese classes to support foreign student, also sometimes you see, we also see, this special attention from teachers, who sometimes propose doing assessments in the foreign students' language or in English in order to facilitate the students' evaluation.'
<i>Quelles sont les langues enseignées?</i> 'What are the languages taught?'	<i>As línguas ensinadas na UAAlg são o inglês, o espanhol, o francês, o italiano, o mandarim e o alemão.</i> 'The languages taught in University of Algarve are English, Spanish, French, Italian, Mandarin and German.'

¹Universidade do Algarve.

Or in other cases, students, in addition to the paraphrases of the question, gave an answer to it, as shown in the following case by another Portuguese student in Table 3:

[associated audio-4-caruso.mp3 with example (5) in Table 3]

Table 4: Oral exposition with direct answers to questions in the slides.

PowerPoint presentation	Oral exposition
<i>Dans quelle langue sont les étudiants reçus?</i> 'In what language are the students received?'	<i>Os estudantes estrangeiros são recebidos com a língua portuguesa: com um bom dia, um olá, boa tarde, mas posteriormente os trabalhadores comunicam na língua mais favorável a esses alunos</i> 'Foreign students are welcomed with the Portuguese language: with a <i>bom dia</i> [good day], an <i>olá</i> [hello], a <i>boa tarde</i> [good afternoon], but later staff workers communicate in the most favourable language for these students'
<i>Quels sont les compétences linguistiques des employés?</i> 'What are the language skills of the staff?'	<i>e em geral esses mesmos trabalhadores têm muito boas competências linguísticas, falando fluentemente inglês, francês, italiano etcétera.</i> 'and in general, these same staff workers have very good language skills, they are fluent in English, French, Italian and so on.'

And finally, in other cases, students do not paraphrase the questions in Power Point, answering directly, as shown in Table 4 in an excerpt from the presentation of another Portuguese student.

[associated audio-5-caruso.mp3 with example (6) in Table 4]

The first two examples show a case of a linguistic transfer from the written PowerPoint presentation in one language to the oral exposition in another language. For students who were attending the presentation, simultaneously listening to and reading it obviously helped in understanding if they did not have a high level of competency in one of the two languages presented. The last example, however, provided an extra cognitive step. In fact, the student who made the presentation read out the French questions written in her PowerPoint and gave answers directly in Portuguese. Hence the students who attended were also obliged to perform an extra linguistic process, listening to the answers and reading the questions in two different languages. Moreover, this may assist in the understanding process. Portuguese or Italian students who did not have advanced competence in French (4 of 15) may have understood questions written in French through the Portuguese answers, while French students reading the French questions might be supported in their understanding of the oral answers in Portuguese. Through this multilingual practice, then, well-structured cognitive linguistic processes were activated by students.

3.5 Questionnaires

In order to obtain deeper insight into students’ perceptions, they were issued with a questionnaire containing 10 questions on their perceptions and opinions on language use in the course. Below are the results of two of these questions.

The first one (Table 5) concerns the relevance of using several languages during the course to students’ academic education. In order to avoid confusion, the term translanguaging was not used, opting instead for the term multilingualism – a term well known to students, explained simply as “the use of several languages”.

Table 5: Question 1 of the questionnaire.

Question	<p>1. <i>Achas o “multilinguismo” desta unidade curricular relevante para a tua formação académica (o facto de utilizarem mais do que uma língua durante as aulas)?</i></p> <p>☐ <i>Nada relevante</i> ☐ <i>pouco relevante</i> ☐ <i>indiferente</i> ☐ <i>relevante</i> ☐ <i>muito relevante</i></p> <p><i>Porquê?</i></p>
	<p>[1. Do you think that the “multilingualism” of this course is relevant to your academic education (the use of more than one language during classes)?</p> <p>☐ Not relevant ☐ Slightly relevant ☐ Indifferent ☐ Relevant ☐ Very relevant</p> <p>Why?]</p>
Answers	<p><i>Não relevante</i> 0</p> <p>Not relevant 0</p> <p><i>Pouco relevante</i> 0</p> <p>Slightly relevant 0</p> <p><i>Indiferente</i> 1</p> <p>Indifferent 1</p> <p><i>Relevante</i> 3</p> <p>Relevant 3</p>
	<p><i>Não quero trabalhar neste domínio.</i></p> <p>I do not want to work in this field.</p> <p><i>Permite-me de “jongler” entre as línguas.</i></p> <p>It allows me to “jongler” [French: ‘juggle’] among languages.</p> <p><i>Sim ajuda na aprendizagem.</i></p> <p>Yes it helps to learn.</p> <p><i>Permite comunicar com várias línguas ao mesmo tempo, o que acaba por desenvolver as capacidades dos alunos em cada língua e em conseguir alternar de uma língua para outra na mesma conversação.</i></p> <p>It allows communication with several languages at the same time, which ends up developing students’ abilities in each language and allows them to switch from one language to another in the same conversation.</p>

(continued)

Table 5: (continued)

Muito relevante 6	<i>Vivemos num Mundo completamente “aberto” e penso que eu os meus observam a Europa como possível local de trabalho.</i>
Very relevant 6	<i>We live in a completely “open” world and I think I see Europe as a possible destination for work.</i>
	<i>Acaba por ter efeitos bastante positivos para quem estuda línguas, pois assim pratica-se a expressão e compreensão oral.</i>
	<i>It ends up having rather positive effects for those who study languages, because it practises both oral expression and comprehension.</i>
	<i>Porque estudo num curso de línguas e nesse curso o multilinguismo é importante.</i>
	<i>Because I study a language course and multilingualism is important on this course.</i>
	<i>Eu estou a estudar varias línguas e para mim o jeito de valorizar minhas competências e de poder mostrar que eu sou capaz de comunicar em varias línguas e que posso adaptar-me em diferentes situações de comunicação.</i>
	<i>I am studying several languages and for me it is a way to evaluate my competences, and to show that I am able to communicate in several languages and that I can adapt myself to different communicative situations.</i>
	<i>Porque vejo o meu futuro muito ligado aos ambientes multilingues e multiculturais, como é esse o âmbito dos meus estudos.</i>
	<i>Because I see my future closely linked to multilingual and multicultural environments, as this is my field of studies.</i>
	<i>Porque desenvolvemos capacidades comunicativas que são bastante úteis na nossa área.</i>
	<i>Because we have developed communicative skills that are very useful in our field.</i>

As the answers show, 9 of 10 students consider the use of several languages during the classes to be “relevant” or “very relevant”, while one student claims to be indifferent to the matter. The main reason why they think multilingualism is relevant is the fact that it may be useful for them as students studying a degree in languages. One of them also claims that the use of several languages helps the process of understanding.

The second question analysed (Table 6) asks the students’ opinion about the opportunity to use this method in other university courses.

Table 6: Question 5 of the questionnaire.

Question	<p>5. <i>Concordarias se nas aulas universitárias cada um pudesse utilizar a sua própria língua (na medida do possível) ou preferirias que se concordasse uma língua no início e que se mantivesse?</i></p> <p>☐ <i>várias línguas são admitidas</i> ☐ <i>indiferente</i> ☐ <i>só uma língua</i></p> <p><i>Porquê?</i></p>	
	<p>[5. Would you agree to everyone using their own language in university classes (as much as possible) or would you prefer a language to be agreed upon at the beginning of the course and maintained throughout?</p> <p>☐ several languages allowed ☐ indifferent ☐ only one language</p> <p>Why?]</p>	
Answers	<p><i>Várias línguas</i> 6</p> <p>Several languages 6</p>	<p><i>O uso de várias línguas é enriquecedor para o perfil académico dos alunos.</i></p> <p>The use of several languages is enriching for the academic profiles of the students.</p> <p><i>As línguas se enriquecem mutuamente e o conhecimento também. É sempre bom valorizar as particularidades de cada um.</i></p> <p>Languages mutually enrich each other and knowledge too. It is always good to value the particularities of each one.</p> <p><i>Tudo mundo pode compreender a aula.</i></p> <p>Everyone can understand the lesson.</p> <p><i>Porque cada um está mais confortável na sua própria língua e assim pode expor melhor o seu ponto de vista.</i></p> <p>Because everyone is more comfortable in his/her own language and thus he/she can better explain his/her point of view.</p> <p><i>Porque algumas vezes nessa maneira evitam-se incompreensões. Do outro lado, porém, acho que todos deveriam esforçar-se de aprender a língua do país em que estudam.</i></p> <p>Because sometimes this ensures misunderstandings are avoided. On the other hand, however, I think everyone should strive to learn the language of the country in which he/she studies.</p>

(continued)

Table 6: (continued)

Indiferente 2 Indifferent 2	<p><i>Não me faz diferença, desde que compreendesse a língua que fosse utilizada.</i></p> <p>It makes no difference to me, as long as I understand the language that is used.</p> <p><i>Só uma língua é bom, para aprender bem esta língua. Várias línguas é bom, para ter vocabulário em cada língua.</i></p> <p>Only one language is good, in order to learn this language well. Several languages are good, in order to have vocabulary in each language.</p>
Só uma língua 2 Only one language 2	<p><i>Preferia que se concordasse só numa língua seria mais fácil, mas seria egoísta da minha parte pois iria perturbar a aprendizagem de alunos estrangeiros e as aulas têm de estar ao alcance de toda a gente.</i></p> <p>I would prefer that only one language were agreed upon, it would be easier, but it would be selfish on my part because it would impede the foreign students' learning and classes should be accessible to everyone.</p> <p><i>Só uma língua para melhor aprender e não confundir.</i> Only one language in order to learn better and not to get confused.</p>

Six in ten students agreed to allowing the use of several languages in university courses and they support their answers with four key reasons: it enriches and enhances individual traits, it helps comprehension and avoids misunderstandings, and it facilitates the inclusion of all students, through a language-comfort approach. Two students claim to be indifferent and another two state they would prefer the use of a single language, saying that the use of more than one language may lead to confusion and incomprehension.

The students' answers to these two questions appear to show the use of translingual practices is broadly accepted by this cohort and considered as relevant to their academic education. It could even be viewed as a good practice which could be extended to other academic contexts.

4 Conclusions

In answer to the research questions – which translingual practices appear in this case study, how they are developed and what their pedagogical implications are – a series of translingual practices that occurred during the observation of lessons

was identified and enumerated, postulating their pedagogical implications. The translingual practices were widely employed and it was noticed that their use is actually mixed up in what García (2012: 1–4) defines as a “dynamic bilingualism”, in this case not merely bilingual, but rather dynamic multilingualism.

This study, in fact, differs from other studies on translanguaging as pedagogical practices, because unlike the other studies that analyse case studies where translanguaging occurs across two languages (except Kypö et al. 2015 who analyse the development of multilingual and multicultural competence, in part through translanguaging), in this case there were more than two languages involved. The students’ individual repertoires were more engaged and the creation of a co-learning environment was possible through the collective repertoire of the classroom.

Furthermore, the choice to use multilingual communication within the classroom was a clear decision of language policy made by the single professor. It represents, then, a possible alternative solution to other types of language policies which consider the use of a single lingua franca, in most cases English, where there are different linguistic repertoires within the same classroom. Considering the fact that most of the texts proposed for analysis during the course were in English, the potential of using English as a single lingua franca would have been an easy, but also too simplistic decision. Indeed, it would not have favoured the use and development of each individual linguistic repertoire, nor would it have stimulated a series of metalinguistic reflections about contents and related linguistic issues. In this way, the use of translanguaging allowed a greater equity in the classroom, allowing a deeper inclusion of all participants, either local or Erasmus, because any monolingualism (in English or Portuguese) would have favoured part of the classroom, leaving others at a disadvantage.

It is in this sense that this study presents an example of pedagogical outcomes implicated by the use of translanguaging: the use of many of the students’ linguistic repertoires, also associated with the use of texts in English, meant that in fact, several questions on terminology and content arose, leading to reflections, discussions and ultimately greater, deeper understanding of the content. The use of translanguaging obliged students to discuss terms and the content they conveyed, through a collective and metalinguistic reflection, facilitating a co-construction of knowledge, as for example regarding the term “language” and its corresponding *língua/langue/lingua* and *linguagem/langage/linguaggio*.

Moreover, the benefits of these pedagogical practices can also be inferred from students’ answers to the second questionnaire, in which they focussed on the usefulness of these practices in developing of academic competence, as well as how they aid a deeper comprehension of the content.

Finally, both the spontaneous use of translanguaging and its planned and structured use throughout the final presentation have a clear pedagogical implication, having encouraged the development of what is known as *multilingual competence* or *multicompetence*, as originally defined by Cook (1999) and currently defined by Franceschini (2011: 351) as “at the same time a tool and a state and [which] relates to the complex, flexible, integrative, and adaptable behaviour which multilingual individuals display”, which helps students to become *plurilingual people*, i.e. “individuals with knowledge of an extended and integrated linguistic repertoire who are able to use the appropriate linguistic variety for the appropriate occasion”.

Thus, the study contributes to existing research on translanguaging and its pedagogical implications in higher education. However, this research was limited to a single case study involving only one class and one academic discipline. Further research including larger samples across other various disciplines will be necessary in order to provide a wider view on this research area.

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