

1 Towards a Practical Theory of the Translanguaging of Education: The Significance of Evidence-Based Deliberative Advocacy

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Mae trawsieithu ar wefusau pawb
Translanguaging is on everyone's lips

The Paradox of Translanguaging: A Thriving and Diversifying Paradigm Wanting Advocacy

Translanguaging is – in more than the figurative sense of the sayings above – on everyone's lips. Emerging from the interface of Welsh and English, what was once a neologism has become a recognisable and diversified paradigm that is shaping approaches to multilingualism and language more broadly beyond its time and place of origin (Baker, 2001; Lewis *et al.*, 2012; Li, 2014; Singleton & Flynn, 2022; Williams, 1994). As a philosophy and a practical theory of language, as a pedagogical practice and as a research methodology (Donley, 2022; García, 2023; Li, 2018), this paradigm aims to offer an alternative to both monolingualism on the one side, and on the other side, additive or multiple solitudes approaches to multilingualism (Cummins, 2019). In contrast to such serial approaches to multilingualism, in which languages and linguistic identities are separated into insulated silos, translanguaging covers a spectrum of positions that foreground the entanglement and permeability

among languages – from individual repertoires and practices to social interactions, and from language learning to teaching methodologies. Like other influential contemporary approaches to language (for conversation analysis, see [Stokoe \(2018\)](#), for everyday argumentation, see [Toulmin \(1958\)](#)), the translanguaging paradigm prioritises applied over theoretical linguistics, *parole* over *langue*. With that comes a focus on speakers' agency, practices and identities in selecting from and applying what is sometimes referred to as their full linguistic repertoires (e.g. [Choi, 2025](#); [Creese & Blackledge, 2010a](#); [García, 2009](#); [O'Rourke & Pujolar, 2015](#)).

Depending on the specific positions they represent within the broader paradigm, advocates of translanguaging have variously claimed that such an integrative approach to languages in educational settings and beyond can achieve numerous goals: it can advance language learning; foster metalinguistic awareness; support content learning; promote academic success; expand options for meaning-making; increase learners' engagement and investment; enhance socioemotional connectedness; facilitate the construction of learners' identities; maintain minority and/or heritage languages; and enhance learners' ability to understand social justice (for a systematic review of these claims, see [Zhang et al., 2024](#)).

Expanding the perspective to a *longue durée* that also includes different regions of the world, the current surge of interest in translanguaging can be seen as part of a much longer and more diverse account of how humans use symbols in their relationships with each other. In this vein, some advocates of the translanguaging paradigm emphasise the importance of a diachronic linguistic account of the hybrid interweaving of languages in the lives of individuals and communities – for India, see [Khumbchandani \(2012\)](#); for southern Africa, see [Makalela \(2016\)](#). These accounts challenge the hierarchising taxonomisation of languages into discontinuous systems of world disclosure as proposed by, for example, [von Humboldt \(1996\)](#) and Heidegger (see [Lafont, 2000](#)). Combining their fluid depiction of languages with critical pedagogy ([Freire, 1970](#)), critical educational linguistics ([Pennycook, 2022](#)) and a decolonising stance ([Wa Thiong'o, 1998](#)), some of these advocates of translanguaging see in it a resource to counter the instrumentalisation of language that constructs culturalised, ethnicised, tribalised, racialised or nationalist identities ([Flores & Rosa, 2015](#); [Poza, 2017](#)). Instead, challenging what they call Eurocentric epistemologies and ontologies of language, they use these historical linguistic ethnographies of interdependencies to argue in favour of ubuntu notions of linguistic and social relationality ([Makalela, 2016](#)) and to advocate a current translanguaging education that empowers modern plurilinguals to participate in contemporary superdiverse multilingual societies ([Lin, 2015](#)). Foregrounding the translanguaging practices of societies not wholly colonised by monological imperialism, they argue, can contribute to the

‘decolonization of contemporary multilingual communities’ (Liyanage & Canagarajah, 2024: 12).

Much as this paradigm has driven interest and research, as well as diversification and specialisation across disciplines, it remains plagued by a curious paradox. A gulf persists between, on the one hand, normative monolingual and additive multilingual ideologies and practices in many educational institutions and, on the other, infinite occurrences of spontaneous translanguaging in everyday practice, vibrant research and some high-level policy in favour of translanguaging (Beacco & Coste, 2017). Notwithstanding ‘favourable attitudes to multilingualism’ among teachers, as well as a ‘rhetorical celebration of multilingualism in the policy documents’ reported for some settings (Costley & Leung, 2020: 10), deliberate and systematic use of translanguaging in formal education is still widely deemed injudicious. Indeed, in educational settings ‘translanguaging is rarely accepted as a legitimate practice that students should understand how to do’ (García & Li, 2014: 132). This incongruity is especially curious in that the term and inspiring force that gave its name to this paradigm – *trawsieithu* – hails from educational practice. This makes it all the more pressing to understand and address the reasons for the persistence of monolingualism and additive multilingualism, especially among stakeholders in education who are central to mediating between theory and practice.

Focusing on educator practitioners reflects the serious consideration that must be given to their attitudes, beliefs and practices; it by no means implies denouncing them as the sole or primary obstacle to the implementation of a promising educational paradigm. On the contrary, it has been argued that given appropriate support, these practitioners can contribute to the legitimisation of translanguaging in formal education (Gorter & Arocena, 2020; Hamman-Ortiz & Romero, 2025; Liu & Fang, 2022). What vexes these practitioners may reflect their own experiences of translanguaging, their beliefs and attitudes about multilingualism and (language) learning, their own competence in various languages and in diverse methodologies of (language) teaching, as well as their positions and views on the roles of languages and education systems (Wang *et al.*, 2025). Policymakers may emphasise what they see as the need for educational institutions to reproduce monolingual individuals so as to optimise collective intelligibility, secure linguistic congruency between society and its members, and ensure cohesion in superdiverse polities. Curriculum designers may prioritise the need to develop high-level native-speaker-like competences in each language, which they consider to be best attainable through adherence to immersive and pure monolingual instruction in the target language. While teachers who focus on classroom management and teaching methodology may prefer established monolingual pedagogies, especially if they have not received training in translanguaging education and if the education system restricts their autonomy to adapt to the specific linguistic contexts in their environments.

Against this background, this chapter – and, by extension, this book – develops a practical theory of translanguaging education. Central to such a practical theory, is deliberative advocacy grounded in sound empirical evidence. Applied to education, *this book calls for the development of a practical theory of the translanguaging of education informed by deliberative advocacy and based on rigorous evidence*. The aim of such a practical theory of the translanguaging of education is to close the gap between the abundant spontaneous translanguaging in everyday life and current reservations regarding the deliberate use of translanguaging in education. Thereby, a practical theory of the translanguaging of education may contribute to the legitimization of translanguaging as a mindset and practice within education. This includes the use of multiple languages in learning and teaching and, beyond that, reconstituting the ways in which learners and teachers view the relations among languages, language as such and semiotic systems more broadly. Ultimately, this could contribute to a transformation of the symbols, selves and societies which educational institutions serve and reproduce. In this process of the translanguaging of education, educators, as practitioners, play a crucial role, which is why developing their understanding of translanguaging and their teaching methodologies is vital.

Themes of current research

The indispensability of ‘sound empirical scholarship in advocacy for pluralist language ideologies’ is undisputed (MacSwan & Rolstad, 2024: 719; see also Liyanage & Canagarajah, 2024). Burgeoning research in the second decade of the 21st century (Liu & Fang, 2023) has broadened the evidence base while also animating discussions on its implications for theories of translanguaging and its applications. Databases now identify translanguaging in the titles of more than 1200 documents (Web of Science, 1277; Scopus, 1,717; MLA International Bibliography, 1900 – databases consulted in May 2025), and translanguaging is among the most explored areas in linguistics, with three papers devoted to the topic ranking among the 20 most highly cited in linguistics (Yan & Zhang, 2023). Reflecting this trend, translanguaging has been the subject of general and topical systematic reviews. These range from sociolinguistics, covering sociocultural practices (Lauwo, 2021) and decoloniality (Chaka, 2020), to psycholinguistics, covering the communicative practices of plurilinguals (Golovko & Sheiko, 2021) and the bilingual lexicon (Bosma *et al.*, 2023), and educational linguistics covering language learning (Bonacina-Pugh *et al.*, 2021; Rodríguez *et al.*, 2019), the content and language of integrated learning (Lisaitė & Smits, 2022), teachers’ translanguaging practices (Jeon *et al.*, 2025), writing pedagogies (Salmerón, 2022; Sun, 2025), translanguaging pedagogy (Conteh, 2018; Hamman-Ortiz *et al.*, 2025), pedagogical translanguaging (Prilutskaya, 2021), translinguistics (Won Lee & Dovchin, 2020), and translanguaging involving English in particular (Cenoz & Gorter, 2025; Sah & Kubota, 2022). In a nutshell, inquiries into

translanguaging are now so extensive and the paradigm evolving at such a pace that an introduction like this can, at best, give a broad indication of selected claims made regarding this paradigm.

Accompanying the growing interest among researchers, inquiries into translanguaging have seen diversification, specialisation and also transdisciplinary collaboration. The translanguaging paradigm has driven innovation in theory and empirical research across domains and territories, expanding our knowledge about translanguaging in many directions: this ranges from subcortical malleability (Yee *et al.*, 2024), to cultural identities (Creese & Blackledge, 2010a), everyday translangual practices (Canagarajah, 2013) and schools (García, 2009, 2017) in various parts of the world (e.g. for Arabic in Asia, see Bin-Tahir *et al.*, 2018; for minority languages and Spanish in the Southern Cone of Latin America, see Bonnin & Unamuno, 2021).

Given the emergence of translanguaging in teaching methodology, and given the importance of language in education, research on translanguaging has unsurprisingly been particularly strong in education. Initial inquiry into translanguaging as a practice in educational contexts soon expanded to interest in multiple language practices involving diverse stakeholders in education, then extending to the explicit and implicit language policies that facilitate or inhibit translanguaging in schools (Canagarajah, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2010b; Mazak & Carroll, 2017; Paulsrud *et al.*, 2017). Following disciplinary lines within education, translanguaging has been explored in subjects such as geography, science and mathematics education (Essien, 2024; Jakobsson *et al.*, 2021; Karlsson, 2025; Maruma & Motlhaka, 2020), as well as in language learning (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022).

Linking translanguaging to other concepts and contexts in linguistics has opened up further avenues of inquiry. One such a concept is the notion of translanguaging instinct, which dialogues with the notion of language instinct (Pinker, 2003) and denotes the compulsion among learners to use multiple codes in a multisensory and multimodal manner (Li, 2018). Another such concept is translanguaging space, which engages with the spatial turn (Lefebvre, 2009) and refers to transformative social spaces created by multilingual users in which they can integrate spaces and linguistic codes in creative and critical ways (Li, 2011). Some other recent directions in which the notion of translanguaging has been developed highlight transformation (Li, 2011; Moore *et al.*, 2020), performance (Zhu & Li, 2022) and translanguaging as a rhizomatic multiplicity (Heltai, 2023). Importantly, investigations into translanguaging have also benefitted from transdisciplinary approaches to everyday practice (Mazzaferro, 2018) and translation (Sato, 2022).

This lively interest in translanguaging includes critical debates ranging from the sympathetic to the oppositional (for a recent example, see the contribution by Treffers-Daller (2025) to *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* and the diverse responses to it). One discussion problematises the various conceptualisations of the term translanguaging and centres on

the question: What precisely is meant by translanguaging? These largely theoretical and conceptual discussions concern the broad semantic field that the term has acquired, which risks overextension and generates divergent usage (Treffers-Daller, 2024a). While some consciously debate the concept with the aim of further developing it in diverse directions (Lemke & Lin, 2022), others consider this polysemy a hurdle for consistent theorisation, operationalisation, discussion and the comparability of research and practice and doubt whether the new terminology and paradigm has contributed meaningfully to pre-existing knowledge (Backus, 2025; Berthele, 2025).

A second area of debate addresses the evidence base on which the calls for translanguaging rest and centres on the question: What evidence exists to support the various claims made regarding translanguaging listed at the start of this chapter? Here, the issue is to what extent the empirical findings are conclusive regarding the precise contribution that translanguaging can make to language learning and education and to social and political transformation (Jaspers, 2018; MacSwan & Rolstad, 2024).

Related to this, a third area of discussion addresses the question: How are symbolic and social transformation related? Here, deliberation focuses on whether accounts of translanguaging pay adequate attention to the relationships between the symbolic and material dimensions of society that are crucial for participation and emancipation. This includes criticisms of insufficient attention to the relations between translanguaging and commodification (Namatama & Jimaima, 2020). It also includes criticism of the prioritisation of the recognition of diverse symbolic systems and identities at the cost of the redistribution of material resources (Block, 2020). Overall, these sceptics point out that the transformation of symbolic systems might well be a necessary element of social transformation, yet it is not a sufficient one.

A fourth area of discussion concerns the attitudes and practices of stakeholders and centres on the question: To what extent is translanguaging desirable? These deliberations centre on how to deal with the possible misalignment between welcoming the hybridity associated with the translanguaging paradigm on the one hand, and some educators' fidelity to modelling the monolingual ideal, as well as some learners' and parents' aspiration to language purism, on the other (Dovchin & Wang, 2024; Liu & Fang, 2022).

A fifth area of debate concerns the question: How should relations between translanguaging and other language goals be addressed? Some worry that, under certain conditions, translanguaging may 'unintentionally reproduce advantages and reinforce inequalities and the hegemony of majority languages' (Paradowski, 2021: 246). These sceptics are concerned that a unified notion of language that defies distinguishing among named languages used in society collides with notions of language rights and language revitalisation that are premised on the naming and promotion of distinct languages (Turner & Lin, 2024).

Overall, these discussions can be welcomed, whether they reflect a normal paradigm-internal diversification of positions among the advocates of translanguaging or whether they constitute more adversarial criticisms that force these advocates to strengthen their research and sharpen their theories and concepts. In both cases, these debates reflect acceptance of the significance of evidence-based deliberation among all stakeholders regarding the theory, methods and goals associated with the translanguaging paradigm.

The next section of this chapter sketches the outlines of a practical theory of translanguaging and its connections to evidence-based deliberative advocacy. It is followed by a section that delineates a range of claims and precepts that have been proposed within the translanguaging of education paradigm, which are the subject of empirical and theoretical scrutiny and deliberation. The section thereafter argues that the theorisation and empirical findings, the emphasis on educators and their development, and deliberation in the various chapters of this book further contribute to a practical theory of translanguaging education. The penultimate section offers an overview of the chapters of the book, and the chapter concludes with a brief synthesis of the contributions, suggestions for further research and an emphasis on the need for advocacy that not only allows for spontaneous translanguaging but also systematically develops translanguaging competences with a broader educational intent.

The Emergence of a Practical Theory of Translanguaging Education

The features of practical theories

In an influential article, Li Wei (2018) describes translanguaging as a practical theory of language – which Saner (this volume) argues belongs to the broader domain of a practical theory of semiotising. Practical theories are of special interest to disciplines with a strong applied orientation, from communication and linguistics to education (Craig, 1987; Hirst, 1983). A common commitment of practical theories is the close integration of theory and practice, which is a feature shared by Confucianism and Maoism – to which Li (2018) refers – as well as by critical theory (Habermas, 1978; Spolsky, 2022), contemporary education sciences (Li, 2020) and evidence-based educational linguistics (Spolsky *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, in a practical theory of language – as opposed to theoretical linguistics – practice directs theory and theory serves practice. This can include the following four ideas: that practitioners' theorisation of what they do and empirical evidence regarding practice collected by observers are the starting points of theory; that theory is developed for the sake of practical application; that the validation of theory lies in its corroboration in practice; or that the validation of theory lies in its ability to transform practice (Spolsky, 2022).

Among the various practical theories that have been distinguished (see [Barge & Craig \(2009\)](#) for an overview), practical theories of the reconstructive kind have been particularly influential in illuminating the interconnections between language and society. From descriptions of actual practice, reconstructive practical theories infer prescriptions for transformative practice. Following the methods of rational reconstruction, these practical theories make explicit the implicit norms that inform practices ([Brandom, 2001](#); [Habermas, 1983](#)), with the aim of rationally convincing agents to deliberately and coherently actualise what is already implicit in what they do already. By shuttling ‘between interpretative empirical studies of particular communicative practices and an evolving normative model’ such reconstruction ‘conceptualizes values and principles (or “situated ideals”) already partly implicit in those practices’ ([Barge & Craig, 2009: 64](#)).

In such a rational reconstruction, the shift from description (what is the case) to practical transformation (what ought to be the case) is mediated through rational deliberation (for an account of a theory of argumentation and of deliberative democracy, on which the present account of deliberation in practical theory draws, see [Benhabib, 1994](#); [Habermas, 1984, 2022, 2024](#)). A rational reconstructive practical theory of language holds that ‘deliberation about linguistic rules is not only possible but can be informed systematically by linguistic research’ ([Craig, 1987: 8](#)), chiming with the view that the task of educational theory is to develop ‘rationally defensible principles for educational practice’ ([Hirst, 1983](#)). An essential feature of rational deliberation, as proposed by Habermas and others (for an overview, see also [Van Eemeren *et al.* \(2013\)](#)), is that it is sound – i.e. that it is guided by the unforced force of the better argument and based in the best available evidence. A second characteristic, namely that deliberations are open to all stakeholders, resonates with the growing awareness in educational linguistics of the importance of joint advocacy among diverse stakeholders, ranging from researchers (e.g. [Liu *et al.*, 2020](#); [Treffers-Daller, 2024a, 2024b](#); [Anderson, 2024](#)) to policymakers, curriculum designers, school leaders, teacher educators and practitioner teachers ([Martín Rojo *et al.*, 2025](#); [Bigelow & Enns-Kananen, 2015](#)).

Clarifying the precepts of a rigorous practical theory of translanguaging education

Much as the translanguaging paradigm may want to prioritise applied over theoretical linguistics, the latter cannot be totally ignored. On the contrary, an adequate practical theory of the translanguaging of education typically needs to integrate two sets of requirements: theoretical and practical ones. Regarding the former, theory is expected to comprise clear and consistently applicable concepts and principles that facilitate the formulation of plausible conjectures. In addition to being internally coherent, practical theory must not only be consistent with current

knowledge, it must also be able to explain such knowledge. The conjectures it facilitates must be truth apt (i.e. capable of being true or false) and thus corroboratable and falsifiable. Regarding the practical requirements, practical theory is expected to propose aims that are deliberately justifiable. In addition, the findings must be actionable and the methods to achieve the goals feasible. Building on some of these features of practical theory in general, this section outlines some of the issues that must be clarified to further advance a rigorous practical theory of the translanguaging of education. It identifies some potential topics and broad questions as well as some of the current stances on these topics that stakeholders need to address in their evidence-based deliberations on the translanguaging of education.

Relationships among languages in different domains: From more fixed to more fluid

A practical theory of the translanguaging of education would have to articulate a coherent theory of the relations among languages and base its theoretical concepts in evidence. Regarding the relationships among languages, views within the translanguaging of education paradigm range from considering languages as more fixed to more fluid (Bonacina-Pugh *et al.*, 2021).

The more fixed view has been described in Bakhtinian terms as ‘heteroglossic multilingual’ (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021: 44). According to this view, it is possible to identify socially distinguished and nameable languages, and it may sometimes be useful or even necessary to assert these distinguishing categories, for example, when language rights are at stake (Auer, 2025). Although, according to this view, languages are distinguishable, the boundaries between them are nevertheless permeable and soft (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020).

The more fluid position, in turn, leans towards a deconstructive stance (Derrida, 1982; Otheguy *et al.*, 2015; García & Otheguy, 2020). Replacing the linguistic occupation with different language systems as ‘discrete, bounded, impermeable, autonomous systems’ (Creese & Blackledge, 2015: 25), the fluid approach prioritises the flows in the practice of meaning-making that draw on communicators’ whole range of signs, which form one integrated or unitary system (Bonacina-Pugh *et al.*, 2021).

It is likely that at least some progress towards clarifying how languages relate to each other may emerge as proponents of these diverging positions distinguish more clearly which domains they are addressing. This is because claims whether languages can be distinguished or whether they form one integrated unitary system can be interpreted as any or a combination of the following: that there are different languages is a social construct rather than a linguistic characteristic of languages; that language users may not always distinguish between the languages they use; and that languages are not neurologically distinct (Auer, 2025; Kootstra & Poarch, 2025; Torregrossa *et al.*, 2025).

Scope of the paradigm: From translanguaging to transsemiotisation

A practical theory of the translanguaging of education would also have to be clear about the scope of the phenomena it seeks to analyse and explain: to what extent does it restrict itself to language and to what extent does it extend to the relations between languages and other symbolic systems such as numbers, music, and images?

While most translanguaging of education positions acknowledge that languages are part of the whole range of signs covered by semiotics, they weight this differently. This is reflected in the terminologies they favour: while translanguaging is, strictly speaking, restricted to language, transsemiotising explicitly includes all signs and emphasises the interconnections among them. Correspondingly, translanguaging approaches often start with language and deal with non-linguistic signs as an addition, whereas transsemiotising approaches start with signs as such and deal with language as a subclass of all signs. This difference in scope, which can imply different concepts, methods and pedagogies, applies as much to analogue communications (see [Figure 1.1](#)) as it does to multimodal digital signs.

Preference for the transsemiotising approach reflects the ubiquity of new communicative practices facilitated by readily accessible and easy-to-use digital technologies on mobile devices that mesh linguistic with other audio and visual symbolic systems such as music, icons and video ([Lin, 2015, 2019; Ruiz de Zarobe & Querol-Julián, 2025](#)). Individual studies have shown the value of such a transsemiotic approach in which translanguaging is one aspect in shedding light on learners’ agency ([Chen et al., 2022](#)) and digital citizenship ([Gu et al., 2023](#)). One review, for example, discusses how emerging bilingual learners translanguaged while producing digital products to ‘access and establish information, collaborate with classmates,



Figure 1.1 Music student taking notes: a topic heading in German and Latin is followed by an anatomical sketch and explanations in German and some Korean in (Hangul script), partly ordered by means of Arabic numerals. © Edina Krompák

and interact with communities', as well as how these students translanguaged within these digital products themselves to 'express identity, add nuance to and augment meaning, and engage audiences' (Pacheco *et al.*, 2022: 389). While another review, which examined inquiries into digital translanguaging pedagogy, digital translanguaging in writing and digital multimodal composing among learners and teachers, advocates for teacher training that empowers educators to critically and fluently engage students in transemiotising (Lu & Gu, 2024).

Ideologies and methodologies: From pedagogical translanguaging to translanguaging corriente

Unsurprisingly, a range of approaches exist regarding educators' language ideologies and methodologies. Accordingly, for a practical theory of the translanguaging of education to be coherent and applicable, it would be necessary to clarify the relations among these positions as well as the feasibility of each. Sharing a large common base of views on suitable translanguaging pedagogies, the differences among the various approaches are largely a matter of degree and emphasis.

Elaborated discussions of teaching methods is especially evident in pedagogical translanguaging, one of the distinctive positions in this broader paradigm. Within the pedagogical translanguaging approach, the focus is exclusively on educational contexts, and its purpose is decidedly pedagogical (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017, 2021). This pedagogical purpose includes developing both multilingual and multiliteracy competences as well as subject and 'content competences in school contexts' (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021: 1) (see also Cenoz *et al.*, 2021; Thomas *et al.*, 2022). While they agree that pedagogy is crucial, some advocates of the translanguaging of education link pedagogy to the broader social aims of education and the role of languages in it (Hurst & Mona, 2017). There is also broad consensus that the goals of translanguaging are pursued by 'activating multilingual speakers' resources' (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021: 1). Concretely, such activation is pursued by explicitly and systematically building on learners' pre-existing knowledge of and about languages rather than bracketing these. Proponents of the view that languages are distinguishable, even if entangled with each other, typically also advocate for 'instructional strategies which integrate two or more languages' (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021: 18). This includes using different languages for input and output.

Where views on learning and teaching do diverge, this largely concerns the degree of planning and steering. While some focus on the deliberate and systematic planning and steering by teachers (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021, 2022), the translanguaging corriente approach also emphasises learners' initiative and assigns a greater role to the unplanned spontaneity associated with everyday translanguaging outside school (García *et al.*, 2016).

Planned teacher-led and spontaneous student-led pedagogies are, however, not as mutually exclusive in all regards as some discussions

suggest. Accordingly, an important task for a practical theory of translanguaging education would be to clarify an appropriate mix of the two teaching methodologies. This includes when to give priority, how to do so, and how much priority should be given to either the planned teacher-led or spontaneous learner-led approaches during individual lessons as well as throughout a curriculum.

Aims of translanguaging: From affirmation to transformation

While advocates for a practical theory of translanguaging broadly agree that theory and practice should be closely interlinked, views differ on what precisely this entails. In particular, a practical theory of the translanguaging of education would have to be clear about what it aims to achieve and the corresponding practices that serve those aims, be it for education more narrowly or society more broadly.

Some of the practical effects that have been claimed for translanguaging include that it ‘assist[s] and motivate[s] learning, and deepen[s] meaning, understandings and knowledge’; enhances ‘metalinguistic awareness and linguistic consciousness, including critical sociolinguistic consciousness’; ‘affirm[s] bilingual identities’; improves ‘social interaction and communication’, which includes cooperation between schools and homes and, finally, that it empowers minoritised communities (García, 2017: 261). Those who focus more strictly on pedagogy emphasise the need to develop translanguaging policies and practices that will support the declared pedagogical goals.

Others see the need for broader transformation of the education system to develop a translanguaging mindset and normalise translanguaging in both policy and the practices of individuals, institutions and society. To them, translanguaging is not only ‘a scaffold to learn the dominant ways of using language; and it is not solely a pedagogy for those who are least able to succeed’. Instead, it is ‘a way to enable language-minoritised communities who have been marginalised in schools and society to finally see (and hear) themselves as they are, as bilinguals who have a right to their own language practices [...] and free to use their own practices to expand understandings’. In this regard, translanguaging raises ‘awareness of social justice in multilingual educational contexts, where marginalised communities and languages are impacted by relationships of power’ (Bonacina-Pugh *et al.*, 2021: 499). Beyond mobilising translanguaging as a means of learning, from this transformative perspective, the translanguaging of education further entails a critical stance towards language, aspiring to enshrine language rights and aiming to decolonise mono- and multilingualisms in educational settings and in society more broadly (Ndhlovu & Makalela, 2021).

Within this range of laudable goals – from the modest facilitation of learning to the more ambitious affirmation of identities and the utopian transformations of symbolic systems, selves and societies – advocates of a

practical theory of the translanguaging of education need to be clear about which aims they deem desirable and achievable as well as the extent to which the means at their disposal can contribute to the fulfilment of these aspirations.

So far, we have argued that the translanguaging of education poses an alternative to monolingualism and to additive or serial multilingual language teaching and learning that is worth examining. For this alternative to be seriously considered by all stakeholders in education, we called for the development of a practical theory of translanguaging education that scrutinises the various claims and precepts associated with translanguaging in general and translanguaging education specifically. The previous sketch of some of the theoretical and empirical contributions that have thus far been made to such a practical theory was informed by the assumption that neither ubiquitous everyday translanguaging nor extensive scholarship on their own will suffice for translanguaging education to be accepted as a legitimate practice. What is needed beyond this is putting translanguaging into practice in teacher education (Zhang-Wu & Tian, 2023) and activism that explicitly advocates translanguaging as a political stance (Li, 2022). Ultimately, however, the extent to which the theory, practices and goals of translanguaging education are legitimised is a matter of advocacy informed by both evidence and deliberation among all stakeholders.

Current Contributions to a Practical Theory of Translanguaging Education

The chapters in this book contribute to the development of a practical theory of translanguaging education in three ways.

Firstly, by including chapters from different countries and diverse translanguaging constellations, the volume contributes empirical research and theorisation for a broader scholarly debate that includes languages and settings which have received less attention to date. Thus far, the itinerary of the concept of translanguaging as well as scholarship on translanguaging have been closely aligned to languages and settings conjoined to English (e.g. Welsh–English, Spanish–English and Chinese–English), with English playing either a hegemonic or a facilitating role. However, in translanguaging settings where languages other than English are also part of the mix, uptake of the concept as well as research have been less abundant. By including chapters from such settings in Austria, Italy, France, Luxembourg, South Africa, Spain/the Basque Country, Switzerland and Rwanda, the book follows hitherto less traversed avenues of inquiry. In some cases, this includes translanguaging in the prestigious official languages of officially multilingual countries (e.g. French and German in Switzerland); in others, it also includes translanguaging in unofficial and minority languages and languages of migration

(e.g. Turkish and Chechen in Austria). In this way, the perspectives collected here not only assist in the introduction of educational translanguaging to new settings, they also open potential research and practice dialogues related to translanguaging between Anglo-aligned and other scholars and educators.

Secondly, highlighting the capacity of practitioners to initiate innovation in pedagogical practice and broader social change, many chapters address the important role of educators in practical theory. To address educators' concerns, and for translanguaging to be accepted as a legitimate practice in educational settings, a number of chapters advocate for the inclusion of translanguaging in policy and curriculum design, as well as systematic and dedicated teacher development, both formal and informal. This ranges from familiarising pre- and in-service teachers with the various positions within the translanguaging education paradigm to training them in methods that develop learners' various translanguaging competences.

Thirdly, the chapters that follow contribute to evidence-based deliberative advocacy related to translanguaging education, whereby the book contributes to the development of a practical theory of translanguaging. Language advocacy in multilingual settings typically prioritises the protection and/or vitalisation of marginalised, minoritised or emergent languages (De Korne, 2020). In some multilingual countries – such as India, South Africa and Switzerland – language advocates instead prioritise multilingualism. Often, however, this is understood as the co-existence of various languages in compartmentalised form alongside each other, a position that has not escaped criticism (Canagarajah & Ashraf, 2013; Makoni, 2005; Werlen, 2009). Going beyond such approaches to multilingualism, the chapters in this book instead can be read as advocating for a translanguaging education lens (see also Dávila & Bunar, 2020).

Three degrees of advocacy for translanguaging education can be distinguished, with various chapters contributing to each of these. The first, and most modest, is advocacy for speakers to use their extensive repertoires in educational endeavours free from constraints, albeit without any special measures to actually encourage or promote such translanguaging. The second, and more ambitious, is advocacy for the explicit application of learners' existing extended repertoires and for the further development of their repertoires. This means that translanguaging education needs to include learners' communicative competences in the languages with which they are already familiar, as well as add more semiotic systems and develop critical thinking regarding languages. Thirdly, because the full potential of those repertoires needs deliberate development, advocates also call for the translanguaging of education that is dedicated to developing the competences of learners and teachers to apply such extended semiotic repertoires (Pontier & Tian, 2022). Even

when they do not explicitly address advocacy for translanguaging education, such advocacy is often implicit in the practices the chapters in this volume examine. Accordingly, they may be read as calls for both a practical theory of translanguaging education and advocacy for translanguaging education as a legitimate practice.

Overview of the Chapters

Emerging from the conference on ‘Beyond Multilingualism – Translanguaging in Education’, the papers in this collection have been extensively reworked, peer reviewed and revised. Part 1 ‘Translanguaging Strategies and Practices in Education’ focuses on performativity and translanguaging. The empirical studies in this section examine how translanguaging is applied in the school on an institutional level, as well as in the classroom in different learning and teaching contexts, focusing on various competences. The section covers the perspectives of school leaders, language teachers, subject teachers and preservice teachers, as well as learners as practitioners and advocates. In addition, it maps a trajectory for translanguaging through different levels, from primary school to higher education. This section closes with a call to reflect on the methods and ethics researchers should follow when conducting empirical studies on translanguaging education.

Chapter 2 examines the advocacy by school leaders for pedagogical translanguaging and its systematic and deliberate introduction in a monolingual environment. Sonya Maechler-Dent and Catherine Blons-Pierre examined a relatively privileged private preschool and primary school in a monolingual part of multilingual Switzerland. Their 12-year longitudinal, mostly qualitative action research involved about 40 teachers as well as children aged 6 months to 12 years. The data collected from classroom observations, surveys and discussions in teacher feedback groups show how the initial positive response to the gradual introduction of more languages (German, English and French) throughout the primary level is curtailed as exams for the transition to the monolingual (German) public high schools approach. Among children, the authors report a transition from initial compartmentalisation and shyness with regard to translanguaging to more spontaneous translanguaging across educational and social settings. The study emphasises the efficacy of explicit training for teachers socialised in prevailing monolingual education systems. It also shows how teachers’ positive attitudes towards translanguaging in the preschool phase diminish towards the end of the school years, as teachers prepare children for monolingual high-stakes exams to gain entry to competitive public high schools. The authors identified factors in the public education environment that hinder initial advances in translanguaging and advocate for the extension of translanguaging beyond the private primary school to higher levels of public education.

Chapter 3 compares translanguaging to the French approach of meso-alternation in plurilingual education. It illustrates this with two examples of the way teachers and pupils construct subject knowledge in a Swiss public school. Gabriela Steffen and Audrey Freytag-Lauer describe the theoretical underpinnings that inform the teaching methodology of plurilingual showers in which the deliberately planned alternation of languages (in their case French or German L1 with French, German or English L2) is used to integrate the learning of additional languages with subject learning. They combined analyses of filmed ethnographic observations of discourse and interactions in history and geography classrooms with semi-directive interviews with school leaders and teachers, as well as analyses of teaching materials for two seventh-grade classes (pupils aged 12–13 years) in a public school located in an officially monolingual German-speaking canton in rural Switzerland. Their analyses show how teachers' deliberate changes in the medium of instruction during consecutive sequences in instructional interactions depend on the types of document used, the point in time of the overall lesson and the cognitive demand on learners. They also show how teachers deliberately use different structures of meso-alternation alongside conscious code-meshing in oral interactions with pupils to integrate the building of both subject knowledge and competence in the target language. Using this analysis, they identify and advocate for five elements that need to be considered when training teachers to competently integrate subject learning with translanguaging, namely, contact, continuity, co-presence, complementarity and coherence.

Chapter 4 shifts to translanguaging in a lower-secondary mathematics class in a low-income post/neocolonial setting in rural Rwanda, where the teacher mobilises both prescribed English and proscribed Kinyarwanda. Rachel Bowden, Jean Claude Dushimimana, Innocente Uwineza and Alphonse Uworwabayeho argue that 'subtractive' multilingual education, where the learners' previous languages are officially removed and replaced by the additional language of instruction, is a form of governance and symbolic violence that benefits the privileged who are particularly strong in English. Their analyses draw on a five-month critical ethnographic case study of one lower-secondary mathematics teacher and his 52 learners aged between 12 and 16 years. The cross-national multilingual research team gathered data through participant observation and 13 hours of transcribed filmed lessons, as well as interviews with teachers and focus group discussions with students. They analysed multilingual verbal, paralinguistic, non-verbal and mathematical language speech acts and speech events. The authors offer a detailed examination of an example of translanguaging in which teacher and students used multilingual, non-verbal and multimodal linguistic resources as part of a single holistic repertoire. They show how the teacher employed languages familiar to the learners along with the

language of instruction to enhance participation and learning. Such translanguaging, they argue, constitutes a better alternative to the monoglossic ideology that inhibits pedagogical interaction and also undermines the confidence of both the teacher and the students in the latter's abilities. Instead, they advocate for a language-supportive pedagogy in which translanguaging helps teachers and learners recognise their emergent multilingual competences.

Chapter 5 investigates the way in which Austrian secondary school students practise translanguaging in self-regulated learning and the value these learners ascribe to such translanguaging. In her chapter, Aysel Kart focuses on how multilingual students implement translanguaging in subject-based lessons. Data were gathered using qualitative methods such as interviews, digital learning diaries and group discussions with 18 students whose home languages were Albanian, Bosnian, Chechen, Croatian, Georgian, Kurdish, Russian, Serbian and Turkish, rather than the language of instruction, namely German. Analyses shed light on the translanguaging strategies that students develop and how they improve their achievement through self-regulated translanguaging. Kart concludes that the students applied constructive and creative translanguaging strategies and self-regulated linguistic resources to facilitate their academic achievement. Despite the monolingual mindset of the school, the students used self-regulated translanguaging to create a translanguaging space. In this way, participants employed purposeful translanguaging to activate previous knowledge and transfer and reproduce content knowledge and academic skills, thereby accomplishing their academic goals. In the process, the students acquired critical language awareness, allowing them to reflect on the monolingual and monocultural context of their schools and the linguistic discrimination that prevails.

Chapter 6 examines the beliefs about multilingualism held by students in education courses for prospective teachers of English in Austria and Germany. In particular, it analyses the value the students ascribe to linguistic diversity as a resource in language learning. Elizabeth J. Erling, Felicitas Siwik, Katharina Haslacher and Anouschka Foltz's study draws on the concept of a translanguaging stance ([García & Kleifgen, 2018](#)), the recent multilingual turn in English language education and the growing body of research on teachers' beliefs about multilingualism. Data in this quantitative study of 194 student teachers were collected by means of a 68-item questionnaire focusing on participants' beliefs, their motivation for learning English and their extramural access to English. The authors argue that many of these student teachers express a translanguaging stance by valuing and seeking to foster learners' full linguistic repertoires as a resource. However, this stance appears to conflict with another finding: many participants still endorsed a monolingual approach to classroom language use, often emphasising exclusive use of the target language (i.e. English). Based on this tension, the authors propose that

English teacher education programmes more explicitly integrate translanguaging pedagogy to better support future teachers in aligning their beliefs with inclusive multilingual practices.

Chapter 7 investigates translanguaging and pluripedagogy in primary and secondary teacher education. Holli Schaubert and Slavka Pogranova's exploratory case study of multilingual pre- and in-service teachers and learners in French-speaking Switzerland brings into conversation the concepts of translanguaging and pluripedagogy, the latter of which refers to the multilingual exposure to multiple educational and teaching cultures. Data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews and lesson plans at the primary level, and participant observation, focus group discussions and document analysis at the secondary level. The data were analysed using thematic analysis. One key result was that at the primary level, the dimension of teachers and their actions (such as planning and curriculum, objectives, activities and adaptations) appeared more dominant than the dimension of students and their learning. At the secondary level, the findings emphasise the relevance of translanguaging practices and pluripedagogical engagement in applied documents such as handouts and PowerPoint presentations, activities and tasks, interaction and collaboration, and in formative assessment. The findings underline the effective integration of pluripedagogy and translanguaging into teacher education and school-based teaching, yet also point out the challenges in the professionalisation of preservice teachers. In conclusion, the authors advocate for the inclusion of translanguaging in teacher education, thus enabling future teachers to apply translanguaging in the classroom.

Chapter 8 investigates the academic writing of multilingual education students in South Africa, focusing on translanguaging pedagogy and the role of home languages in the writing process. Building on previous empirical research on second language writing, translanguaging pedagogy and the multilingual South African context, Verbra Pfeiffer conducted a longitudinal study between 2016 and 2019 with 427 preservice student teachers in order to explore their beliefs about good academic writing and translanguaging writing practices. While analyses of the quantitative data gathered from a questionnaire describe aspects of good writing from the perspective of these students, qualitative data illustrate the students' experiences in including their home languages such as Afrikaans, English, Eritrean, German, isiXhosa, isiZulu and Siswati in the writing process. The study also reports on how students' perspectives on good writing changed as they gained teaching experience in the classroom. Student teachers noticed that in their classrooms, the learners faced similar challenges in the writing process as they themselves experienced at university. They also reported showing more empathy towards learners who spoke languages other than English at home. The author concludes that translanguaging is valuable in fostering academic writing and raises awareness regarding the recognition and value of home languages in the writing process.

Chapter 9 examines the methodology and ethics of research on early childhood translanguaging. After conceptualising translanguaging in the multilingual context of early childhood education and care in Luxembourg, Claudine Kirsch and Džoen Bebić-Crestany distinguish between procedural ethics and ethics in practice. While the former includes predetermined guidelines such as informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, the latter refers to ethical considerations beyond the scope of official research ethics guidelines. In focusing on ethics in practice in, for example, video recordings and interviews, the authors draw attention to an underexposed field in early childhood research. Furthermore, they endorse critical reflection on the coding of translingual interactions and outline the relevance of micro-analyses in children–teacher talk. The authors conclude that an understanding of the concept of translanguaging depends on the contexts and language policies within the investigated field. Overall, they advocate for greater critical reflection on the research process and the position of researchers when investigating translanguaging.

Part 2 of the book, ‘Translanguaging in Transregional and Transdisciplinary Educational Spaces’, opens up a broader context of education, reaching out beyond the pedagogical commitments of school. This includes the relationships among school languages, home languages and heritage language courses; cross-border collaboration among universities; and language learning in a centre for adult migrants. In chapters that build a bridge between spontaneous everyday translanguaging and translanguaging in aesthetic domains such as poetry and music, the book illustrates the transferability of the concept. Additionally, in chapters that weave translanguaging into notions of polyphony, the book explores the values and methods that inform translanguaging advocacy. In doing so, the projects described not only examine a pedagogical translanguaging space but also embrace the critical and creative aspects of translanguaging in transdisciplinary practices.

Chapter 10 outlines a poetics of linguistic ethnography focusing on the relations between everyday translanguaging and poetry. Adrian Blackledge and Angela Creese show how aesthetic form presents a fruitful alternative discourse for academic linguistics when it comes to the presentation and interpretation of everyday translanguaging. This is illustrated with excerpts from two cycles of poems they produced as part of a four-month detailed observation of a busy city market in the United Kingdom. The poems are accompanied by a behind-the-scenes look at the interpretative creative process through which they came about, as well as an argument for the specific value of poetry to let translanguaging voices ‘stand for themselves’. Polyphonous poetic form, the authors suggest, can represent and interpret the complexity characteristic of translanguaging in human interaction. This is because both poetry and translanguaging thrive on difference and multiplicity, and also because poetry supersedes adherence to a naïve empiricist sociolinguistics in ways analogous to

which translanguaging breaks with the politically and socially codified boundaries of languages. In contrast to notions of communication that seek to mitigate difference, the attitudes and practices informing translanguaging aim to facilitate communication ‘not so much by mitigating difference as by transforming difference into a resource for successful interaction’ (Blackledge & Creese, this volume). Their account of their own research serves as a model and inspiration for educators who wish to engage learners and students in linguistic ethnography and/or translanguaging poetry.

Chapter 11 examines translanguaging policy involving members of higher education institutions who are conducting transdisciplinary, transborder and transcultural environmental research. Karin van der Worp and Itxaso Etxebarria Lekanda report on the Ocean i3 project, involving the University of the Basque Country and the University of Bordeaux, which aims to reduce plastic pollution on the Basque–Aquitaine coast. To strengthen tolerance for linguistic and cultural diversity and foster language awareness among the participants of the project, a language policy was developed that offers guidelines on the use of the majority languages of Spanish and French, the minority language of Basque, and English as a *lingua franca*. Pointing out the regular disregard for minority languages in international university collaboration, the authors describe how the Ocean i3 project’s members were trained regarding the value of multilingualism and its use in, among other things, meetings. In this way, the visibility of minority languages in the multilingual communication was a key aspect of the bottom-up language policy. The authors illustrate the translingual practices of the project members and conclude that the bottom-up language policy developed for the Ocean i3 project fosters an open mindset towards the inclusion of diverse majority and minority languages and contributes to the multilingual identity of the research group.

Chapter 12 merges theories of translanguaging and musicking (García & Ortega, 2020) to develop a thick description of transmusicking (Ortega, 2018). Philipp Saner studied an ensemble of 10 experimental musicians, drawing on participant observation, video recordings and interviews with five members of the group during a four-day experimental session. As a co-participant and a musician himself, Saner addresses the creation of musical meaning and its relation to translanguaging. Applying the methodology of grounded theory, the author identifies three core categories emerging from the interview data: musical individuation, artistic literacy and social semiosis. He illustrates these findings with excerpts from interviews with a musician from Switzerland and from Hong Kong respectively. While they differ regarding their musical individuation and the expression of their artistic literacy, both experimental musicians practise transmusicking by moving between and beyond musical idioms and by including non-musical elements such as

body movement, images and videos in social semiosis. With this account of transmusicking, Saner calls for music education that fosters an understanding of music as a multimodal discourse.

Chapter 13 examines the interpretations, perceptions and positioning regarding translanguaging among adult migrants at an integration centre in Italy. For this study, Chiara Facciani gathered data in informal interactions with 38 migrants from 20 different countries, as well as via semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 participants. While the observations showed the participants translanguaging flexibly, using various languages and dialects in their everyday conversations amongst each other, in the interviews some of them supported language purism and advocated for the separation of languages in interaction. Although some of the participants connected translanguaging with negative emotions and supported the separation of languages, they practised translanguaging in their everyday family context and highlighted the importance of preserving family languages. This leads the author to argue that both translanguaging practices and, crucially, how they are perceived, depend on the interaction context. Whereas the family context appeared to be a safe translanguaging space, the simultaneous use of different languages in other social contexts was rejected by most of the participants. The author concludes with a plea for more research on the perception of translanguaging and how this perception influences the respective practices across diverse settings.

Chapter 14 addresses the potential of translanguaging in learning and teaching heritage languages, even when they are poorly and selectively integrated into the school system. In Switzerland, some schools offer extracurricular heritage language classes, with the overall offer amounting to more than 40 languages (Giudici & Bühlmann, 2014). Describing heritage language teaching as a parallel system, Irène Zingg outlines the challenges facing these marginalised heritage language classes. In the research-based development project carried out by the Bern University of Teacher Education since 2018, heritage language teachers and regular schoolteachers work in tandem to generate new synergies that foster multilingualism and language learning. On the language days organised by the project team, students engage with different languages in a playful manner. In addition, in-service teachers are trained to integrate students' entire linguistic repertoire in the classroom. The main results of the project confirm the benefits of translanguaging in heritage language classes and the collaboration between the heritage language teachers and the class teachers. The author advocates for the use of translanguaging to merge language education practices and policies, and thereby counteract the marginalisation of multilingualism in education.

In her **afterword**, Ofelia García describes how drawing linguistic distinctions contributes to the construction of demographic groups, how the marginalisation of languages and the marginalisation of people co-constitute

each other and how this goes hand in hand with the normalisation of hegemonic languages in nation states. Correspondingly, the aim of the translanguaging she advocates is not merely to add more languages to the curriculum; instead, she suggests that learners should get to understand how discrete languages and hierarchies among languages come about, as well as what the effects of this hierarchisation are. In addition, she endorses the use of each child's full semiotic repertoire, not just in learning languages but also in learning as such. For such a thorough translanguaging education to succeed, teachers must receive appropriate education and work together across language boundaries. This also requires educators to have the courage to let learners' translanguaging voices stand for themselves. The aim of such a translanguaging education is not to entrench additive multilingualism comprising a limited number of languages; rather, it is to protect language from being instrumentalised by nation states to police and normalise their members. Ultimately, a translanguaging education that expresses faith in everyone's ability to language and learn contributes to reconfiguring the ways we conceive of society.

The Future of Advocating for the Legitimation of Translanguaging Education

In this chapter, we have argued that the contributions to this volume broaden the evidence base that can be mobilised in deliberative advocacy for the translanguaging of education. Highlighting the voices of the speakers (García, this volume), the various contributions add to our understanding of translanguaging education along multiple intersecting axes. This includes translanguaging in constellations that range from hegemonic and prestigious to marginalised and minoritised languages in education as well as geographic regions from the Global South (Rwanda and South Africa) to the Global North (Austria, Basque Country, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland, the UK and the USA). This broadening of the evidence base also covers age groups from early childhood education and care (Kirsch & Bebić-Crestany, this volume) to primary learners (Maechler-Dent & Blons-Pierre, this volume), secondary learners (Bowden, Dushimimana, Uwineza and Uworwabayehe; Steffen & Freytag-Lauer, as well as Kart, all in this volume) and adult migrant language learners (Facchiani, in this volume). In addition, it includes groups of educators, from preservice teachers (Schauber & Pogradina; Erling, Siwik, Haslacher and Foltz; and Pfeiffer, this volume) to in-service teachers, including teachers of heritage languages (Zingg, this volume) and diverse domains, from academics in the natural sciences (van der Worp & Etxebarria Lekandam, this volume) to artists such as poets (Blackledge & Creese, this volume) and musicians (Saner, this volume). Thereby, these chapters invite deliberations among diverse stakeholders who strive to legitimise translanguaging education as a broader social goal.

Other scholars have identified further research that may contribute to the legitimisation of the translanguaging of education more broadly (for example, [Bonacina-Pugh *et al.*, 2021](#); [Mendoza *et al.*, 2024](#); [Prilutskaya, 2021](#); [Zhang *et al.*, 2024](#)). We add to these valuable avenues of future inquiry they suggest some additional topics of inquiry that would further develop a practical theory of the translanguaging of education proposed throughout this chapter.

We proposed that for a practical theory of the translanguaging of education to be justified and actionable, it should be anchored in evidence-based deliberative advocacy about the goals and methods of education and the roles of languages therein and symbolic systems more broadly. In this regard, further theory-building is necessary regarding practical theory and the role of evidence and deliberative advocacy in a practical theory of translanguaging education. Following the notion of rational reconstruction, advocates of translanguaging education may seek to convince spontaneous everyday translanguagers to deliberately actualise – in education – the norms that already inform their practice. That is, they may seek to make explicit the underlying rules that govern translanguaging so as to develop matching pedagogies informed by these rules, thereby deliberately developing learners' translanguaging competences. Such a rational reconstruction may be informed by detailed empirical studies along the lines of conversation analysis that identify the relations between interactional and translanguaging patterns in order to develop appropriate teaching methodologies that, in turn, develop translanguaging skills (for emerging research in this direction, see [Tai \(2023\)](#)). As far as conceptualisation and theory-building are concerned, advocates of translanguaging in general and translanguaging education in particular may seek to further delineate the range of positions within the overall paradigm. This includes clarifying the different stances regarding the possibility and desirability of demarcating languages and, connected to this, the different accounts of the degrees of permeability among languages. Related to this question of demarcation, it would be helpful to distinguish under which conditions it makes sense to distinguish languages and under which conditions it makes sense to focus on speakers' unified repertoires and their agency in meaning-making. By extension, in view of the evolution of technology and the impact of artificial intelligence in translanguaging through machine translation as well as the creation of image and sound, similar questions also include clarifying the value of broader concepts, such as transsemiotisation and, as a consequence, the relations among semiotic systems such as languages, numbers, sounds and images.

We furthermore propose that the translanguaging of education can benefit learners and, by extension, the societies to which they belong. To substantiate the factual claim associated with this thesis, advocates for the translanguaging of education may further broaden the evidence base by diversifying and strengthening the rigour of their research

methodologies. This includes integrating the many ethnographic findings with quantitative and longitudinal studies (for an elaboration of this point, see [Prilutskaya \(2021\)](#)), as well as optimising the coherence between concepts of translanguaging and corresponding research methods (for an elaboration of this and related points, see [Bonacina-Pugh *et al.* \(2021\)](#) and [Zhang *et al.* \(2024\)](#)). It also includes expanding the range of contexts (language constellations, educational institutions, etc.) and participants (policymakers, educators, learners and their home environments) in future studies (for an elaboration of this point, see [Mendoza *et al.* \(2024\)](#)). It includes empirical studies on concrete questions such as: Which educational situations are best suited to translanguaging – from extracurricular to classroom settings, from language learning to subject learning?; What ages and stages in education are best suited to translanguaging?; Which forms and intensities of translanguaging optimise which aspects of learning and which are the most sustainable?; and How can translanguaging be assessed? To substantiate the normative claim associated with this thesis, advocates for the translanguaging of education could further argue and show that the proposed aims and consequences of the translanguaging of education are desirable and even preferable over alternatives for both individuals and societies. Furthermore, they might expand the evidence base with studies that show how translanguaging on its own, or in combination with other measures, may advance these goals.

We finally propose that a practical theory of the translanguaging of education could contribute to mitigating the implementation gap between translanguaging in educational practice and everyday translanguaging. In this regard, future research may further expand our knowledge on the roles of practitioners in the form of educators in becoming active agents in the broader implementation of translanguaging. This includes investigating the constraints they face – from policy prescriptions to resources and their own and others' attitudes and beliefs – as well as the facilitating conditions for the translanguaging of education. In particular, within a practical theory of translanguaging education, this includes developing and studying the efficacy of training educators in the theory and pedagogies of translanguaging.

As necessary as such future studies will be, they alone will not suffice. As the practical theory sketched in this chapter claims, academic advocacy in the form of scholarship needs to combine with other forms of advocacy. Ultimately, legitimising the translanguaging of education rests on the extent to which everyone involved can draw on evidence in deliberative advocacy about the goals and methods of education and the roles of language therein. Given that education is not an end in itself, such evidence-based deliberative advocacy would extend to the way we humans wish to use symbols in referring to the world, in expressing ourselves and in relating to each other.

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