

11 Translanguaging in Cross-Border University Collaborations: Enhancing Linguistic Diversity

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It is increasingly common for universities to work together on an international scale, either for research or for educational purposes. In these more and more frequently occurring international collaborations between universities, one important concern that arises is the languages to be used in such collaborations; should a unique lingua franca be chosen as the vehicular language (often English as the main academic language), or do there exist possible ways for maintaining the linguistic diversity and including the different working languages of the international community? The present study explores multilingualism in the field of cross-border university collaborations and argues that linguistic diversity can – and should – be protected in these settings. It puts special emphasis on the beneficial role that translanguaging can play in these multilingual settings as a facilitator of linguistic diversity.

Specifically, this chapter focuses on a cross-border university project (denominated Ocean i3) carried out between the University of the Basque Country on the Spanish side of the border and the University of Bordeaux on the French side of the border. In this interdisciplinary project, staff, students and professors from various faculties work together in aiming to contribute to reducing the ocean's plastic pollution on the Basque–Aquitaine transboundary coast. This work group features a diverse repertoire of languages, including the local majority languages (Spanish and French), the minority language (Basque) and the international language (English). The project leaders had to find a way to deal with the linguistic diversity among the participants. Therefore, with the help of the authors of the present chapter, they constructed a bottom-up, tailor-made language policy for their project in line with the following three aims: (1) to create language awareness among participants, encouraging social cohesion based on tolerance for language diversity and linguistically

sensitive cross-border collaboration; (2) to foster and promote linguistic diversity and (3) to protect and promote the use of Basque as a minority language within the working group.

In order to create this language policy, different stages were worked through. First, the actual use of languages and the linguistic needs of the participants were analyzed by observing their meetings and gathering questionnaire data. In the second stage, an action research approach was adopted by putting various translanguaging dynamics into practice and reflecting on them. The final stage consisted of the development of a bottom-up language policy to promote linguistic diversity in this context and support the participants in their multilingual practices. One of the authors of this chapter has been especially involved in the management of the project, while the other author was mostly involved in the role of researcher. The present chapter provides the outcome of this bottom-up language policy, discussing the different parts of the policy that ensure multilingual communication, and focusing specifically on the use of translanguaging as a multilingual strategy.

Introduction

Nowadays, it is becoming an increasingly common practice for universities to work together on an international level: internationalization is a strategy as well as a goal of higher education in today's global educational context (Célio [Conceição, 2020](#)). Academic globalization and the internationalization of scientific knowledge require universities to navigate between two forces: global competitiveness and innovation on the one hand, and local attractiveness and diversity on the other hand ([Yanaprasart, 2020](#)), creating a conflict between internationalization and contextualization ([Gajo & Berthoud, 2020](#)).

Internationalization of higher education inevitably brings with it the use of languages, which are needed to communicate across borders. It raises questions about the role of language in the construction, transmission and dissemination of scientific knowledge. Language should be understood as a communication tool as well a construction tool (Gajo & Berthoud, 2020). Academic mobility and the increasing need to integrate international research teams have made plurilingualism a reality ([Melo-Pfeifer, 2020](#)).

Often, participants in international collaboration opt for the use of one international lingua franca, usually English. However, this might have serious consequences for linguistic diversity, as the use of other local languages is reduced. In particular, the space for minority languages might be endangered, since in international situations, they have to compete not only with the local languages but also with the international language. Tension between the increasing use of English and the use of other national and regional languages may arise ([Cenoz & Gorter, 2025](#))

Universities across Europe might experience a twofold pressure. On the one hand, their ranking depends, in part, on their successful internationalization, which, in terms of language use, often asks for the use of English. English is needed for applying for international research funds and publishing in high-impact academic journals, just to name a few. On the other hand, universities are often funded by local taxpayers, which makes the promotion of local languages a priority.

In all areas of universities, from teaching and research to management, we can see the effect of internationalization, raising a need for adequate language policies to deal with the languages involved in these internationalization processes. Navigating between local and global contexts in the process of internationalization of universities depends, among other aspects, on the linguistic capital. In other words, improved knowledge of available linguistic capital within universities could improve internationalization strategies by managing language practices among local, regional and international languages (Chardenet & Ferreira-Meyers, 2020). Language policies and pedagogical and methodological innovations should go hand in hand. As Célio Conceição (2020) underlines, a new integrated approach towards languages is needed.

The literature on international research communication and the languages involved is not extensive, and what is needed is more research to ‘exploit and discover new linguistic ways of doing’ (Melo-Pfeifer, 2020: 21). Discovering these ways of doing ‘helps to show in what way and under what conditions they are not merely just a response to a problem but an asset’ (Lüdi, 2015: 213). Lüdi underlines that ‘the respect for linguistic diversity is, therefore, a *conditio sine qua non* for meeting the increasing challenges of the world’s superdiversity’ (2015: 213).

This chapter aims to expand the body of knowledge on international research communication by presenting a language policy developed for a cross-border university collaboration between New Aquitaine and the Basque Autonomous Community. A cross-border university project is studied, where a compromise is made to protect the multilingual diversity within this setting, dealing with two majority languages (French and Spanish), one minority language (Basque) and an international language (English). The main aim is to shed light on how a cross-border university community could work in a linguistically diverse environment, supporting multilingualism and, specifically, the use of the minority language by using translanguaging.

This chapter first provides a theoretical framework detailing the concepts and previous research on this topic, with a special focus on the added value of translanguaging. After this, it describes the context of the specific university collaboration under study. Thereafter, relevant parts of the language policy are presented in order to show how translanguaging can be an aid in fostering multilingual communication.

Finally, conclusions are drawn on the effectiveness of these multilingual translanguaging practices in cross-border university collaborations.

Languages in Higher Education

In university education and scientific writing, English, as a lingua franca, is often considered as a suitable option, in terms of efficiency and equality of opportunity to participate in a global community. An important factor pushing the importance of English is publication in high-impact academic journals, which mainly prefer publication in English. Moreover, English medium instruction is increasingly offered at university, often in order to attract foreign students. This importance attached to English as a lingua franca seems to be based on a monolingual ideology, considering linguistic diversity as a problem with the use of a single language as the solution (Lüdi, 2015).

However, there are also downsides to this one-language-only strategy. Unifying the spoken language might incorrectly give the idea of sameness among participants in terms of values and representations; one's lack of competency in the lingua franca may affect one's confidence in expressing oneself and may lead to a lack of precise formulation and thus a lack of information. Moreover, using a lingua franca that is different from one's own language may lead to a lack of emotional involvement (Lüdi, 2015). Adopting one single lingua franca may thus cause a lack of creativity, losses of information, a malaise related to not being able to speak one's own language and the appearance of fracture lines between science and society. The latter is especially important to consider in the case of countries where there are minority languages. Often, on a societal level, an effort is made to promote the use of the minority languages, which could be easily overlooked in international collaboration in higher education because of the tendency to use an efficient lingua franca.

Lüdi (2015) advocates for what he denotes as 'plurilinguaging' in the research team and a dissemination policy that includes the local community. In arguing this, he underlines some of the advantages of revaluing bi- and or plurilingualism, such as the learning of languages and cognitive advantages in terms of developing creativity, among others. In addition, using multiple languages can also be beneficial to a sense of belonging to the work group, as language possibly plays an important role in identity construction. The individual's ability to communicate in multiple languages has a direct effect on their sense of belonging to various ethnic and linguistic groups (Dewaele, 2007).

Of course, plurilinguaging also shows another side of the coin, with certain disadvantages, such as the use of a multilingual approach giving rise to communication problems, possibly slowing down working processes (Lüdi, 2015). It is therefore important to find adequate ways to enhance linguistic diversity, ensuring effective communication at the same time.

Multilingualism in International University Collaborations

In an international or cross-border research group, one can find a variety of linguistic repertoires. It is uncommon that all participants share exactly the same linguistic repertoire and understand everyone's preferred languages (Lüdi, 2015). The internationalization of university collaborations has brought with it an important paradox: the more languages the university stakeholders speak, the more often they opt for English as a language of communication. The need for a common language, as well as the several functions multiple languages have in a university, brings up a complex linguistic reality, and universities have an important role to play in creating a non-diglossic co-existence of several languages at university (Kuteeva *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to shed more light on what multilingual practices participants can use to manage those linguistically diverse situations. Although the area of multilingualism in international university collaborations is an area which has not yet been extensively explored, several studies have provided some interesting results concerning this topic.

Lüdi (2015) carried out a study on the DYLAN (Dynamiques des langues et gestion de la diversité) international research project. He describes how participants in the project use several communication strategies involving several languages, including national languages and minority languages, as well as a lingua franca. He also discovered a contradiction of the common assumption that all participants speak English and found that participants adopted a wide range of strategies classified in two categories: the monolingual (one language only or one language at a time) and plurilingual strategies (all languages at the same time or all languages at all times). In line with the aim of the present chapter, Lüdi describes the main components of the internal language regime. These included several strategies based on the core three languages in play in the specific context under study, French, German and English: (1) recognizing all languages of partners as official languages; (2) in all communications with the whole group, one of the three languages should be used; (3) bilateral communication in any language; (4) oral presentations using one language for written support and another one for the oral presentation (with the option of whispered interpretation); (5) scientific deliverables in any of the three languages, with administrative reports in English and (6) publication in a wide range of languages.

Greco *et al.* (2013), in the same DYLAN project, studied the plurilingual interactions in work situations and the effects of participants using varied linguistic repertoires not shared by all and distributed unevenly among the members of the group. They concluded that the diversity of linguistic resources used in the interaction increases the work carried out and that the diversity offered by the multilingual scene opens a wide range of options and decisions. They conclude that 'its solution lies

in the diversity first perceived as an obstacle but then used as a resource, not least by creating the conditions for an appropriation of new linguistics' (Greco *et al.*, 2013: 55).

The more recently published study carried out by [Melo-Pfeifer \(2020\)](#), in which she analyzes the self-reported practices of participants in an international research project, is also highly relevant. The multilingual practices of 25 researchers at universities of both Romance and Germanic language countries were studied (France, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Austria, Germany and Belgium) by means of collected questionnaire data. The study sheds light on three main topics: (1) the languages researchers use to publish and communicate; (2) researchers' linguistic aspirations, in terms of the languages of publication and (3) the declared communicative practices in the scope of the ongoing project. Although all three categories are interesting, the last one appears especially relevant to the present study. [Melo-Pfeifer \(2020\)](#) found that French was the lingua franca and official language in this project, with some researchers wishing to speak more Spanish and Italian, but English was shown to be avoided in conversation by over one-third of the researchers. The latter is concluded to be because no native speakers of English took part in the project, and because of the existing ideology of intercomprehension among Romance language speakers. It is concluded that multilingual practices are present in most of the domains of academic life, and that the participating researchers invest in different linguistic practices according to their plurilingual identity and positively value the linguistic repertoires they consider as capital they can draw on as well as intercomprehension. A critical notion is that tensions can arise when the capital of plurilingual repertoires is valued differently by researchers and or institutions.

Minority Languages and Translanguaging in the Multilingual Educational Context

The role of minority languages is worth exploring in this international context, as university stakeholders with minority backgrounds often need to adapt their use of the standard variety of the national language and English ([Kuteeva *et al.*, 2020](#)). Minority languages are often overlooked in international collaborations, since they are not considered as a candidate for becoming a vehicular language among speakers of different linguistic repertoires. However, from a sustainable linguistically diverse point of view, it is not convenient to overlook these minority languages. In the first place, they might be the language several participants feel most confident in to express their ideas. In the second place, those languages are part of the identity of some of the participants and should thus be taken into account.

Cenoz and Gorter (2017) discuss the role of minority languages in the light of translanguaging. Translanguaging distinguishes between spontaneous and pedagogical translanguaging, which refer, respectively, to the competence of multilingual speakers to navigate between several languages in an integrated system, and the pedagogical strategy based on this multilingual alternation between languages. It is important to consider that participants might be used to alternating languages and have a rich linguistic repertoire, including several languages which they are able to use in a dynamic way according to the context (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011). In the language policy to be presented, multilingual practices are proposed, based on the idea of translanguaging, i.e. alternating between languages according to the specific purposes of communication. Instead of using one single language for all purposes within the workgroup, all the languages from the linguistic repertoires of the members are welcomed, as is it believed that according to the context the participant is involved in (informal talk, presentation, discussion, listening), different languages can suit different purposes.

In order for sustainable translanguaging to take place, Cenoz and Gorter (2011) provide several conditions that should be taken into account. Although the aim of this chapter is not to focus on language learning (the aim of pedagogical translanguaging), but on language use, the conditions provided appear equally relevant, especially the conditions of designing functional breathing spaces for using the minority language, developing the need to use the minority languages through translanguaging, and enhancing language awareness.

The fact that a functional breathing space should be provided for using the minority language could be extended to our context: a place where the minority language has a valuable use. According to the idea of translanguaging, as described in the following sections, language dynamics following the principle of alternating languages, including the minority language, could provide such a breathing space for Basque, even in international contexts, where little value is otherwise attached to minority languages.

The Ocean i3 Project: A Cross-Border Multilingual Community

This chapter describes the language policy created for the Ocean i3 project, an interdisciplinary cross-border university project carried out in the New Aquitaine area in France and in the Spanish part of the Basque Country. The project is coordinated by the Euskampus Fundazioa (Euskampus Foundation), a cooperation between the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU, Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea) in the Spanish part of the Basque Country and the University of Bordeaux in France. The Euskampus Fundazioa was set up in 2011 by the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU), together

with the Corporación Tecnológica Tecnalia and with the Donostia International Physics Center. It was created as an interinstitutional foundation to manage and govern the UPV/EHU Euskampus International Campus of Excellence. In 2017, the University of Bordeaux joined the Euskampus Fundazioa, thus creating international and cross-border cooperation.

Of the various projects to come out of this union, the Ocean i3 project addresses the challenge of reducing ocean pollution from plastics and microplastics on the Basque–Aquitaine cross-border coast. The name Ocean i3 reflects the three ‘Is’ in the Basque language: *Ikaskuntza* (learning), *Ikerkuntza* (research) and *Iraunkortasuna* (sustainability). It is a pedagogically innovative program that aims to develop transversal skills in university students through research-based learning methodologies and targets the challenges related to sustainable development. Therefore, it consists of articulating research work, projects and student practices around several proposed missions and mobilizing the collaboration and co-construction of knowledge and solutions in close collaboration with territorial agents from the public, private and civil sectors of society. Thereby, interdisciplinary skills, cross-sectoral approaches and a systemic and integrated vision of the problems are developed.

The Ocean i3 community comprises a wide variety of participants: students, administrative staff and teaching staff from both sides of the border. Furthermore, the community collaborates with a wide range of external working entities: social agents from the territory that propose various challenges, problems and case studies related to marine plastic pollution. These working entities can be defined as follows: public administrations (governments at the local, regional, autonomous community, state and European Union level) and research centers and education/training institutes other than the universities themselves. Furthermore, the Ocean i3 community is not made up only of permanent members. In fact, the students, some social agents and some teachers change each year. However, the management team and most of the teachers remain the same throughout the various editions.

The set of languages spoken by members brings multilingualism into this community and includes the majority languages (Spanish and French), the minority language (Basque) and the international language (English). In order to preserve and promote this linguistic diversity, the organizational committee felt the necessity to develop an appropriate language policy that enables the linguistic diversity to be maintained by fostering the use of the four languages. Therefore, they made contact with research experts in the field of multilingualism to pave the way towards a language policy by carrying out action research. Through action research, including observations, questionnaires and focus groups, data were gathered around two main axes: (1) the existing language dynamics and (2) the desired language dynamics among the members of the community. In collaboration

with the community members, multilingual strategies were designed, implemented and reflected on in order to come to a set of effective strategies to enhance linguistic diversity in the group. These strategies were collected in a written language policy aiming to help create a multilingual environment and provide the participants with guidelines to help them to decide on which language to use while enabling them to express themselves in the language of their choice.

Therefore, the main objectives of the language policy are:

- (1) To create linguistic awareness among the participants, encouraging social cohesion based on tolerance of language diversity and linguistically sensitive cross-border collaboration.
- (2) To foster and promote linguistic diversity.
- (3) To protect and promote the use of Basque as a minority language in an international context.

It goes beyond the scope of this chapter to describe the methodology of the action research carried out or to provide a detailed analysis of the results. The aim of this chapter is to describe the most relevant translanguaging practices proposed in the language policy. It aims to provide some ideas of how translanguaging practices can be carried out in a multilingual cross-border context and including a minority language.

Enhancing Linguistic Diversity: A Language Policy

The language policy shows translanguaging to be a key element in multilingual cross-border university collaboration. The experience suggests that providing a solid multilingual setting encourages the participants to move smoothly between languages and make use of translanguaging. Moreover, enabling the participants to use their whole linguistic repertoire is perceived by the participants as comfortable and enriching, and reduces the necessity of opting for one exclusive vehicular language. Possible multilingual practices are divided into different categories, which are discussed one by one below.

Paving the way for linguistic diversity: Awareness – raising and commitment

It is of fundamental importance to introduce and explain the multilingual character of the community to its members from the very beginning in order to be able to create a solid multilingual environment.

At the start of the project, a preliminary meeting can be held, at which the topic of multilingualism is introduced to new members of the community. This meeting can explain what multilingualism is, what ideals underlie the multilingual nature of the project, what practices are used in the community and what is expected from new participants.

It is also important to provide a copy of the existing language policy to each participant of the community and to make the language policy available on the digital platforms of the community so that each member will be able to become familiar with the rules and practices of the community before starting the sessions.

Moreover, it is important to reiterate the importance of multilingualism in the project at the various meetings. Therefore, before each meeting/session/workshop, the moderators could briefly restate the purposes of the language policy to consolidate awareness among the community members. The messages to be conveyed could be the following:

- All local languages are welcome, as well as minority languages and international languages.
- The use of the minority languages is particularly welcome in order to protect and foster their use among the participants.
- Each member is free to use the language in which he/she feels most comfortable, and should not hesitate to switch between different languages.
- Members can co-construct meaning together using all the linguistic resources of the participants, such as helping each other by providing interpretation when needed.

This first step appears necessary to create an open mindset in the members towards the use of multiple languages. In the case of the presence of minority languages, it is especially important to underline the opportunity to use a minority language, despite the fact that not all participants share the language.

Top-down multilingual communication from the organization

Communicating with a multilingual community requires special attention and dedication when preparing and writing documents that will be shared with the members of this community. All official communications (emails, information on the web page, invitations, newsletters, etc.) and documents (slides, posters, flyers, sheets, group chats, PowerPoints, etc.) that are shared should respect the target audience and reflect the multilingual nature of the community.

To ensure that the community web page reflects the multilingual character, it should ideally be translated into all the working languages of the community to facilitate communication and understanding. Moreover, all official emails, newsletters and communications with community members are best written in the local languages plus English for foreign community members (Erasmus students, foreign staff, etc.). Furthermore, all types of official documents shared with the community should be written in all the working languages of the community to facilitate comprehension and to contribute to language diversity awareness. In the

documents, there could ideally also be a short summary in English for those community members who do not understand the local languages. Moreover, it will be necessary to include the minority language in documents that are shared, even when the group is made up of members who all speak the same language. In this way, visibility is given to the minority language.

Regarding the order of languages in multilingual communication, the following order is suggested:

- (1) Minority language(s).
- (2) Local majority language(s).
- (3) International language(s).

It is suggested that the minority language should be the first language to give it visibility and to protect and promote the use of minority languages.

It is of great importance that the organization provides multilingual top-down communications as a reflection of the linguistic ideology and as an invitation for members to also use multiple languages.

Bottom-up multilingual output

As already mentioned, the Ocean i3 project articulates research work, projects (Bachelors' theses, Masters' theses) and student placements revolving around the mission of the community: the challenge of reducing plastic pollution on the Basque–Aquitaine cross-border coast. Through their projects, students help the community to advance and develop this objective. For this reason, all students have to present their project to the community and share their developments, data and results. To do so, students should bear the multilingual character of the target audience in mind.

Although there is a need to promote linguistic diversity within the project, it is not up to the management to decide in which language (or languages) the students should write their projects. This choice corresponds to the students themselves or to the curriculum of their studies. Students are required to use whatever language they feel is most comfortable, suitable or useful for them from the possibilities that the institutions offer.

When students present their projects to the rest of the community, they will provide a visual presentation while presenting and explaining the project verbally. In these oral presentations, the students will be free to use the language (or languages) in which they wish to present their project. It will also be possible to change the language during the oral presentation, a multilingual approach that will be promoted by all moderators. As for visual support, students are advised to prepare a presentation that includes at least one language that is different from the one used for the oral

presentation. If the student wishes, he/she may include two, three or even all the languages of the community. For those who only know one of the community languages, help may be provided by the project translators/interpreters appointed during the first meeting of each new iteration.

Multilingual dynamics in the workshops

The identification of the linguistic repertoires of the participants before the start of the project is of fundamental importance for the organization of the multilingual practices to be used during the workshops. This can be easily done by means of an online questionnaire (for instance, by means of the freely available application Google Forms) sent prior to the beginning of the workshops, including questions about the members' linguistic repertoires, such as:

- What is your mother tongue?
- Which other languages do you speak?
- Evaluate your skills in all your languages on a scale from 1 to 5.
- Is there any language you understand although you are not able to speak it?
- Which language would you prefer to use in the meetings?
- Would you like to be an interpreter for your group during face-to-face meetings? If so, in which languages?
- Would you like to translate in your group's online chat? If so, in which languages?

A register of the data obtained from the participants will be created. In this way, it will be easy to have quick access to the necessary information for the organization of multilingual practices to be used during the workshops. Whenever new members join the community, the online questionnaire will be sent out to them in order to update the database, whereas the data of those members who leave the community will be deleted. It is important that the database is always kept up to date. An important part of the database is the register with the names of the volunteer translators and interpreters. Members who will be selected as translators and interpreters will be informed before the start of each workshop. If there are no volunteers, the management team will have to take up this task.

Taking the linguistic repertoire of each participant into account, multilingual working groups will be created in terms of language competence so that they can support each other in multilingual communication, learn from each other and create authentic linguistically diverse environments.

Several guidelines could be used for the creation of multilingual groups. In the case of the groups during activities in which the whole community participates, the organizers of Ocean i3 create different

groups, in which there is ideally at least one French speaker, one Spanish speaker and one Basque speaker. In addition, within the group there will be a French/Spanish interpreter (if a member of the group is bilingual, this is not necessary). Regarding the groups working on specific community challenges, it will be more complicated to use the group formation explained above, since each group will be built according to the thematic interest of each participant, according to his/her university of origin and according to the project he/she is working on.

During the welcome to the first meeting of the project, the organizers of the meeting ask the participants to fill out a multilingual presentation badge, specifying, apart from their name, last name and role in the project, which languages they understand and speak. These badges will be worn throughout the session and will be useful in immediately identifying which language to speak in, to know whether the interlocutor understands a language but is unable to speak it, to check whether the interlocutor speaks common languages and whether an interpreter is needed. In fact, the interpreters who take part in the meeting will have a sticker attached to their presentation badge so that it will be easier to identify them among the members of the group.

When carrying out the various group tasks, it is important to provide certain recommendations for multilingual interaction that promote commitment and respect towards all community languages. Recommendations for multilingual interaction could be of the following nature:

- Speak at an appropriate pace so that other members understand you more easily.
- Indicate if you do not understand the speaker so that he/she can repeat, paraphrase, translate, slow down, etc.
- Sit next to someone who speaks different languages in order to best combine your linguistic resources.
- Use simultaneous spontaneous interpretation in order to help each other to construct meaning.
- Switch languages whenever you feel the need to do so.
- Do not hesitate to use a minority language, even when not everybody in the group speaks or understands it.
- Encourage fellow group members to use a multilingual approach.
- Respect everyone's language choice at all times.

Once the linguistic repertoire of the participants has been identified, working groups have been created and some guidelines have been provided for multilingual interaction, several strategies for multilingual practices can be proposed. First of all, some resources may be provided:

- Multilingual templates for presentations: each group/participant will be provided with templates for presentations in languages other than those they know.

- Multilingual glossaries with vocabulary and sentences related to the project.
- Links to dictionaries and web pages: the organization can provide links to online dictionaries and other language resources that are useful for multilingual interaction.
- Help cards: to facilitate the participation of all members of the community, the organizers of the face-to-face meetings can provide prepared help cards to the members of the various groups, which can be used when communication difficulties arise. Raising these cards can be a non-intrusive way to ask for help without interrupting the speaker, and the texts on these cards could be, for example:
 - *Repeat, please.*
 - *Slow down a little*
 - *I need help from the interpreter.*

Furthermore, some strategies may be applied:

- Receptive multilingualism: the term *receptive multilingualism* refers to a means of interaction in which speakers with different linguistic backgrounds use their linguistic knowledge to understand the language of their interlocutor. Understanding a language, even though a member is unable to speak it, will provide opportunities to use several languages and to promote linguistic diversity within groups. In fact, the linguistic repertoire of the participants will not be restricted to the languages they speak.
- Translanguaging: to encourage multilingual practices during the workshops of the community, it will be necessary to focus on the practice of translanguaging. Considering that this is a typical feature used by those who are bilingual, the participants will be allowed to move smoothly between languages in order to best express themselves.
- Use of translators/interpreters among participants: the members of the group can serve as translators or interpreters, but collaborations could also be established with students from translation and interpretation studies. If meetings are held online, additional sources and strategies are available to the community. Similar to the face-to-face meetings, during online workshops, there will be a translator/interpreter to translate from one language to another for those members who do not understand all the languages in use. In addition, during online sessions, there is the possibility of providing simultaneous interpretation more easily than in face-to-face meetings, since various online platforms provide the possibility of enabling language interpretation and designating participants as interpreters. It would be helpful to find out how many students of translation and interpretation studies can carry out this task as part of their subjects or internships. When the meeting or webinar starts, the host can start the interpreting function, which allows the interpreters to access their own audio

channels. Attendees can select an audio channel to listen in the language they prefer. Attendees will listen to the translated audio, often being able to choose if they want to hear the original audio at a lower volume. Other options available for online simultaneous interpretation are:

- *Google Translate* in real time: this application enables conversations with an interlocutor who does not speak the same language to be translated by Google Assistant.
- *Microsoft Translator* in real time: this application enables one to speak or type in one's own language to communicate with other participants in the conversation. Other participants will see these messages in the language they select.

Moreover, the group chat on the platform could be used to help understand the speech and to translate certain terms. When the participant speaks in a specific language, a group member will be able to use the group chat to write a short summary or clarifications of what has been said in the other community languages.

- Provide options for language learning: in order to see multilingualism as an asset rather than a barrier, it might be interesting to provide basic self-study courses in the languages of the community. Members can learn the basics of other languages and be given the opportunity to immediately put them into practice in the meetings, which is an efficient way to learn new languages by combining instruction and practice. Students of philology can be involved in the preparation of self-study material.
- Multilingual linguistic landscape: particular attention should be given to the linguistic landscape during the meetings. The term *linguistic landscape* refers to the visibility and salience of the languages on signs in a given context. During face-to-face meetings, signs will be in the four community languages in the room used for the session.

All in all, identifying the linguistic repertoire of the participants, setting up working groups accordingly and providing multilingual communication guidelines, resources and strategies can help to create a diverse linguistic environment in which the members of the community use translanguaging in a natural and efficient way.

Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to show how a multilingual working environment could be created in cross-border university collaborations, as an alternative to one-language-only policies. The multilingual guidelines and practices described in this chapter were created and designed specifically for the Ocean i3 community. This work group brings a diverse

repertoire of languages into play, including the majority languages (Spanish and French), the minority language, (Basque) and the international language (English). The community sought to create a multilingual work group, in the context of which the use of a lingua franca policy could form a threat to linguistic diversity. In order to preserve and promote linguistic diversity in this cross-border project, the community considered it necessary to develop an appropriate language policy in collaboration with research experts in the field to help maintain linguistic diversity and, at the same time, appropriately foster the use of the four languages (including Basque, the minority language). The result of this was a bottom-up language policy with a set of multilingual recommendations, resources, dynamics and practices to use during the course of the Ocean i3 project. Each linguistic decision suggested in this language policy is the result of prior analysis and study by the Ocean i3 community and has been piloted within the community through action research. It was beyond the scope of this chapter to provide details on the methodology and results of this prior study, and this chapter has limited itself to describing the main points of the resulting language policy, hoping to provide helpful guidelines for other similar communities. Especially in contexts where a minority language might be easily overlooked in international collaborations, the practices proposed here can serve as a starting point to provide the minority language with a significant presence.

This language policy has tried to cover most aspects of the multilingual nature of the community in order to reach a balanced, linguistically diverse environment. However, some critical reflections should be made about the potential limitations. Firstly, the proportion of members from each side of the border might influence the multilingual dynamics. If there are more participants from one context than another, there will be a greater presence of certain languages. Secondly, despite efforts to raise awareness and commitment in a linguistically diverse community, participants might give more importance to efficiency than to linguistic diversity and might opt to speak in the local majority languages rather than the minority language, especially if few participants are present who can understand the minority language. However, an adequate language policy can pave the way towards an active use of the minority language, providing a clear breathing space. As a negative side effect, it should be mentioned that carrying out the language policy implies a certain effort from all the members, since multilingual dynamics, such as providing multilingual presentations and using interpretation, can be more time-consuming than a situation where a one-language-only policy is adopted.

However, the authors consider that despite the possible downsides and potential limitations it might bring, a language policy based on translanguaging is important to advocate for linguistic diversity in

cross-border collaborations and to create awareness of the benefits of this diversity rather than the barriers it might involve. This is an important step in creating a more open mindset towards the inclusion of different languages, including the minority languages.

This online published language policy (Van der Worp *et al.*, 2021) is a ‘living document’ enabling participants in the community to provide their input and adapt the policy for further editions. The final aim of this policy is to make multilingualism a natural way of working and part of the identity of the working group. The multilingual identity of the group is constructed to open doors to tolerance towards multilingual practices and multiculturalism, enabling individuals to express their linguistic identities without invading those of others (Etxebarria Lekanda, 2018).

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