

Code-meshing Projects in K-12 Classrooms for Social and Linguistic Equity

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ABSTRACT

To contest monolingualism in U.S. classrooms, which oppresses the language diversity of multilingual students, Horner et al. (2011) called for a translingual approach to language differences. As much of the literature on translingualism has remained at a theoretical level, educators have been seeking to enact this disposition in their classrooms pedagogically. As a response to this, code-meshing (Young, 2004, 2013; Canagarajah, 2006, 2011) can be used as a pedagogical application of the translingual approach. This paper conceptualizes code-meshing as translingual pedagogy and explores how it can be used in K-12 contexts by examining documented elementary and secondary classroom examples of code-meshing projects (Zapata & Laman, 2016; Pacheco & Smith, 2015; Pacheco et al., 2017). Despite the concerns that critics have voiced, the examples show that code-meshing can be used as an effective pedagogical tool for developing the translingual disposition, supporting students' multilingual identity, and discussing social and linguistic equity in K-12 settings. While the structural limitations for translingual pedagogy are not unforeseen, teachers and researchers should be encouraged to collaborate and keep developing translingual pedagogy for linguistic and social equity.

Keywords: code-meshing, translingual approach, translingual pedagogy, multilingual students, K-12 English writing

Introduction

Linguistic diversity in U.S. classrooms is the status quo. Student diversity in college classrooms has accelerated as U.S. colleges respond to internationalization and globalization.

The number of multilingual students in K-12 classrooms, including those identified as English language learners (ELLs), has also been on the rise (Baker & Wright, 2021). Nonetheless, certain English varieties (e.g., African American Vernacular English), heritage languages, and home languages of multilingual students have often been regarded as illegitimate languages in U.S. classrooms due to the myth of monolingualism that privileges one variety of English over other varieties or languages.

Since Conference on College Composition and Communication's (CCCC) 1974 statement of *Students' Right To Their Own Language*, student linguistic diversity has been widely accepted by writing scholars in U.S. composition studies (Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Lu, 1994; Young, 2004). Extending the CCCC resolution to differences within and across all languages, Horner et al. (2011) called for a translingual approach. The approach "adds recognition that the formation and definition of languages and language varieties are fluid. Further, this approach insists on viewing language differences and fluidities as resources to be preserved, developed, and utilized" (p. 304). The translingual approach to writing applies to teachers and students in linguistically diverse classrooms and writers of standardized or unconventional forms of writing (Canagarajah, 2013b; Canagarajah, 2016; Lu & Horner, 2013). Thus, teachers who teach English writing to multilingual students in diverse contexts—general education, English language arts, ESL, or college-level composition classrooms—may adopt this approach in order to embrace the linguistic fluidity of multilingual students' writing and open up possibilities of contesting social and linguistic injustices.

Yet, the translingual approach has mostly been discussed at a theoretical level as a teaching philosophy, and its pedagogical applications still need to be explored (Gevers, 2018). As a way to enact the translingual approach, teachers of multilingual students can use code-

meshing, that is, using two or more languages, symbols, and modes in a single composition (Canagarajah, 2006; Canagarajah, 2011; Young, 2004, 2013), as a writing project in multilingual classrooms. Although code-meshing is not what the translingual approach is all about, code-meshing can be a great way to lead students to a critical exploration of what threatens social and linguistic equity. More importantly, the translingual orientation to languages needs to be discussed at the K-12 level since students begin to shape their identities and attitudes towards diversity at an early age.

In this paper, I will first summarize the tenets of the translingual approach and translingual pedagogy. Next, I will review the scholars' views on code-meshing, including the proponents and the critics, and conceptualize the pedagogical use of code-meshing for a translingual approach. Using the theoretical bases of the translingual approach and code-meshing, I will analyze the documented K-12 classroom examples of code-meshing projects to examine the feasibility and benefits of code-meshing projects. Finally, I will conclude with suggestions for teachers and researchers.

Literature Review

The Translingual Approach to Language Differences

As a reaction to the gap between students' diverse language practices and traditional U.S. writing instruction, which takes linguistic homogeneity as the norm, Horner et al. (2011) called for a translingual approach as a new paradigm. The approach asserts that the formation and definition of languages are de facto heterogeneous and fluid and that language differences are the norm and resources, not problems that need to be eradicated. It views "writing, writer identity, language forms used, and writer competence as always emergent" (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 26). Thus, standardized language norms that privilege a particular language practice while devaluing

other groups' language practices are negotiable and should be contested. Horner et al. (2011) summarize the translingual approach as an approach that argues for:

(1) honoring the power of all language users to shape language to specific ends; (2) recognizing the linguistic heterogeneity of all users of language both within the United States and globally; and (3) directly confronting English monolingualist expectations by researching and teaching how writers can work with and against, not simply within, those expectations. (p. 305)

More specifically, the translingual approach urges teachers and students to develop a translingual disposition toward languages—an openness to language differences and the cultivation of translingual sensibility (Horner et al., 2011; Lu & Horner, 2016). The translingual approach “encourages reading with patience, respect for perceived differences within and across languages, and an attitude of deliberative inquiry” (Horner et al., 2011, p. 304). It “aims to develop and broaden the repertoire of students’ linguistic resources and to honor the resources of all language users”—both multilingual students and English monolingual students (Horner et al., 2011, p. 308).

Furthermore, the translingual approach values students’ writer agency. It asks teachers and students to question “how, when, where, and why specific language strategies might be deployed” (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 27). This approach “calls for more, not less, conscious and critical attention to how writers deploy diction, syntax, and style, as well as form, register, and media,” whether they seemingly conform to dominant standards or not (Horner et al., 2011, p. 304). Thus, even dealing with students’ deviant forms or “errors” in their writing, teachers acknowledge that writer agency is always in operation and development as students construct themselves and language through recontextualization in writing (Lu & Horner, 2013).

Lastly, the translingual approach invites writers to work towards linguistic equity by negotiating monolingual standards. The translingual approach decrees that “writers can, do, and must negotiate standardized rules in light of the contexts of specific instances of writing” (Horner et al., 2011, p. 305). It defies the common belief that students must learn the standard language to meet the demands of the dominant discourse. Instead, it insists that students “must understand how such demands are contingent and negotiable” (Horner et al., 2011, p. 305).

For educators who empathize with the translingual approach, how to enact the ideology as pedagogy has been their primary interest. Schreiber and Watson (2018) summarize well what translingual pedagogy should look like by saying:

pedagogy is translingual not merely by exposing students to language diversity or by permitting students to use their full linguistic repertoires in their writing, but by asking students to investigate/consider how language standards emerge, how and by whom they are enforced, and to whose benefit, by bringing to light in the classroom how language standards sustain and are sustained by social inequity. (pp. 94-95)

Code-meshing

The diverse student language practices that led Horner et al. (2011) to envision the translingual approach include *code-meshing* (Canagarajah, 2006; Canagarajah, 2011; Young, 2004, 2013), which refers to the use of a variety of dialects, languages, symbols, and communicative modes in a single composition. Such mixing of dialects and languages happens naturally and more frequently in oral communication, so code-meshed texts can be seen to “represent orality-based discourse in writing” (Gevers, 2018, p. 79). Such translingual literacy practices are “widely practiced in communities and everyday communicative contexts, though ignored or suppressed in classrooms” (Canagarajah, 2013a, p. 2).

The term *code-meshing* is coined by Vershawn Ashanti Young (2013), an African American scholar in African American Studies and Rhetoric. He notes that the goal of his coining the term was “to help code-meshing become an acceptable practice for what I hear and see black people doing every day: blending, adjusting, playing and dancing with standard English and academic discourse... anywhere and everywhere that communication takes place, whether in informal or formal settings” (Young, 2013, p. 139). Non-monolingual writers often purposefully engage in code-meshing, drawing from their entire language repertoire without strict adherence to a set of particular language rules, such as standard English, to make sense of their world and to show their identity, creativity, linguistic reality, and resistance to linguistic injustice. In this sense, code-meshing can be thought of as “the realization of translanguaging in texts” (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 403) or one of the translanguaging strategies (García & Li, 2017). The examples of code-meshing range from writings of established writers, such as Gloria Anzaldúa, to those of international graduate students in Canagarajah’s (2011) example, all of whom established and presented the voices of bi/multidialectical, bi/multilingual, or multimodal writers through code-meshing in formal writing.

Code-meshing is distinguished from codeswitching in that the latter views bilingual students as having two discrete linguistic systems and being fully capable of switching between the two according to the context (Canagarajah, 2011; Kafle & Canagarajah, 2017; Young, 2013). It should be noted that codeswitching, in its broader definition that incorporates various language mixing practices, has a long history in linguistic studies, and such studies have had a tremendous impact on understanding and legitimizing bilingual practices (MacSwan, 2017). However, in education systems that favor monolingualism, the narrow view of codeswitching and its assumptions, combined with a deficit view of bilinguals’ language practice, have negatively

affected multilingual students (Otheguy et al., 2015; Young, 2013). Schools often consider mixing of languages undesirable and require multilingual students to “codeswitch” and use Standard English in the formal classroom setting and nonstandard language in other settings, reinforcing “the superior/inferior linguistic dichotomy” (Young, 2013, p. 142), especially when there are power inequalities between the codes. Code-meshing, on the other hand, defies the structural limitation. Using code-meshing, students can put all their languages on an equal footing in the same context, rather than being forced to switch between a formal language in one context and an “informal” language in another.

Why Use Code-meshing in an English classroom?

Code-meshing empowers multilingual students by affirming their linguistic realities. Using code-meshing “offers students a more realistic, humane, and useful means of experiencing and profiting from composition” (M. E. Lee, 2014, p. 318). Code-meshing as a translingual pedagogy constitutes “a transformative vision that has moved beyond a monolingualist framework to a new ontological and epistemological conception based on ongoing consideration of contemporary students’ linguistic realities” (M. E. Lee, 2014, p. 319).

Code-meshing allows students to “develop cognitive fluency and increase their engagement with learning” (Milson-Whyte, 2013, p. 113). Producing code-meshed texts enables students to “have a better chance of developing—as many of them are already in the process of doing—“a full quiver” of the rhetorical and semiotic resources they need to have at their disposal” (Guerra, 2016, p. 232).

Reading successful examples of multilingual peer students’ code-meshing can be a powerful tool to motivate all students to engage in creative writing practices and discover identities. Code-meshing by multilingual students was found to engender and stimulate

negotiation between code-meshers and readers (Canagarajah, 2013b). Through negotiation, the class participants could reflect on peer writers' language practices and identities. In a graduate course that he taught, Canagarajah (2016) saw that some multilingual students' active code-meshing inspired more dynamic positioning of other multilingual students as translingual writers and motivated English monolingual students to discover their hybrid identities.

Most importantly, code-meshing as a strategy also enables writers of diverse linguistic backgrounds to challenge the dominant discourses that limit and oppress them with their own alternative discourses. It helps "to honor students' wishes to combat expectations about communicative standards." (Schreiber & Watson, 2018, p. 95). Milson-Whyte (2013) saw the potential of code-meshing as "the intertwined socio-political, psychological, and pedagogical benefits of helping to valorize minoritized languages, counter linguistic prejudices, and therefore subvert the hegemony of standardized languages" (p. 113). By reading and writing code-meshed text, teachers and students can see "that deviations from dominant expectations need not be errors; that conformity need not be automatically advisable; and that writers' purposes and readers' conventional expectations are neither fixed nor unified" (Horner et al., 2011, p. 304).

Criticism of Code-meshing

Before using code-meshing in the classroom, teachers should heed warnings of second language writing and translingual scholarship. First, code-meshing can lead to the uncritical valorization of visible language differences. Such practices should be avoided since it has the potential for harmful exoticization, reinforcing ethnocentric perspectives, and perpetuating a myth of joyful hybridity (Matsuda, 2014; Schreiber & Watson, 2018).

Next, code-meshing may not be readily appropriated by all students when considering the heterogeneity of students' language proficiency and backgrounds. Gevers (2018) noted that a

code-meshing pedagogy might not be feasible in classrooms for students with lower-level English writing proficiency. To effectively use code-meshing to challenge established language norms requires some linguistic proficiency and awareness in the meshed languages, but not all students are multilingual, sensitive to the language difference, or metalinguistically aware (Matsuda, 2014). It is also questionable that all students would wish to challenge the language norms.

Code-meshing may not be practical in certain genres. “The options for bending and challenging norms are very genre-dependent, and content-dependent” (Atkinson & Tardy, 2018, p. 89). While genres are flexible, certain genres such as personal narratives are more compatible with code-meshing, while other genres such as scientific research reports do not permit writers to exercise linguistic individuality. Students need to learn to make their meaning clear in writing for informational purposes, but there is less room for innovative language use in such functional writing (Atkinson & Tardy, 2018).

The efforts to defend the production of conspicuous differences in writing can inadvertently lead to the identification of writer agency only with the production of such writing (Lu & Horner, 2013). Excessive focus on visible differences can reinforce monolingualism. Code-meshing can draw “attention to combinations of fixed “languages” rather than subtler variation, boundary pushing, or the fuzzy, complex histories in which words themselves cross borders and are repurposed” (Schreiber & Watson, 2018, p. 95). Although code-meshing appears to contest the discrete character of languages, it leads to multilingualism that still maintains the boundaries between languages, making language practices into “readily identifiable and discrete “codes” available for mixing or meshing” (Horner & Alvarez, 2019, p. 8).

While the criticisms are valid, this paper chooses to explore the pedagogical use of code-meshing since it can be an effective way to catalyze the translingual approach to language difference when used with purpose and adopted critically in the classroom. Code-meshing has its value as an entry point to translingualism in the classroom. According to Wang and Silva (2021), translingualism

(1) treats one's languages not as discrete entities but as available codes in a repertoire; (2) assumes that language is performative and always in contact with diverse semiotic resources and generating new meanings; (3) sees language difference as a resource for meaning making; and (4) negotiates purposeful textual practices, such as code-meshing, as convention- and context-transforming. (p. 4)

The pedagogical use of multilingual students' purposeful code-meshing can bring about teachers' and students' conceptual change about language practices and deeper engagement with translingualism.

How to Use Code-meshing as a Translingual Pedagogy

First, teachers should reflect on and question their language ideologies. Schreiber and Watson (2018) ask teachers to consider “whether we are the ideal judges of rhetorical effectiveness” and “whether we are inadvertently perpetuating status quo language uses by telling our students their code-meshing just isn't rhetorically effective or appropriate” (p. 96). Teachers must be reminded of their subconscious affinities with standard languages and typification of academic language and genres, which could reject certain language varieties.

Next, it is essential to shape a translingual ecology in the classroom, where code-meshing is viable and negotiation is always at work through dialectical interactions among classroom participants. Models of code-meshing by peer students and teachers provide significant

affordances (Canagarajah, 2011). In his ethnographic study of his students' translingual writing, Canagarajah (2013b) found that code-meshing invites complex processes of negotiation between writers and readers. He identified four types of negotiation strategies used by writers and readers to engage in code-meshing: envoicing, recontextualization, interaction, and entextualization. Such strategies are "typical of contact zone communication" (p. 62). What enabled these strategies were Bakhtinian dialogical pedagogy and "a conducive pedagogical environment that will allow students to bring these strategies from contact zones outside the classroom" (p. 63). Such a classroom ecology helps develop students' language awareness, rhetorical sensibility, and writing practices that they can build on for translingual literacy.

While working with multilingual students who are expanding their language repertoire in the English language, or ELLs, teachers should consider the students' language development and learning goals. Teachers should recognize language learners' desires to develop their language proficiency to reach their academic and professional goals (Atkinson et al., 2015; Severino, 2017). In such cases, teachers can adopt knowledge from flexible theories of grammar and genre in the second language writing scholarship, such as Larsen-Freeman's grammaring theory, Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, and Tardy's genre theory, which are compatible with the translingual approach (Williams & Condon, 2016). Additionally, teachers should "consider to what degree students might benefit from incorporating nonstandard language patterns into their writing, and in what contexts doing so may be appropriate, effective, and desirable" (Gevers, 2018, p. 81).

In any case, code-meshing should not be enforced as a prescribed form of writing that students must do or more favored than the standard form of writing. Noting that difference exists "between a writing classroom that *allows* translingual writing and a writing classroom that

encourages or even *requires* translingual writing” (p. 189), J. W. Lee (2016) asserts that the latter can disadvantage students who do not or cannot produce conspicuously translingual writing. Following the translingual approach does not mean that teachers should require students to mimic code-meshing; rather, “what we[teachers] want instead is for them[students] to call on the rhetorical sensibilities many of them already possess but put aside because of what they see as a jarring shift in context” (Guerra, 2016, pp. 231–232). Moreover, using code-meshing in teaching writing does not mean refusing to teach standard English. Both the justification and limitations of standard writing and code-meshing should be conveyed to and discussed with students. The goal is for students to explore writer agency in recontextualization of all forms of English, including those recognized as standard and those not (Lu & Horner, 2013).

The ultimate choice then should be left for students to make; the teacher should support the students’ choice. “Teachers have to be prepared to have students decline invitations to code-mesh or disregard translingualism because these students live/operate in situations where languages are still treated as discrete systems” (Milson-Whyte, 2013, p. 121). For example, a student may want to choose to meet readers’ expectations over projecting their identity. In this case, teachers should help the student write in standard English, respecting the student’s agency and choice. On the other hand, for those students who are willing to mesh codes purposefully, teachers should be able to invite them to do so in their writings (Schreiber & Watson, 2018).

Lastly, producing code-meshed (or standardized) writing is not the end. “Code-meshing is not an absolute solution to an abiding educational and racial crisis” (Young, 2004, p. 713). It should be the starting point that leads the teacher and students to further questioning, negotiation, and discussion about social and linguistic inequities. By engaging students in code-meshing, teachers would want to draw students’ attention to the larger social inequities that cause

discrimination against language differences and those oppressed by monolingualism. As Schreiber and Watson (2018) say, if code-meshed writing feels awkward or inappropriate to students, they can interrogate where that sense comes from by asking such questions as “what hierarchies of privilege are at work in our constructions of readers’ expectations, and what the political and social consequences of infusing spoken and written registers might be” (p. 96). If multilingual writers chose not to code-mesh, the teacher and the writers could probe why they did not. Was it because of the specific demands of the social context, such as an environment where they are deemed outsiders or foreigners?

Classroom Examples

Sun and Lan (2020) synthesized empirical studies on the enactment of a translingual approach to writing and reported that most of the studies were done in college-level classrooms. Among the few translingual writing research studies in the K-12 context were Zapata and Laman (2016) and Pacheco and Smith (2015). The code-meshing projects in these studies show how elementary and secondary teachers embraced the language practices of multilingual students in linguistically diverse classrooms. Reviewing these examples, I will analyze the teachers’ pedagogical use of code-meshing, using the translingual lens to explore the feasibility and benefits of using code-meshing in K-12 classrooms.

Elementary Classrooms

Zapata and Laman (2016) studied translingual approaches to writing in the elementary classrooms of three teachers in the Southwest and the Southeast United States. First, Susan, a monolingual English-speaking teacher, taught a second-grade general education classroom for English-dominant students and a few bilingual students. Susan held a photo-poetry project and invited a bilingual student’s mother to the classroom. The mother showed photos of *Día de los*

Muertos (Day of the Dead) and read Spanish-English bilingual poetry. This opened student discussions about cognates and the bilingual peers' languages and experiences. The teacher "encouraged" (p. 371) a student to produce a bilingual poem including Spanish and English. In this instance, the teacher demonstrated a translingual disposition of openness to language differences. Exposure to language differences and talking about cognates allowed the students to grow metalinguistic awareness, expand the students' linguistic repertoire, and break the monolingual norm. However, it would have been powerful if the choice of whether to write a poem bilingually or not was left for the bilingual student, rather than the teacher inducing her to code-mesh.

Next, Sophia was a bilingual teacher teaching a third-grade ESL classroom for predominantly Latino students. Sophia wrote a bilingual picture book to reflect her "bilingualism and activist beliefs about linguistic diversity" (p. 373). Inspired by the banning of multicultural and multilingual curricula in Arizona and Georgia, Sophia wrote a bilingual picture book, where a nine-year-old girl leads her community to save banned books from being burned. In writing the book, she shared her draft with students, modeling how she negotiated the various language features in her writing. She used a recontextualizing strategy to place Spanish first and an entextualization strategy to make her approaches, negotiation, and purposes of code-meshing explicit. When she shared the process, she made it clear that a particular audience in her mind informed her of her language choices in her writing. In this case, Sophia successfully used her code-meshing process and product to bring social issues about language into the classroom.

Lastly, Alexandra was an emerging bilingual teacher who taught a fourth-grade ESL classroom of ethnically and linguistically diverse students. Alexandra attended to the language variety that students bring to the classroom, such as rap vernacular, southern regional dialects,

etc. She introduced linguistically diverse picture books to students and invited the students to choose their writing mentors. Her students used code-meshing in their narrative writing, appropriating the ways the mentor authors did. Students code-meshed to reveal the character's bilingual identity or to convey intimacy with her grandfather in Mexico. In this classroom, the teacher "did not expect students to write across their languages, but instead expected students to make purposeful decisions about if and when to do so" (p. 375). This shows that the students engaged in purposeful code-meshing with their writer's agency.

These translingual practices in elementary classrooms show how teachers and young students can benefit from pedagogical and purposeful code-meshing. The code-meshing projects led to both the teachers' and students' favorable orientation towards language differences and the construction of texts in innovative ways. Students grew awareness of language practices, monolingualism, their bilingual identities, and writer agency.

Zapata and Laman (2016) highlight three features of these projects, one of which is parent and community involvement. This naturally brings code-meshing of the multilingual communities into the classroom and positions the community's diverse languages as resources for communication and writing. Furthermore, the teachers modeled as translingual writers. The teacher's active modeling of code-meshing enabled teachers' reflection of their own language practices and meaningful negotiation with students about societal issues. Finally, the teachers shared code-meshed literature as models of writing. Picturebook reading and writing are inherently multimodal and easy for code-meshing.

Secondary Classroom

Pacheco and Smith (2015) and Pacheco et al. (2017) examined a multimodal code-meshing project in an eighth-grade English Language Arts classroom in an urban context, where

the majority of the students were current and former ELLs. Pacheco and Smith (2015) specifically focused on multilingual students' multimodal code-meshing practices to understand how bilingual adolescents leverage their linguistic repertoires in digital composition.

The students in this classroom participated in a multimodal code-meshing project called "everyday heroes" as a culminating project of a unit on heroism and reading of Eric Greitens's book, *The Warrior's Heart*. First, the students recorded interviews with heroes in their communities such as family members, many of whom did not speak English. A student, for example, chose to draft questions in English and translated them into Spanish for her mother. Throughout the project, the students engaged in a scaffolded workshop, where they learned about multimodal composition and developed a supportive class community for sharing ideas.

Next, students composed digital texts using PowerPoint, synthesizing the interview, connections to the novel, and personal reflections. While composing, students were put in groups of four so that they could share ideas. Depending on the language the interviewee used, the text could employ code-meshing. A student who had strong literacy in Spanish helped edit her classmate's Spanish writing. In this stage, the students were "encouraged... to be creative in structuring their compositions and using different languages and modalities" (Pacheco et al., 2017, p. 65). As a result, the students' final products meshed text, visuals, sound, and movement. The researchers analyzed the students' digital products and identified three major forms of code-meshing: meshing audio recordings, meshing texts, and meshing images. In all cases, students meshed their heritage language with English on the same slide.

Finally, the teacher held a digital showcase so that the students could share their compositions in small groups. During the conversations, the students were "encouraged... to inquire about different language choices, leading to important conversations about not only *what*

certain words or phrases meant, but *why* the composer chose to write in that language” (Pacheco et al., 2017, p. 65). The conversations about writer agency such as this are an essential part of translingual pedagogy, and teachers can further develop such conversations into a critical discussion about social and linguistic injustice, questioning monolingual norms.

The students’ language practices in this classroom project show that secondary students can purposefully mesh codes using various translingual strategies such as entextualization, envoicing, and revoicing. The students used code-meshing to engage multiple local and global audiences and (re)voice the subject. The students made compositional decisions based on what specific audience experiences they wished to achieve and how to showcase their personalities. The students also code-meshed to revoice as well as envoice the identities of their interviewees. While the students leveraged their biliteracy as a resource, not all students meshed their heritage languages in their slides. This shows that the code-meshing project raised students’ rhetorical awareness for balancing their linguistic competencies and sensibilities of their audience.

What is remarkable about this particular project is that it encouraged the composition of multimodal code-meshing, which goes beyond just code-meshing in reading and writing text, reflecting the expanded definition of literacy. Also, similarly to the elementary classrooms in Zapata and Laman (2016), the project brought the voice of the multilingual community into the classroom, which concomitantly invited students’ translingual practices used in the communities but seldom visible in the classroom.

Conclusion

A translingual approach to language difference was called for to challenge the problems of the monolingualism prevalent in U.S. classrooms. While translingualism is theoretical, educators have sought how to enact the translingual approach in their teaching, and code-

meshing can be used as translingual pedagogy. Some critics have shown concerns about uncritical adoption of code-meshing, students' readiness for code-meshing, and possible reinforcing of monolingualism. However, code-meshing is not necessarily detrimental to students; rather, it can be used as a productive pedagogical strategy in the classroom for developing a translingual disposition, supporting students' multilingual identity, and discussing social and linguistic equity.

The studies of Zapata and Laman (2016) and Pacheco et al. (2017) show what elementary and secondary students can do with and achieve from pedagogical and purposeful use of code-meshing in general education, ESL, and English language arts classrooms. They also illuminate teachers' local attempts to act against the myth of monolingualism through code-meshing projects and bringing in community language to the classroom. Such a translingual approach to writing contributes to "a developing and democratic vision for teaching writing that strives to value, leverage, and teach into students' everyday languaging practices" (Zapata & Laman, 2016, p. 366).

Although this paper's scope was limited to code-meshing, the translingual pedagogy can be and should be translated into practice in many other ways by teachers. However, a hindrance to implementing translingual pedagogy often goes beyond what individual teachers can do, such as standardized tests and school systems that adhere to the monolingual orientation. While this is true, it "does not mean we[educators] should avoid translingual pedagogies, awaiting the kinds of large-scale and top-down changes that will take lifetimes to fully unfold." (Schreiber & Watson, 2018, p. 97). Young (2013) strongly asserts to teachers that:

When we say that our hands are tied because of standardized tests and public perception, we allow test makers, the commercial world, and the general public to dictate our

professional responsibilities, to decide in effect what we teach, and negate our own professional training and credentials. We choose not to use our individual and collective agency to alter the prevailing linguistic prejudice. (pp. 144-145)

Another deterrent could be that teachers are afraid of trying out a new pedagogy and the possible danger of doing it “wrong” as some scholars fear (e.g., Matsuda, 2014). However, as Schreiber and Watson (2018) said, “flawed applications of translingual pedagogy... may be seen as an inevitable part of the work of educators puzzling through newly uncovered concepts, problems, and possibilities” (p. 97). It should be the researchers’ and theorists’ labor to learn from practitioners and help them apply the theories and research findings through collaboration. Teachers and researchers’ collaborative endeavor to apply the translingual approach for equity despite structural limitations should be welcomed and highly encouraged.

The studies introduced in this paper focused mostly on exploring pedagogical efforts to understand, validate, and develop young multilingual students’ language diversity through code-meshing. Future research of translingual pedagogy can explore the code-meshing experiences of both monolingual students and multilingual students in elementary and secondary classrooms. Also, more research should be done to illuminate ways in which a translingual pedagogy might assist K-12 students in negotiating a balance between constructing rhetorically effective monolingual texts and expressing multilingual writer agency and identities.

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