

Embracing a Critical Translingual Approach

Centering Transformative Language Learning

- To make language learning experiences in the U.S. transformative, a comprehensive approach that is able to address the marginalization of minoritized communities should be adopted.
- Ethnic studies courses:
 - Challenges epistemological racism
 - Cultivates critical literacy development
 - Centers the lived experiences, histories, and literary traditions of minoritized communities and people of color.

- Translanguaging theory emphasizes that bi/multilinguals are not the combination of monolinguals. Instead, it emphasizes how bi/multilinguals have an integrated repertoire of language resources.
- Translanguaging is rooted in linguistic flexibility and fluidity.

What is translanguaging theory?

Translanguaging pedagogy & social justice in literacy classrooms

 Translanguaging pedagogy aims to provide social justice in classrooms through three strands:

Stance

Teachers' beliefs about bilingualism and bilingual students

Translanguaging design

Instructional plan that reflects students' language practices

Translanguaging shift

Teachers' unplanned moves that adapt to students' needs in languages, interests, cultures, and learning



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A critical translanguaging approach is one that explicitly draws connections between language, power, and identity.

Corridos—a justice-oriented literary genre

- combats against white supremacy.
- usually centers the destiny and political values of a community.
- can strengthen collective solidarity across racial and ethnic student groups.

- Teachers invited Latinx and African American students to read excerpts from Paredes' (1958) foundational text that highlights the social justice history of corridos.
- Supplemented reading with multi-modal elements to introduce the structure and content of corridos.
- Guided students in collaboratively writing their own corridos.
- Showcased students learning by asking them to read aloud their work.

A Study of Corridos

Study Findings

- Three themes emerged from students' learning:
 - Their fluid translanguaging and desire to engage in language sharing
 - Their articulation of a heightened political consciousness
 - Their development of care for themselves and one another
- This learning experience cultivates students' consciousness of the political discourse around immigration. The awareness further elicits students' feelings of solidarity and care

Teaching Suggestions

Teachers should make space for students to engage in linguistic and cultural sharing and build solidarity among students.

Teachers can center multimodal texts written by culturally and linguistically diverse writers where translanguaging is used and where their understandings about language, identity, and power are articulated.

By doing this, teachers can counter monolingual norms in classrooms. Meanwhile, students are able to make full use of their prior linguistic and literary knowledge. This knowledge is valuable when it is shared.

Infographic by: Jiali Wang and Jenell Krishnan

