Teachers' translanguaging stance, design, and shifts in a professional development course

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Classrooms in Luxembourg are highly socially, culturally, and linguistically diverse. About 65% of 4 year-old children do not speak Luxembourgish, of which 28% speak Portuguese (MENJE, 2018). In 2017, the new law has declared multilingual early education mandatory. Until that time, the focus was solely on the development of Luxemburgish, whereas now teachers should also familiarize children with French and value their home languages. To support preschool teachers, our project[1] aims to: (1) offer a professional development (PD) course in translanguaging, (2) involve children's families to reinforce home-school collaboration, and (3) foster children's cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional engagement in the classroom. We use focus groups, questionnaires, and language portraits with teachers and a test in early literacy and numeracy in school and home language and video observations with children.

Translanguaging, the main topic of our 22 hour PD course (June – December 2019), is the use of a full linguistic repertoire to make meaning (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). Through focus groups, we identified teachers' negative translanguaging stance towards children's proficiency in their home language that hinders the development of Luxembourgish. Translanguaging design was related to teachers' use of multilingual stories and morning greetings, while translanguaging shifts concerned frequent translations by involving older children. Our main goal is to address the negative translanguaging stance by offering practical activities during the course and collaborating with parents, children, and organisational stakeholders.

References

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