BAQONDE International Showcase

Online Dissemination Event

Friday 3 February 2023

BAQONDE | Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Learn in Your Language

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

**3 FEBRUARY 2023
ONLINE VIA ZOOM**

BUILDING CAPACITY IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES

INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE

2.30PM–3.30PM (SOUTH AFRICA, UTC+2)
12.30PM–1.30PM (IRELAND/UTC)

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What is translanguaging?

Multilingualism stems from speakers in an organic, natural way (Garcia & Kleyn 2016:23). So *translanguaging* could be described as:

'the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages' (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015:283)

- Translanguaging in the academic domain is where students actively make meaning of subject content as they are encouraged to use their repertoires (Garcia, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017)
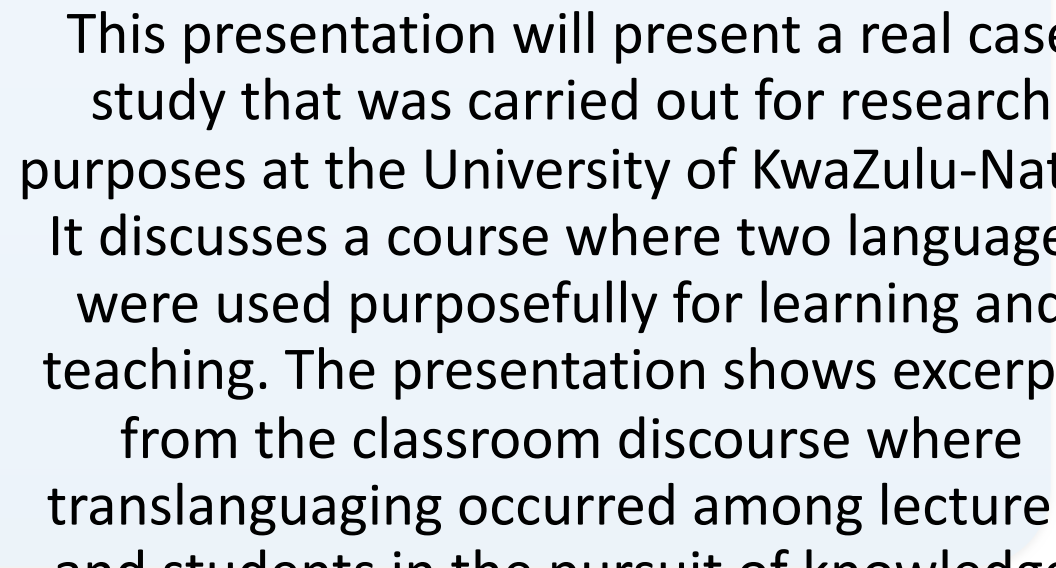
Translanguaging Functions
(Duarte 2020; Nap et al, 2022)

Semantic-Symbolic

- Involves single word translation into another language

- Ask students to provide the word for the concept being taught in their own languages

- Can lead to the development of semantic fields where differences in meanings are nuanced

Comparative Symbolic

- Involves comparing words across different languages

- Affordances for discussion of contextual information and differences in meaning according to context

- Links knowledge in home languages to knowledge in the instructional language
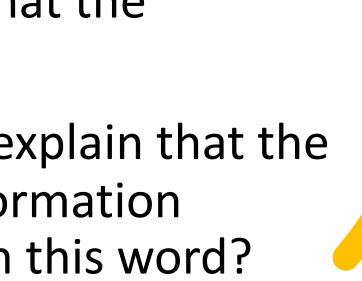
This presentation will present a real case study that was carried out for research purposes at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It discusses a course where two languages were used purposefully for learning and teaching. The presentation shows excerpts from the classroom discourse where translanguaging occurred among lecturers and students in the pursuit of knowledge.

Example

In the following extract from a lesson transcript, an Applied Linguistics lecturer (AL) is debriefing Zulu 3rd year students for their research project with 1st year English students. She is discussing the questionnaires that they have brought to class and is focusing on one of the questions a student wrote which carries too much information. She describes it as "too dense" and then asks the class to translate that into isiZulu.

In the discussion, the Zulu lecturer (ZL) helps to support and clarify the information in isiZulu. This, in turn, encourages the students to use their own languages in the discussion.

Students are S1, S2 and S3.

- **S1**: *Akucacile* kahle (It's not clear)?

- **AL**: Mm? Can you spell that? (Writes on board as student spells the word)… Oh **A-K-U-C-A -C-I-L-E**….so it's not clear? Right! And the reason why is that there is too much information embedded in that one question…it is too *dense*. She hasn't simplified it by asking separate questions for the different aspects of the topic

- **S2**: *Kusaxubile, kusaxakekile*..(students laugh)

- **AL**: These are the kinds of meanings we need in order to understand the concept…and the nuances of meaning

- **S3**: **Kusho ukuthi imisho ixubekile** (it means that the sentences are *mixed up*) – **K-U-X-U-B-E-K-I-L-E**

- **AL**: Thank you, this is helpful… I was trying to explain that the questions were too densely compacted with information …(looking at a student) You don't agree   with this word?

ZL: (intervenes**) Kuxubekile akasho ukuthi kuxubekile...ufake izinto eziningi.**(*It is mixed up* - that's not what she **(AL)** is saying.....you have put in lots of things

S1: Kodwa (but)...**Kuxubekile...kusho ukuthi imix masala, kuhlangene** (It is mixed, it means it is a mixture of various things

ZL: Manje kusho ukuthi...(Now it means that) **akasho ukuthi kunokuningi** (she is not saying there is a range of things) **Kuhlangene akasho ukuthi kuhlangene** (she is not saying it is mixed together)**...kusho ukuthi kuningi kakhulu okushoyo kuleyo nto oyibhalile...akukona okuxubekile** (it means there is a lot of stuff in what you have written, it is not mixed). **Kusho ukuthi le nto oyishoyo wena indlela oyibeke ngayo izinto eziningi kanyekanye...I don't know ...akulona igama elilodwa elichaza lokho okushoyo alikho igama elilodwa** (It means that what you are saying, the way in which you put it there are lots of things all at the same time ..there's no single word to explain it).

Conclusion

- isiZulu was used by ZL for clarification, instruction and explanation

- isiZulu was used by the students to contribute their own knowledge of their language and to engage in debate

- English was used to clarify and question, especially by the AL

- English was used by the ZL to confirm and clarify what she originally had said in isiZulu

- Students were actually building a semantic field of related concepts in this way

Thank You

Advancing the use of African languages in education

BAQONDE is collaborative project between European and South African Higher Education Institutions to facilitate and promote the use of indigenous African languages as mediums of instruction in tertiary education. Co-funded by the EU's ERASMUS+ Capacity Building in Higher Education programme, BAQONDE aims to guarantee a more (linguistically) inclusive and legitimate access to Higher Education by means of a coordinated inter-institutional strategy that seeks to train lecturers in the use of innovative multilingual teaching methodologies, develop new materials to both train teachers and teach multilingually, and establish a collaboratory network of African Language Development Units among SA partners.

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