



# Translanguaging practices and metalinguistic reflection during negotiation of meaning in tandem virtual exchanges

*Prácticas de translenguaje y reflexión metalingüística durante la negociación de significado en intercambios virtuales tándem*

Laia Canals  
*Universitat Oberta de Catalunya*



## Abstract

Earlier studies exploring translanguaging in virtual exchanges (Walker, 2018; Zheng et al., 2017) have mainly focused on identifying translanguaging in written chats to analyze discursive aspects and feedback processes. However, tandem virtual exchanges provide the possibility of analyzing the negotiation of meaning of linguistic aspects from the perspective of plurilingual practices, such as translanguaging, which have not yet been investigated in these contexts. The present study examines the role that the linguistic repertoires of the learners play in learner-learner interactions in tandem virtual exchanges between college-students at a Canadian and a Spanish university. Eighteen learners interacted online while carrying out oral collaborative tasks where they negotiated and co-created meaning in their respective target languages. In these interactions, the entire linguistic repertoires of the learners scaffolded the conversations and contributed to mutual understanding. Translanguaging practices occurred mostly in inquiries and explanations about linguistic aspects where metalinguistic reflection played an important role.

**Keywords:** Online oral interaction; Task-based language learning (TBLL); Negotiation of meaning; Metalinguistic reflection; Synchronous computer-mediated communication

## Resumen

Estudios anteriores que exploran el translenguaje en intercambios virtuales (Walker, 2018; Zheng et al., 2017) se han centrado en identificar el translenguaje en chats de texto para analizar aspectos discursivos y retroalimentación. Sin embargo, los intercambios virtuales en tándem brindan la posibilidad de analizar la negociación de significado de aspectos lingüísticos desde la perspectiva del translenguaje que apenas se ha investigado en estos contextos. El presente estudio examina el papel que juegan los repertorios lingüísticos de los alumnos en las interacciones alumno-alumno en intercambios virtuales en tándem entre estudiantes de universidades canadienses y españolas. Dieciocho estudiantes realizaron tareas colaborativas orales en las que negociaron significado en sus respectivos idiomas meta. En estas interacciones, los repertorios lingüísticos completos de los alumnos vehicularon las conversaciones y contribuyeron al entendimiento mutuo. Las prácticas de translenguaje ocurrieron mayoritariamente en indagaciones y explicaciones sobre aspectos lingüísticos donde la reflexión metalingüística jugó un papel importante.

**Palabras clave:** Interacción oral en línea; Enfoque por tareas; Negociación de significado; Reflexión metalingüística; Comunicación sincrónica mediada por ordenador

## INTRODUCTION

Virtual exchanges (O’Dowd, 2018), and especially those which have a tandem format (O’Rourke, 2007; Tian & Wang, 2010), have been proven to be a fertile ground for interaction between learners. When carried out as part of carefully designed tasks (Ekin et al., 2021; Hauck & Young, 2008), the oral tasks completed during these exchanges can elicit negotiation of meaning and language related episodes (Bueno-Alastuey, 2013; Yanguas, 2010; Yanguas & Bergin, 2018; Yilmaz & Granena, 2010). The focus on form and the negotiation of meaning which occurs in language related episodes have been deemed as important for language acquisition (Yanguas, 2010; Yilmaz & Granena, 2010). However, the role that translanguaging can play in negotiation of meaning as part of tandem virtual exchanges tasks is still understudied.

The objective of the present study is to understand the role that translanguaging plays in learner-learner online oral interactions in which the learners employ their whole linguistic repertoires during the negotiation of meaning process. We address translanguaging both as a pedagogical practice (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021), which can be fostered through task-based online oral interactions between learners, and as a skill (García & Wei, 2014) that allows learners to use their entire linguistic repertoires to co-construct meaning.

## TRANSLANGUAGING IN ONLINE LEARNER-LEARNER INTERACTIONS

Translanguaging as a term to describe how (even emergent) plurilingual speakers negotiate and create meaning using their whole linguistic repertoires (Costa, 2021) has its origin in the mid-1990s. The concept was coined in Wales to describe a bilingual pedagogical practice in which students receive input in English but produce learning outputs in Welsh (Lewis et al., 2012). Since then, the term has been adopted by bilingual education scholars (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Carstens, 2016; García & Wei, 2014; Tian, 2021; Zheng, 2019) to describe how plurilingual speakers communicate and make meaning using their entire linguistic repertoires. Emergent plurilingual speakers who are not proficient in the foreign language (FL), such as the participants in the present study, use translanguaging “as both a scaffolding tool and a language of thought, as they still have a strong dependence on their native language” (Costa, 2021, p. 7). In these cases, translanguaging becomes the manner in which speakers create meaning using several languages, from one-word switches to entire episodes where learners use their whole linguistic repertoires. According to Costa (2021), one-word switches and code-switching are

included in the concept of translanguaging. In fact, and as the same author points out, translanguaging transcends codes-switching as “it [translanguaging] is not merely about using separate languages, but rather about exploiting a flexible, comprehensive linguistic repertoire that encompasses all the language codes that make it up as one sole entity.” (Costa, 2021, p. 7).

Translanguaging practices have recently gained some attention in English language teaching contexts -in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL)- and at the primary (Karabassova & San Isidro, 2020; Rajendram, 2019), secondary (Aoyama, 2020; Tai & Wei, 2021) and university levels (Adinolfi & Astruc; 2017; Canals, 2021; Carsten, 2016). This literature review will focus on earlier research which has examined translanguaging practices in synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) (Adinolfi & Astruc, 2017; Canals, 2021, 2022a; Messina Dahlberg & Bagga-Gupta, 2014; Walker, 2018; Zheng et al., 2017), which is the setting of the present research.

Translanguaging practices have been used as an interactional resource in learner-learner interactions but also teacher-learner interactions in SCMC. Adinolfi and Astruc (2017) examined the use of pedagogical translanguaging by teachers to provide instructions and prompt non-verbal responses from their learners in a Spanish video-conferencing lesson. In a different setting, in this case a 3D virtual learning environment, Chinese learners of English engaged in translanguaging practices while completing an oral collaborative consensus task where learners had to agree about decorating a virtual living room (Zheng et al., 2017). Canals (2021) examined how translanguaging scaffolded oral interactions during learner-learner SCMC conversations by reinforcing and complementing negotiation of meaning with the use of the target languages practiced during the virtual exchange (VE) (O’Dowd, 2018) and other languages in their linguistic repertoires. In a more recent study, Canals (2022a) analyzed the role of translanguaging episodes in eliciting interactional feedback and modified output and found translanguaging had a statistically significant effect on the amount of interactional feedback and modified output learners received and produced, which have been said to influence second language (L2) development (Gass & Mackey, 2006). Examining a similar SCMC environment, Messina Dahlberg & Bagga-Gupta (2014) analyzed how translanguaging supported the process of meaning-making and assisted in mediating and co-constructing learning while learners displayed their entire linguistic repertoires. Reporting on a VE between German and English learners, Walker (2018) found that the learners used translanguaging in meaning negotiation, while solving

language issues, negotiating roles during tasks, doing exploratory talk, and showing mutual support.

### **PEDAGOGICAL TRANSLANGUAGING, METALINGUISTIC UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS**

Pedagogical translanguaging (PT) refers to an instructional practice by which teachers foster the development of skills that allow learners to use their entire linguistic repertoires in the classroom. PT involves planning and applying pedagogical interventions utilizing plurilingual pedagogical strategies that mobilize the learners' entire linguistic repertoires. Cenoz and Gorter (2021) indicate that PT brings the concept of translanguaging closer to its original meaning.

Another aspect which occurs in PT practices and in the data presented in the current article is what García et al. (2017) call translanguaging shifts, that is, unplanned translanguaging practices emerging as a consequence of the communicative needs of the interaction. These translanguaging shifts are closer to translanguaging communicative practices in bilingual communities between plurilingual speakers. Translanguaging shifts have an underlying pedagogical value which needs to be exploited during instruction or while designing tasks that require learners to have conversational interactions between them, such as in the current study.

Cenoz and Gorter (2021) applied PT to CLIL contexts to refer to explicit instructional practices. In the present article, however, the PT concept is adopted to analyze translanguaging practices in tandem VE interactions. In this context, the meaning of PT shifts from being a pedagogical action intentionally used by the teacher in classroom practices to being implemented through the planning and designing of learning activities and tasks that mobilize learners' whole linguistic repertoires. These tasks are carried out online by pairing learners who have different proficiency levels in the languages involved and interchange roles as experts and learners during their online interactions. The scope of PT is also broadened to include not only two languages spoken in a bilingual community where translanguaging practices are common, but also to contexts where translanguaging is allowed, facilitated, and fostered by the plurilingual nature of VE encounters between plurilingual speakers. In the data presented in this paper, translanguaging practices not only involve the languages of the VE, Spanish and English, but also any other shared (foreign or second) language, such as German, French, or Catalan.

Be it in classroom practices or in learner-learner interaction, PT helps to scaffold the interaction process, and the negotiation of meaning and meaning making taking place, while it also contributes to the development of metalinguistic awareness (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021). According to Jessner (2014), metalinguistic awareness is understood as the ability to reflect on language and to focus on language as an object. In the data presented in this paper however, the development of metalinguistic awareness becomes a by-product rather than an objective or aim of the learner-learner interaction.

The concepts of metatalk and metalinguistic understanding are crucial to understand knowledge representation in L2 development (Ellis, 2009), especially the learners' explicit knowledge about the target language and how that knowledge is employed in language use. The concept of metatalk has been defined by Swain (1998) as metalinguistic reflection on language use and has been linked to cognitive processing (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Metatalk, particularly in teacher-learner or learner-learner interactions, has been deemed essential in facilitating learners' understanding of the relationship between meaning and form (Storch, 2008). Another related concept which plays a role in monitoring, recognizing, and reflecting on patterns of language use is metalinguistic understanding. According to Bialystok (2001), metalinguistic understanding helps learners process language use and create meaning.

The present study draws on earlier research examining translanguaging in learner-learner dyads carrying out oral tasks online and takes up the PT concept in order to analyze the functions that translanguaging exerts in scaffolding these interactions.

The following research questions guided the present research:

- 1) What are the most common functions that translanguaging exerts during learner-learner negotiation of meaning?
- 2) What role does metatalk play in episodes which contain translanguaging practices?

## **METHOD**

### **Context and participants**

The interactions analyzed in the present study come from a tandem-based VE organized between a Spanish and a Canadian university which was carried out over

the course of three months. The participants were nine high-intermediate learners of Spanish at the Canadian institution and nine advanced learners of English at the Spanish university (11 males and 7 females) who carried out three two-way information exchange oral tasks online using a video-conferencing tool. During these online meetings, learners alternated between the roles of expert (in their most proficient language) and that of learners of the target language they were studying at the university.

### **Data collection procedures**

Learners were paired up according to time availability and the dyads met to practice each other's languages over Skype, where they took part in three oral interactive tasks using a video conferencing system which allowed them to record the sessions. These recordings were sent to the professors at each institution for assessment purposes and to the researcher who obtained the learners' explicit written consent to use the data for research purposes.

There were three two-way open-ended tasks which were carried out once every three weeks and required the learners to exchange information about each other's lives. The first two tasks involved comparing and contrasting information about their own cultures (university life, culture-specific objects) and decision-making and collaborating to write a proposal together about a city's regeneration project (task 3). The tasks, the instructions for which can be found in Appendix A, lasted 39 minutes on average, and learners were instructed to conduct part of the conversation in one language and the other part in the other language to make sure both learners had equal opportunities to practice their target language. Learners were also encouraged to help their partners with language-related questions and to provide explanations about lexical items and demonstrate the pronunciation of certain words whenever their interlocutors requested it.

### **Data treatment: transcribing and coding**

Data were transcribed following Seedhouse and Richards' (2007) transcription conventions (see Appendix B) and 203 translanguaging language related episodes were identified and coded according to the function the translanguaging played in the negotiation of meaning process. Explanations about each coding category are provided below along with illustrative examples.

The first category, which is the most common one, is *Seeking help about linguistic aspects*. This category included instances in which one of the learners

looked for a lexical item in the target language and was generally introduced by a variation of the sentence *How do you say X?* The function of translanguaging in these cases helps contextualize the topic shift and strengthen the request besides *Retaining original terminology* (which was coded as a category on its own) because there is not a word in the target language for that lexical item, as shown in example 1.

#### Example 1

SP2: It could be also a: *merienda*? Do you have a word for *merienda*? ← **Seeking help about lexical item + retaining original terminology**

CAN2: *Merienda*? Like a snack or?

SP2: It's time between lunch and dinner, do you eat?

CAN2: We would just call that an afternoon snack. ((laughter)) We don't really have a word for that.

The provision of *Metalinguistic explanations* is another function that translanguaging fulfils which often implies reiterations or the need to explain the rule to others or to oneself, as seen in example 2. In the same example, translanguaging also allows speakers to express the *Equivalent lexical item* in the language of the interlocutor. Similarly, the same translanguaging has the function of *Making sure the other understands* the repair sequences by providing some emphasis on the lexical item at stake. At the end of example 2, one of the interlocutors uses translanguaging to *Express understanding*.

#### Example 2

CAN2: Toda sus vidas.<sup>1</sup>

[All their lives.]

SP2: Su vida. Claro, tú lo has hecho pensando en inglés que dices *their*. ← **Equivalence + Metalinguistic information + making sure understanding occurred**

[Their life. Of course, you said that thinking of the English 'their'.]

CAN2: Their lives, *sí*. ← **Expressing understanding**

[Their lives, yes.]

*Confirmation checks, clarification requests and comprehension checks* were coded according to the definitions and categorizations provided by Ziegler and

---

<sup>1</sup> None of the transcripts have been corrected to purposefully illustrate pronunciation or grammatical non-target-like utterances.

Phung (2019). Clarification requests are questions one of the interlocutors asks when they fail to grasp the meaning of an utterance, as illustrated in example 3.

**Example 3**

CAN5: Cómo se dice *rivalry*?

[How do you say rivalry?]

SP5: Library? ← **Clarification request**

CAN5: Rivalry. I don't know how to describe it. There is like a lot of history between the teams and they don't like each other very much.

SP5: Ah, vale, rivalidad, rivalidad.

[Ah, ok, rivalry, rivalry.]

*Confirmation checks* are questions in which one of the interlocutors is trying to corroborate what the other interlocutor is intending to express, which we can see in example 4.

**Example 4**

CAN1: *Dönnner* es carne especiada dentro de una envoltura de pita e:: con

[*Dönnner* is spiced meat inside a pita wrap e:: with]

SP1: De pita *you mean a kind of bread*? ← **Confirmation check**

CAN1: sí,

SP1: Ah, ok.

CAN1: con cebolla, tomates y salsa, a::

[With onion, tomato and sauce]

*Comprehension checks* refer to instances when one of the interlocutors realizes the other one might have difficulty understanding them and they are a common function of translanguaging, as we can see in example 5. In the same example we illustrate how translanguaging also often occurs when learners are *explaining the meaning of a lexical item*.

**Example 5**

SP4: No me he explicado muy bien. Es que es un poquito difícil. *Did you understand?* ← **Comprehension check**

[I didn't make myself understood. It's a bit difficult. Did you understand?]



CAN4: No, no, no. En.. entiendo todo. Es como am::, creo que es *bursaries* en en inglés. *Scholarships* am:: es como cuando:: e:: estudia muy muy buena y a:: tiene buena notas.

[No, no, no. I understand everything. It's like am::, I think it's bursaries in in English. Scholarships am:: is like when:: e:: you study very very well and a:: you got good grades.]

SP4: *Yeah, yeah.*

CAN4: *That's scholarships y bursary* es más de solamente dinero. ← **Explaining the meaning of a lexical item**

[That's scholarships and bursary is more just money.]

SP4: Yeah, yeah. It's.. it's like this, yeah, yeah. And then if you . Do you have honor marks then they pay your.. Free, it's all free. But it's very difficult.

Another function of translanguaging is *mitigating corrections* with the use of affective and also humorous language, as we can observe in example 6.

#### Example 6

CAN3: Sí y a: el próximo clase el hombre no es en el clase e:: *any. anymore?*

[Yes and a: the next class the man was not in class e:: anymore?]

SP3: *Anymore, sí, ya no estaba otra vez, no estaba nunca más. He run away, yeah?* ((laughter)) ← **Correction mitigation**

[Anymore, yes, he was not there again, never again. He run away, yeah?]

*Discourse markers* (such as *so*) or *interjections* (such as *wow* or *really?*) are also another category of translanguaging functions as seen in example 7.

#### Example 7

CAN3: *Ah:: when you say weather it's hacer como hace viento, right?* ← **Discourse marker**

SP3: Yeah, very windy sería hace mucho viento, pero ventoso, we don't use it too much, ventoso.

Finally, translanguaging is also used to express *apologetic comments about their lack of linguistic knowledge* which can also be seen as a strategy to help save face in front of their interlocutors, as we can see in example 8.

#### Example 8

CAN5: Dirty, like if you are covered in mud, what would you call that, like, you get dirty.

SP5: Let me.. Can you write it on the chat and I can translate for you?

CAN5: Okay.

SP5: Ah, *dirty*, ah, *sucio*.

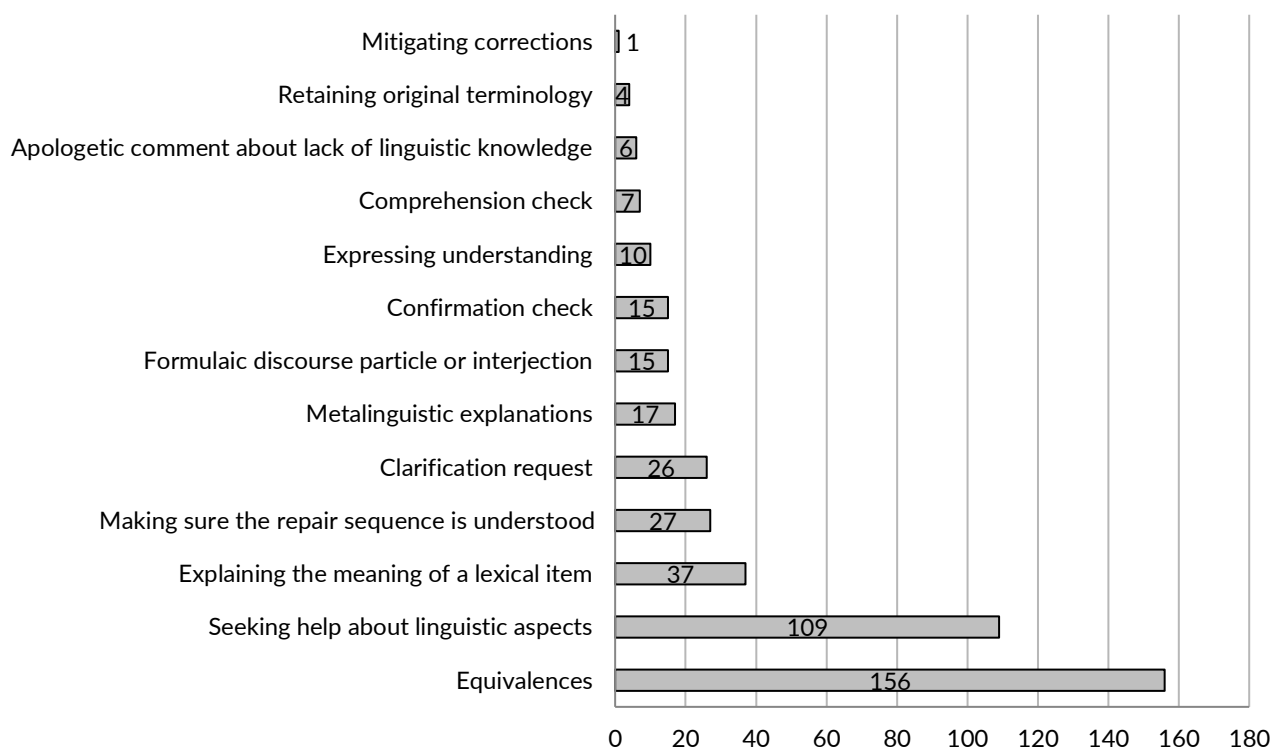
CAN5: *Sucio, that! I. I knew it started with an -s* ((laughter)) ← **Apologetic comments**

As it can be observed in the examples above, one single translanguaging episode can exert more than one function at once.

## RESULTS

To answer research question 1, and as we can observe in figure 1, the most common functions of the translanguaging found in the 203 negotiation of meaning episodes were: 1) expressing linguistic equivalences; 2) learners' requests seeking help from their partners about linguistic aspects; and 3) explanations about the meaning of lexical items. Somewhat common functions included making sure the interlocutor understands the repair sequence, making clarification requests, metalinguistic explanations, the use of formulaic expressions or interjections, and confirmation checks. The rest of the functions that could be observed were much less frequent, with ten or fewer instances identified in the data (expressing understanding, comprehension checks, apologetic comments, retaining original terminology and mitigating corrections).

Figure 1. Most common functions of translanguaging



In summary, the most common functions of translanguaging had to do with comparing and contrasting lexical items using metatalk, which contributes to metalinguistic understanding and awareness. Before delving into the qualitative examples and given that one instance of translanguaging can serve several functions at once, data about the most common combination of functions together in a single translanguaging episode will be presented and illustrated with examples.

The example shown in Table 1 was among the most common types of translanguaging episodes. One of the learners asked for the equivalent of a word that they did not know in the target language.

**Table 1. Common combination of functions of translanguaging in an episode: seeking help about language & equivalence**

Turn	Speaker	Transcript	Coding
1	SP2	You put. It's kind of a sharp edge, in the little hole and you:: <i>Girar? Cómo se dice?</i> [Translation: Turn? How do you say that?]	Seeking help about language
2	CAN2	Turn.	Equivalence
3	SP2	You turn and it's open.	

Turning to other more complex sequences, we can observe in Table 2 how learners used translanguaging to compare and contrast the meaning of a lexical item; in this case, the target word was 'veal' or 'ternera' in Spanish. The Spanish speaker knew the equivalent word, but in her mind, the word 'veal' and 'beef' seemed to be equivalent. However, the English speaker pointed out the specific meaning of the lexical item ('it's like a young cow') in turn 3. The Spanish speaker, insisted that the word for 'veal' is 'ternera' and added emphasis including what she thought was the equivalent word in English in the next turn. In this case, the episode was resolved without knowing whether a real understanding had occurred.

**Table 2. Common combination of functions of translanguaging in an episode: seeking help about language, equivalence & explanation of the meaning of a lexical item**

Turn	Speaker	Transcript	Coding
1	CAN5	De pollo and <i>veal</i> ? [Translation: Out of chicken.]	Seeking help about language
2	SP5	De <i>ternera</i> ? <i>Beef</i> ?	Equivalence
3	CAN5	No, de <i>veal</i> , es like a young cow.	Explanation of the meaning of a lexical item
4	SP5	Yes, de <i>ternera</i> , de <i>beef</i> .	Equivalence
5	CAN5	Okay.	

In the following example in table 3, the use of translanguaging helped scaffold the negotiation of meaning process. A clarification request in English ‘Excuse me?’ triggered a subsequent use of the text chat tool to clarify the form of the target lexical item.

Table 3. Common combination of functions of translanguaging in an episode: Equivalence & Clarification request

Turn	Speaker	Transcript	Coding
1	CAN7	It's cool.. <i>pero formal</i> [Translation: but formal]	Equivalence
2	SP7	Formal? Hm, no sé. Suena bien. [Translation: Formal? I don't know. It sounds cool.]	
3	CAN7	<i>Excuse me?</i>	Clarification request
4	SP7	Mira, te lo escribo en el chat. [Translation: Look, I'm writing it on the chat.]	
5	CAN7	Ah, ok, suena bien [It sounds good]	

In the example in table 4, the translanguaging highlighted the fact that the Spanish learner was asking for an equivalent word and a confirmation check at the same time. It is intriguing to understand why the Spanish learner did not ask the same question in Spanish which was the language in which the episode started and ended. Instead, she seemed to choose English to signal and reinforce that she was looking for an equivalent word in English or to make sure she understood what her interlocutor meant.

Table 4. Common combination of functions of translanguaging in an episode: equivalence & confirmation check

Turn	Speaker	Transcript	Coding
1	CAN1	Dönnner es carne especiada dentro de una envoltura de pita e:: con [Dönnner is spiced meat inside a pita wrap e:: with]	
2	SP1	De pita <i>you mean a kind of bread?</i>	Equivalence +Confirmation check
3	CAN1	Sí.	

In relation to research question 2, the negotiation of meaning process provided learners with *in situ* practice for comparing, contrasting and reflecting on linguistic structures and lexical items, something which contributes to develop and reinforce their metalinguistic awareness (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021). The examples above, however, do not provide the entire picture of the extent to which learners

use their whole linguistic repertoires. Below are two examples where learners use languages other than the target ones learners signed up to practice in this virtual exchange (Spanish and English) in order to contribute to the negotiation of meaning process.

In the first example in Table 5, learners used another FL, German, in order to provide the equivalent of the Spanish expression in the first turn. However, in turn 2 she had provided an explanation of the term in English which was supposedly understood by her interlocutor ('yeah'). In this case, providing the equivalent in another language (German) reinforces the negotiation of meaning because it provides a close almost word-per-word equivalent to the Spanish expression 'no tengo ganas'. At this point, it seemed that neither one of the speakers could think of the exact English equivalent 'I don't feel like it', so the German expression that both knew worked just as well.

Table 5. Example of translanguaging involving Spanish, English and German

Turn	Speaker	Transcript	Coding
1	SP2	No tengo ganas. [Translation: I don't feel like]	
2	CAN2	Oh! Like want to do something?	Explaining the meaning of a lexical item
3	SP2	Yeah.	
4	CAN2	Like <i>Ich habe keine Lust?</i>	Equivalence
5	SP2	Exactly!	

In the following excerpt, in Table 6, the Canadian learner used a French expression before reformulating the sentence. In this case, and knowing that the Spanish speaker also knew Catalan, she tried her chances with French before giving the English equivalent of the expression. The Spanish-Catalan speaker failed to understand the expression and asked for clarification instead of providing the Spanish equivalent ('me pregunto'), so in this case the equivalent expressions in other languages did not end up helping the Spanish-Catalan speaker understand the target expression.

Interactions in languages other than the target languages were not common in the corpus of this study because learners did not always have a shared knowledge of the same FL. Only in five percent of the cases did translanguaging episodes involve the use of languages other than English and Spanish.

Table 6. Example of translanguaging involving Spanish, English and French

Turn	Speaker	Transcript	Coding
1	CAN4	No sé cómo se dice en español. <i>In French is 'je me demande', I wonder.</i> [Translation: I don't know how you say it in Spanish. In French is I wonder]	Equivalence
2	SP4	Can you repeat?	
3	CAN4	Pienso que.. cuántas personas usan <i>couch-surfing</i> en Barcelona? [Translation: I'm thinking.. How many people use couch-surfing in Barcelona?]	

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Besides teachers' pedagogical interventions, this study suggests that PT practices can also occur when learners interact and (naturally) deploy their entire linguistic repertoires, such as in VEs involving interactions between learners. These practices reinforce the idea that these learners are emergent plurilingual speakers. As such, they are developing competence in a FL by drawing on their knowledge and experience as plurilingual speakers making their linguistic repertoires interrelate and interact (Council of Europe, 2001).

The translanguaging practices of the student dyads analyzed in the current article revealed that translanguaging aids in scaffolding the interactions and negotiation of meaning, linking prior knowledge to new information by comparing and contrasting different languages. This practice has been deemed crucial for the development of metalinguistic awareness, the ability to reflect on language and to focus on language as an object (Jessner, 2014).

Even though using the learners first language (L1) should be done selectively while learning a second language, some uses of the L1 presented above suggest that it may help learners reflect on their process of learning of lexical items by negotiating its meaning and using metatalk. The use of metatalk, defined as metalinguistic reflection on language use (Swain, 1998), has been said to facilitate cognitive processing (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). The translanguaging instances presented above illustrate how translanguaging scaffolds the negotiation of meaning processes, serving a communicative function which contributes to solving linguistic misunderstandings or clarifying the meaning of lexical items which come up in learner-learner interactions. Swain (1998) deems the use of metatalk in interactions in these contexts necessary to support learners' understanding of the relationship between meaning and form (Storch, 2008). The use of metatalk involves metalinguistic

understanding, which requires monitoring, recognizing, and identifying language use patterns to adjust learners' language use and create meaning (Bialystok, 2001). Creating opportunities for learners to discuss and reflect on language use (such as in learner-learner interactions) can help the development of metalinguistic understanding which, in turn, helps linguistic autonomy and allows learners to make decisions about language use.

Earlier studies, such as Gutiérrez (2013), have analyzed the role of metalinguistic knowledge in teacher-led language related episodes while learners were writing texts in collaboration, and have found that (covert) metalinguistic knowledge plays an important role in the resolution of these episodes. In the data in the present study, we have observed the interplay between metatalk, metalinguistic understanding and translanguaging. All these contribute to the internalization of the linguistic aspect discussed and reflected upon and to consolidate existing knowledge about the L2 by facilitating cognitive processing (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Canals (2022b) also analyzed language related episodes in learner-learner dyadic online oral interactions and found that the presence of metalinguistic information had a positive effect in the resolution of these episodes, evidenced by an increased number of repair sequences.

From a more heteroglossic perspective, the present study coincides with the findings of Melo-Pfeifer and Araújo e Sá (2018) in the sense that learners interacting with other learners employ plurilingual communicative practices such as translanguaging both to learn about the language and to learn to communicate that knowledge to one another using their entire linguistic repertoires.

As far as implications for language learning, the present research highlights the importance of eliciting metalinguistic reflection during collaborative tasks which can aid L2 development. Learners seem naturally drawn to negotiating meaning in collaborative oral tasks where they have to pay attention to several linguistic aspects that keep coming up. This seems especially true for tandem VEs or lingua franca exchanges rather than in other types of pairings of oral interactive tasks, such as between learners who share the same L1(s) (Bueno-Alastuey 2013). Together with adjusting the composition of the dyads, the other aspect which helps elicit negotiation of meaning and the use of metatalk is the design of the tasks (Gutiérrez, 2013). Previous research has indicated that convergent tasks require more interaction and negotiation of meaning because learners need to come to a consensus in order to solve the task (Canals, 2022b; Gilabert et al., 2009). The present research exemplifies how these types of tasks elicit metalinguistic reflection

involving the learners' entire linguistic repertoires by examining the most common functions of translanguaging practices and the role that metalinguistic reflections and metatalk played. This article has also evidenced how translanguaging shifts have intrinsic pedagogical value and need to be fostered and elicited during instruction or tasks design.

## APPENDIX A: TASK INSTRUCTIONS

Canals (2023). Links to the task instructions. *figshare*. (Online resource). <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.24235693.v1>

## APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS USED ADAPTED FROM SEEDHOUSE AND RICHARDS (2007)

Meaning	Convention
Translanguaging	<i>italics</i>
Short pause	..
Rising intonation	?
Animated/emphatic tone	!
Lengthening of the vowel	e: e::
Full stop indicating falling intonation (final)	.
Non-verbal action or editor's comments	((A is looking at B))

## REFERENCES

- Adinolfi, L., & Astruc, L. (2017). An exploratory study of translanguaging practices in an online beginner-level foreign language classroom. *Language Learning in Higher Education*, 7(1), 185-204. <https://doi.org/10.1515/cercles-2017-0008>
- Aoyama, R. (2020). Exploring Japanese high school students' L1 use in translanguaging in the communicative EFL classroom. *TESL-EJ*, 23(4), n4.
- Bialystok, E. (2001). Metalinguistic aspects of bilingual processing. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 21, 169-181. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190501000101>
- Bueno-Alastuey, M. C. (2013). Interactional feedback in synchronous voice-based computer mediated communication: Effect of dyad. *System*, 41(3), 543-559. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.05.005>
- Canals, L. (2021). Multimodality and Translanguaging in Negotiating for Meaning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 54(3), 647-670. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12547>
- Canals, L. (2022a). The role of the language of interaction and translanguaging on attention to interactional feedback in virtual exchanges. *System*, 105, 102721. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102721>
- Canals, L. (2022b). The Interplay between Metalanguage, Feedback and Learning Negotiation in Oral Interaction. *Language Learning & Technology*, 26(1), 1-24. <https://hdl.handle.net/10125/73486>
- Canals (2023). Links to the task instructions. *figshare*. (Online resource). <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.24235693.v1>



- Carstens, A. (2016). Translanguaging as a vehicle for L2 acquisition and L1 development: students' perceptions. *Language Matters*, 47(2), 203-22.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10228195.2016.1153135>
- Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2021). *Pedagogical translanguaging*. Cambridge University Press.
- Costa Costa, I. (2021). *Uses and perceptions of translanguaging and code-switching as foreign language teaching strategies: A case study*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Universitat de Vic.
- Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Cambridge University Press.
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? *Modern Language Journal*, 94(1), 103-115.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x>
- Ekin, S., Balaman, U., & Badem-Korkmaz, F. (2021). Tracking telecollaborative tasks through design, feedback, implementation, and reflection processes in pre-service language teacher education. *Applied Linguistics Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2020-0147>
- Ellis, R. (2009). Measuring implicit and explicit knowledge of a second language. In R. Ellis, S. Loewen, C. Elder, R. Erlam, J. Philp & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Implicit and explicit knowledge in second language learning, testing and teaching* (pp. 31-64). Multilingual Matters.
- García, O., Johnson, S. I., Seltzer, K., & Valdés, G. (2017). *The translanguaging classroom: Leveraging student bilingualism for learning*. Caslon.
- García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Pivot.
- Gass, S.M., & Mackey, A. (2006). Input, interaction and output: An overview. *AILA Review*, 19(1), 3-17. <https://doi.org/10.1075/aila.19.03gas>
- Gilabert, R., Barón, J., & Llanes, À. (2009). Manipulating cognitive complexity across task types and its impact on learners' interaction during oral performance. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 47(3-4), 367-395.  
<https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.2009.016>
- Gutiérrez, X. (2013). Metalinguistic knowledge in language-related episodes with covert metalinguistic activity. In K. Roehr & G. A. Gánem-Gutiérrez (Eds.), *The metalinguistic dimension in instructed second language learning*. (pp. 147-169). Continuum.
- Hauck, M., & Youngs, B. L. (2008). Telecollaboration in multimodal environments: The impact on task design and learner interaction. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 21(2), 87-124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588220801943510>
- Jessner, U. (2014). On multilingual awareness or why the multilingual learner is a specific language learner. In M. Pawlak & L. Aronin (Eds.), *Essential topics in applied linguistics and multilingualism* (pp. 175-184). Springer.
- Karabassova, L., & San Isidro, X. (2020). Towards translanguaging in CLIL: A study on teachers' perceptions and practices in Kazakhstan. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 20(2), 556-575. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2020.1828426>
- Lewis, G., Jones, B., & Baker, C. (2012). Translanguaging: Origins and development from school to street and beyond. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 18(7), 641-654.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2012.718488>
- Melo-Pfeifer, S., & Araújo e Sá, M. H. (2018). Multilingual interaction in chat rooms: translanguaging to learn and learning to translanguage. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 21(7), 867-880.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2018.1452895>

- Messina Dahlberg, G., & Bagga-Gupta, S. (2014). Understanding glocal learning spaces. An empirical study of languaging and transmigrant positions in the virtual classroom. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 39(4), 468-487. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2014.931868>
- O'Dowd, R. (2018). From telecollaboration to virtual exchange: State-of-the-art and the role of UNICollaboration in moving forward. *Journal of Virtual Exchange*, 1, 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2018.jve.1>
- O'Rourke, B. (2007). *Languages for Intercultural Communication and Education* (vol. 15). Multilingual Matters.
- Rajendram, S. (2019). *Translanguaging as an agentive, collaborative and socioculturally responsive pedagogy for multilingual learners*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Toronto.
- Seedhouse, P., & Richards, K. (2007). Describing and analysing institutional varieties of interaction. In H. Bowles & P. Seedhouse (Eds.), *Conversation Analysis and Language for Specific Purposes* (pp. 17-36). Peter Lang.
- Storch, N. (2008). Metatalk in a pair work activity: Level of engagement and implications for language development. *Language awareness*, 17(2), 95-114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658410802146644>
- Swain, M. (1998). Focus on form through conscious reflection. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 64-81). Cambridge University Press.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2000). Task-based second language learning: The uses of the first language. *Language teaching research*, 4(3), 251-274. <https://doi.org/10.1177/136216880000400304>
- Tai, K. W., & Wei, L. (2021). Co-Learning in Hong Kong English medium instruction mathematics secondary classrooms: A translanguaging perspective. *Language and Education*, 35(3), 241-267. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2020.1837860>
- Tian, Z. (2021). Translanguaging design in a third grade Chinese Language Arts class. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 13(3), 327-343. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2021-0024>
- Tian, J., & Wang, Y. (2010). Taking language learning outside the classroom: Learners' perspectives of eTandem learning via Skype. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 4(3), 181-197. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2010.513443>
- Walker, U. (2018). Translanguaging: Affordances for collaborative language learning. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 24(1), 1-18. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.740504301313186>
- Yanguas, Í. (2010). Oral computer-mediated interaction between L2 learners: It's about time! *Language Learning & Technology*, 14(3), 72-93. <http://dx.doi.org/10125/44227>
- Yanguas, I., & Bergin, T. (2018). Focus on form in task-based L2 oral computer-mediated communication. *Language Learning & Technology*, 22(3), 65-81. <https://doi.org/10125/44657>
- Yilmaz, Y., & Granena, G. (2010). The effects of task type in synchronous computer-mediated communication. *ReCALL: the Journal of EUROCALL*, 22(1), 20-38. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S095834400990176>
- Zheng, B. (2019). Translanguaging in a Chinese immersion classroom: An ecological examination of instructional discourses. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 24(9), 1324-1339. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2018.1561642>
- Zheng, D., Schmidt, M. M., Hu, Y., Liu, M., & Hsu, J. (2017). Eco-dialogical learning and translanguaging in open-ended 3D virtual learning environments: Where place, time, and objects matter. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 33(5), 107-122. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.2909>

Ziegler, N., & Phung, H. (2019). Technology-mediated task-based interaction: The role of modality. *ITL-International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 170(2), 251–276.  
<https://doi.org/10.1075/itl.19014.zie>



## LAIA CANALS

I currently hold an Associate position at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya. My research addresses technology enhanced task-based language learning, development of L2 through interaction in collaborative tasks in computer-mediated communication settings, the development of intercultural communicative competence, the development of digital skills and online language teacher education.

[ecanalsf@uoc.edu](mailto:ecanalsf@uoc.edu)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9605-012X>



Canals, L. (2023). Translanguaging practices and metalinguistic reflection during negotiation of meaning in tandem virtual exchanges. *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature*, 16(3), e1135. <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/jtl3.1135>



Rebut / Recibido / Received / Reçu: 11-05-2022

Acceptat / Aceptado / Accepted / Accepté: 27-09-2023

<https://revistes.uab.cat/jtl3/>