Implementing Translanguaging in an English as a Second Language Continuing Education Program: A Multiple Case Study on Teachers' Perspectives and Challenges

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Introduction

Canada has many different English language programs to support immigrants in acquiring the language skills to learn an official language. One way to support their learning is to include students' languages in the classroom for pedagogical purposes, also known as translanguaging (García & Li, 2014). Translanguaging pedagogy is an approach in which the learner is supported in utilizing their full linguistic repertoire as a resource for learning. In the past decade, many studies in K-12 contexts and higher education have shown the possibilities for the development of a translanguaging pedagogy aligned with curriculum expectations and research. However, there is still a paucity of research on a very distinct teaching context – an ESL program that is a part of a continuing education program which this study addresses (Waterman, 2009; Wong, 2017).

Context

- A continuing education program in Ontario, Canada during the pandemic with courses delivered online
- Program is for adults, ages 21 or older, to earn secondary school credits
- Granted a high school diploma after completion of program
- Students take credit courses which deliver content from and meet expectations for the Ontario curriculum
- Program includes English as a Second Language courses and a course is completed in 9 weeks

Research Questions

This research investigates why teachers are not consistently utilizing students' languages to support language learning and how a translanguaging pedagogy may be conceptualized and implemented within an adult ESL program context. The following research questions guide my study:

1. What are ESL teachers' stances and understanding of translanguaging theory and practices?
2. How do ESL teachers implement translanguaging strategies and resources in their classes?
3. How do their students respond to these strategies?

Methodology

Multiple Case Study (Stake, 2013) & Implementation Research (Werner, 2004)
- 3 teachers and 8 students

Teacher	Lived in	Self-reported knowledge of languages	Education	Certifications	Years of Teaching
Roxanne	Abu Dhabi	English, Arabic, French, and Spanish	B.A., B.Ed.	• OCT • Additional Qualifications – ESL and Guidance	5
Nyawira	Kenya	English and Swahili	B.Ed., M.A., and Ph.D.	• OCT • TESL Ontario • TESL Canada	32
Paula	Italy	English, Italian, and French	Hons. B.A. and B.Ed.	• OCT	15

| Student	Self-reported knowledge of languages	Birthplace	Time living in Canada	Number of quadmesters
Arsema	Tigrinya and Arabic	Asmara, Eritrea	4 years	4
Camilla	Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese	Bogota, Colombia	3 years	3
Hakim	Arabic	Khartoum, Sudan	1 year and 7 months	1
Amrita	Tibetan and Hindi	Amdo, Tibet	1 year and 4 months	4
Farah	Arabic, French, and Italian	Beirut, Lebanon	2 years and 10 months	3
Kadin	Arabic	Beihan, Yemen	1 year and 4 months	3
Kiya	Amharic and Italian	Adis Ababa, Ethiopia	1 year and 8 months	4
Lilli	Amharic, Tigrinya, and Arabic	Asmara, Eritrea	2 years and 8 months	4

Data Sources
- Professional engagements, unit and lesson plans, interviews, teacher's reflections, observations, student artifacts, and field notes

Data Analysis
- KARDS (Kumaravadivelu, 2012)
- Content and thematic analysis (Saldaña, 2015)

## Theoretical Framework

Front View

Side View
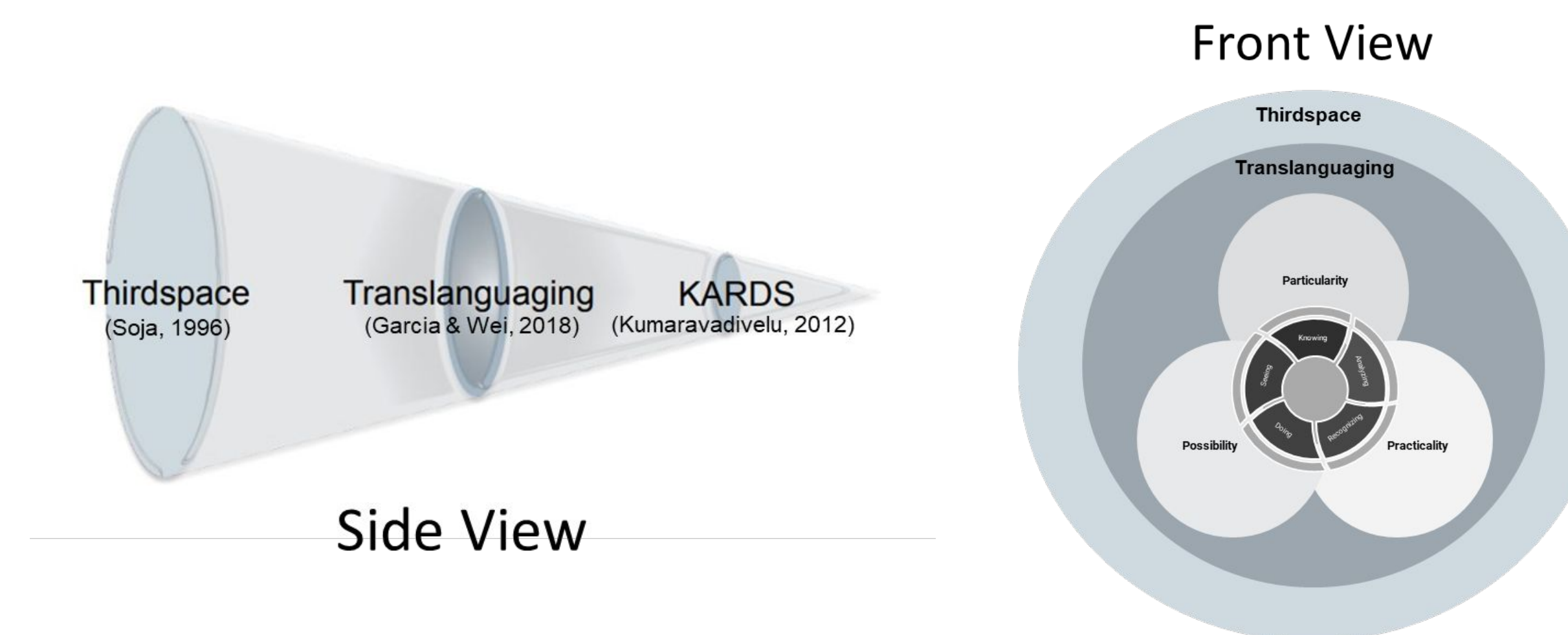
Conceptual framework is based on the metaphor of camera lenses, illustrating how each lens is used to frame and analyze the data.
- **KARDS model (Kumaravadivelu, 2012):** the macro-kaleidoscopic lens zooming in to identify the teacher participants' stance and understanding of translanguaging and their translanguaging practices. KARDS is a modular model for language education, reflecting the dynamic process of language teacher education. Each module is labelled an active verb (Knowing, Analyzing, Recognizing, Doing, and Seeing). The model offers a non-linear, holistic, and transformative approach to professional development.
- **Translanguaging theory (García & Li, 2014):** the mid-zoom lens to analyze how participants implement and respond to translanguaging strategies and how they interact with each other in their language practices.
- **Thirdspace theory (Soja, 1996):** the wide-angle lens to analyze how the participants' stances and understandings of translanguaging are enacted and translanguaging strategies are operationalized in an ESL classroom.

Findings

Sample Case Study: Roxanne
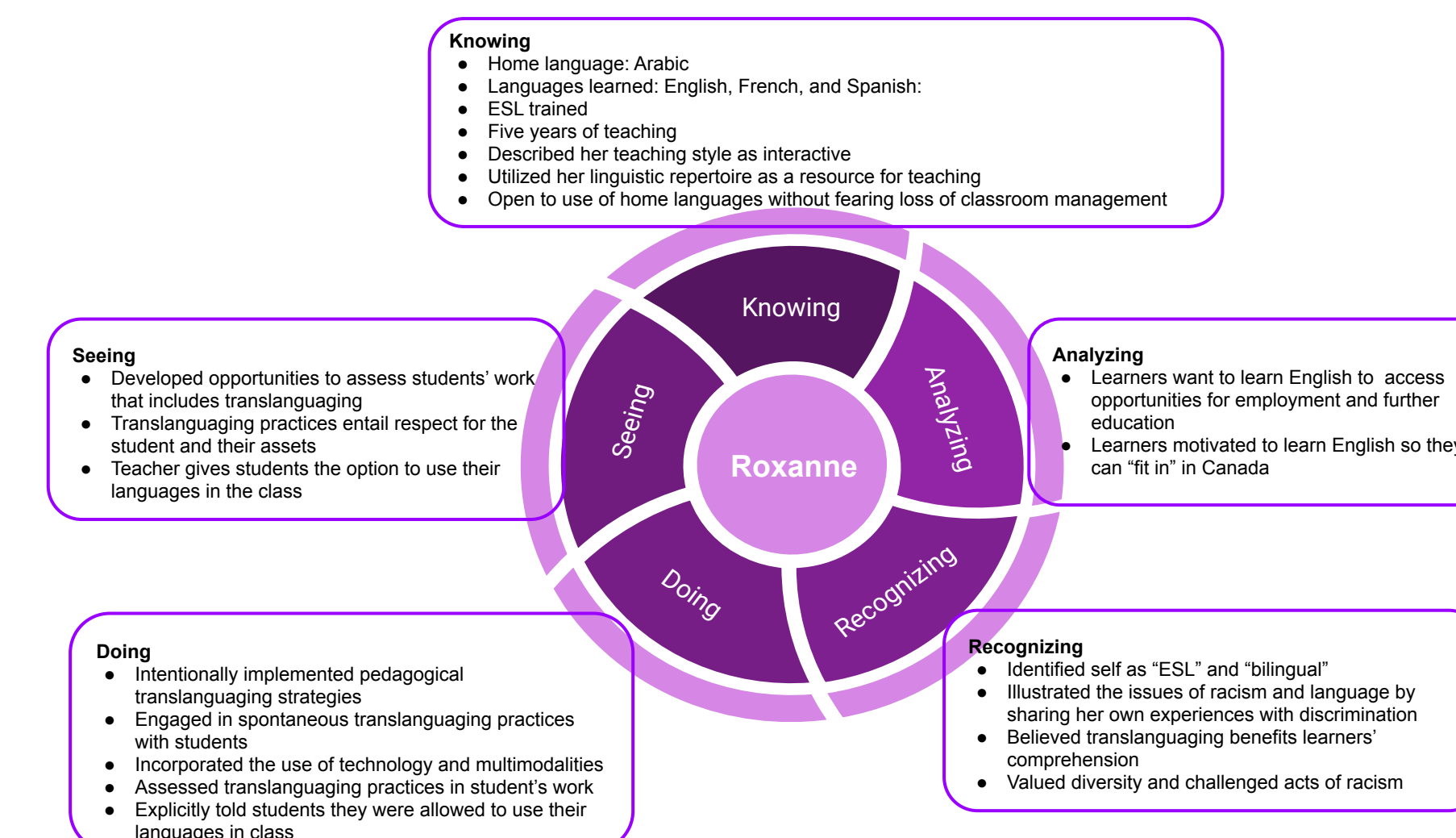
Cross-Case Analysis of Research Question #1: Seven themes emerged from teachers' stances and understanding of translanguaging theory and practices.
- An emerging translanguaging stance
- Relating to students' language learning experiences
- Valuing inclusivity
- Limitations to assessing translanguaging practices
- Struggles with time constraints
- Concerns with technology and online engagement
- Impact of ESL training and professional development

Cross-Case Analysis of Research Questions #2 & 3: ESL teachers implementation of translanguaging strategies and resources students responses to these strategies.
- Preparation for the course - teachers were provided individualized support through dialoguing and support from the researcher
- Implementation of pedagogical translanguaging strategies - participants employed planned strategies that reflected their language awareness
- Engagement with spontaneous translanguaging practices - students were translanguaging even without teachers telling them to do so
- Challenges and affordances of teaching and learning online - engagement was challenging with the sudden shift to online teaching

Contributions

Thirdspace as Praxis for Context-Specific Professional Development:
- Findings underscore effectiveness of researcher-teacher collaboration as part of professional development.
- Consistent with a post-method approach (Kumaravadivelu, 2001) to teachers developing a context-sensitive pedagogy.
- The **Process of Teacher's Transformative Understanding of Translanguaging** emerged from the study. The teachers reflected on, assessed, engaged with, and enacted strategies that they perceived as appropriate for their students and the program.
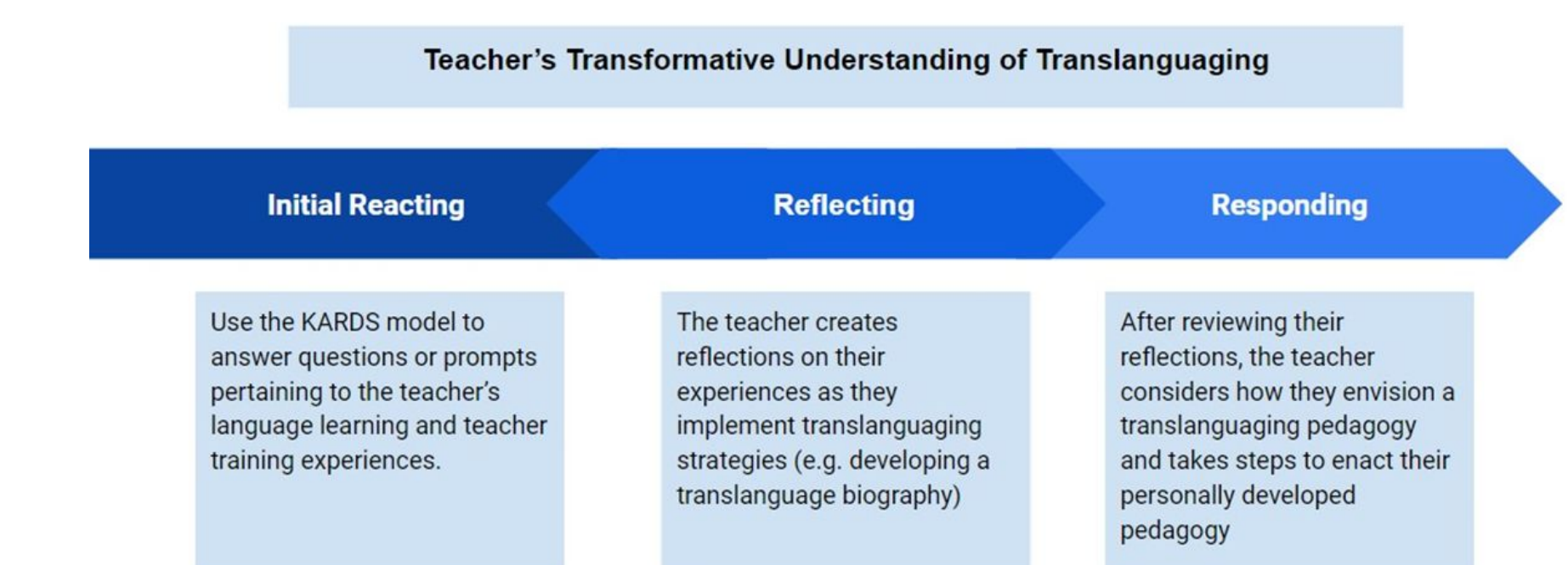
- Tailored and personalized professional development came out of the individual engagements with each teacher.
- Professional development engagements with the teachers contributed to the creation of their Translanguaging Biographies, a visual representation that brings together a teacher's knowing, analyzing, recognizing, doing, and seeing of translanguaging theory and practices in their lives.

Implications & Recommendations

- With teacher professional development, stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, Ontario College of Teachers, and provincial school boards have a vital role in making real the enactments of plurilingualism and students' languages in learning spaces.
- With developing a translanguaging pedagogy in this particular context, the locally school-based practices that came out of my engagements with the teachers illustrate how teachers can develop their pedagogical strategies to take advantage of their students' assets within a continuing education program.
- Developing critical multilingual awareness in teachers can further inform a translanguaging stance, legitimizing plurilinguals' language practices while countering monoglossic ideologies that valorize English
- More professional development can provide the training needed to make translanguaging strategies possible for online learning.
- Affordances of multimodalities indicated that teachers had access to alternative ways of teaching and further development of this understanding can be beneficial.

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