

EU·DO·IT

European Digital Online Game for Intercultural Learning and Translanguaging

THE EU·DO·IT HANDBOOK

Part 1: Foundations

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European Digital Online-Game for Intercultural Learning and Translanguaging

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PRESENTING THE EU·DO·IT HANDBOOK

The *EU·DO·IT Handbook* is designed as a curricular guide and additional learning resource for teachers who wish to use the open access EU·DO·IT digital online language learning platform in their plurilingual classroom settings, especially with migrant students who need to increase their proficiency in the language of the school and/or the wider society. The handbook aims to offer teachers innovative and practical ideas for integrating plurilingual, more specifically, translanguaging practices into their teaching contexts by encouraging their students to use all the resources available to them in their existing language repertoires in order to both learn the target language and explore other languages. With this goal in mind, the handbook offers plurilingual learning material and tasks which aim to help learners develop BICS (basic intercultural communicative skills) for A1 level in various everyday communicative scenarios in their chosen language and lead them towards increased cultural competencies.

The EU·DO·IT Handbook has two components:

Part 1 offers an anchor to teachers who are willing to learn more about EU·DO·IT and its underlying rationale. The theoretical pillars of the project; the multi-/plurilingual turn in language education in the 21st century as well as the notion of translanguaging and its pedagogical implications for language education are covered in this part.

Part 2 bridges theory and practice by presenting a wide range of learning material and tasks based on the languages represented in the EU·DO·IT learning platform along with general instructions for teachers. The material is specifically designed to support the learning experiences brought about by the students' interaction with EU·DO·IT and work best when used alongside the different scenarios offered in the game, but it is also possible to use them independently.

1. THE EU·DO·IT PROJECT

EU·DO·IT is a plurilingual computer-based language-learning tool designed predominantly for students (A1-B1) with a refugee, asylum seeker or migrant background, who need to quickly acquire a new language. It is designed to cater to all individuals with this profile, regardless of where they come from, or whether they receive formal or informal teaching in institutions and organizations, such as primary, secondary or VET institutions, government programs for refugees & migrants, or NGO initiatives. EU·DO·IT is a resource for anybody interested in the wealth of language resources in Europe and the languages present on the EU·DO·IT platform reflect the most common languages in migration contexts from outside and within the EU: Arabic, Catalan, English, French, German, Luxembourgish, Spanish, and Turkish.

EU·DO·IT prioritizes the EU policy on promoting multiple language learning and giving value to the cultural aspects of linguistic diversity while maintaining the learners' first language(s) (L1). Driven by this motive, EU·DO·IT comprises two Modules; Module I (A1) and Module II (A2-B1), both providing learners with tasks and opportunities for using their plurilingual resources, developing their plurilingual communicative skills and also enriching their cultural experiences through the development of intercultural competence.

Module I offers mini episodes on a wide range of everyday scenarios in private, public and institutional domains (i.e. catching public transport, filling out a form, asking for directions). Learners' interaction with various communicative skills in this digital game-based context potentially prepares them for active participation in their new environments. It also offers them a platform where they can navigate their existing linguistic and cultural repertoire and build on it by using translanguaging as a strategy in their meaning making process.

Module II is an extension on the EU Erasmus+ project MELang-E (VG-SPS-HE-14-001526) which follows the adventures of Mali Khan, a 19-year-old teenager and aspiring musician from Oxford with a Pakistani family background, as he travels across Europe to track down his former band members in different European cities (Frankfurt, Barcelona, Luxembourg) and persuade them to sign up to a band contest in Tallinn. The key challenges he has to face on his journey are primarily characterised by the need to overcome language barriers. EU·DO·IT enriches this plot through the development of the chapter set in Istanbul,

which not only contributes to the overall sociocultural variety of different settings and communicative encounters but also enables for the integration of Turkish and Arabic into the game.

Who developed EU·DO·IT?

This collaborative project has been developed from the combined skills and expertise of several university teams, secondary school teachers, and secondary school students themselves, in Barcelona, Berlin, Frankfurt, Istanbul, Luxembourg and Tallinn. Our aim was to take advantage of the range of knowledge and experience from all areas of the language-learning field, provided by researchers, teachers, and learners themselves, in order to create a game that appealed to our target audience all the while providing a solid and effective language-learning tool.

2. MULTILINGUALISM, PLURILINGUALISM AND LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

The rationale of EU·DO·IT lies in the fact that nowadays monolingual societies are virtually non-existent. It is, therefore, important to consider the value of language diversity in our world, and the effect that a plurilingual environment has on the individual and on education systems. The co-existence of different languages offers a variety of perspectives for scientific research in the context of language teaching and learning, and also challenges teachers and teacher trainers to rethink their teaching, especially those working in the field of language education.

This notion is backed up by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL 2001), for example, which describes the language diversity in Europe as a valuable resource which needs to be preserved. With this in mind “a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding” (ibid.: 2). Language ecologies can be very complex, and this complexity is sometimes enhanced by the different uses made of technical terminology by researchers and teachers alike. In this context, and in order to avoid confusion, EU·DO·IT adopts the CEFRL’s distinction between **multilingualism** and **plurilingualism**. On the one hand, as the “knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society” (ibid.: 4). That is to say, multiple languages may be spoken in a country, but they are viewed as separate from each other and connections between these languages are not necessarily established.

On the other hand, plurilingualism envisions a learner who “does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact” (ibid.). To increase plurilingualism, one would focus on encouraging students to draw on all the languages available to them in their linguistic repertoire to successfully communicate or understand a text: “From this perspective, the aim of language education is profoundly modified. It is no longer seen as simply to achieve ‘mastery’ of one or two, or even three languages, each taken in isolation, with the ‘ideal native speaker’ as the ultimate model. Instead, the aim is to develop a linguistic repertoire, in which

all linguistic abilities have a place.” (CEFRL 2001: 5). EU·DO·IT adheres to this notion that languages are not compartmentalised in one’s head and, in doing so, invests upon a more fluid understanding of languages where interaction between and blending of various linguistic features reflect a more complex form of communication. In this sense, plurilingual communicative competence (PCC) is the plurilingual individual’s ability to use the different languages available in their linguistic repertoire in a correct and appropriate way, by means of naturally-occurring plurilingual practices, such as translation, code-switching and so forth, in order to ensure effective communication.

Furthermore, with regards to culture, the CEFRL (2001: 103), defines intercultural awareness as the product of “knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the ‘world of origin’ and the ‘world of the target community,’ taking into account social and regional diversity in each of the ‘worlds’ in question.” Thus, we refer to intercultural competence as the ability of an individual to take advantage of this knowledge, awareness and understanding in order to negotiate efficiently between cultures.

In reference to language learning and teaching, EU·DO·IT adopts the term additional language (AL), as opposed to terms such as foreign language or second language learning. The term additional language refers to any language the language learner learns other than their first language(s). This is based on the underlying belief that language knowledge and experience adds to the language knowledge and experience a learner already has (Sugrañes 2017). From a teaching perspective, the term encompasses all the languages used in the learning process as it “underscores the belief that ALs are not necessarily inferior nor superior nor a replacement for a student’s first language” (Jud, Tan & Walberg 2011: 6).

On the other hand, there is much debate about how to refer to the languages pupils use at home which are not the mainstream languages spoken in a society. Terms such as heritage language, family language, home language, identity language or language of language origin are in use (van Deusen-Scholl 2003). EU·DO·IT views all languages (both the languages students learn and those they already know), from an integrated and holistic perspective, as

suggested above. Thus, the languages students use at home and in their family contexts is referred to as L1s.

2.1 PLURILINGUAL EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE AWARENESS

Today, young people are socialised in an unprecedented environment of sociocultural hybridity, shaped by the high mobility of populations and the internationalisation of economic, technical and human progress. Being aware and willing to participate in this process enables students to benefit from the advantages of a cosmopolitan society. As Breidbach, Elsner & Young (2011: 13) elaborate “in a world where societies are increasingly becoming multilingual and multicultural, [...] linguistic plurality and cultural hybridity become the underlying process of social practice”. In a culturally heterogeneous environment, all participants bring a huge variety of sociocultural, economic, political, and linguistic experiences to the table (Ovando & Combs 2011: 45).

AL education has the responsibility and the opportunity to integrate the diversity of linguistic and sociocultural resources learners bring to the classroom. This, of course, also includes learners’ L1(s). An awareness and positive attitude of teachers towards their students’ L1 not only provides a rich source of language learning opportunities (Cummins 2005), but also allows students to feel recognised and valued as their sense of plurilingual identity is encouraged and affirmed (Sugranyes 2017). Utilising the variety of languages which heterogeneous learner groups have to offer, enables “language minority students” (Ovando & Combs 2011: 176) to build identity, self-worth “and reduce (...) feelings of ambivalence towards the majority language and culture.” (Ovando & Combs 2011: 176; Sugranyes & González Davies 2014). On the other hand, Cummins (2001), as cited by Breidbach, Elsner & Young (2011: 12), claims “if home languages and prior knowledge encoded in those home languages are ignored, students are likely to internalise a sense of inferiority, potentially affecting their self-esteem and academic aspirations”.

Furthermore, the examination of different linguistic aspects of a wide range of languages can, ideally, foster learners’ awareness of languages as systems. Language learners can profit from comparing languages, regardless of whether these systems share aspects in terms of syntactical structure, vocabulary or phonological system. As Corcoll

considers, the insertion of particular linguistic features of children's known languages can foster their "ability to think about languages and value them differently" (2013: 42). This process, the re-evaluating and re-thinking, and its outcome, becoming aware of languages or linguistic systems, is one of the prominent advantages of plurilingual education. As Breidbach, Elsner & Young (2011: 11) elaborate "language is the cognitive tool through which all learning takes place. Heightened language awareness is helpful for all learners engaged in language learning and literacy development". As a second advantage, working with a range of languages – including their L1(s) - may help students to value their own linguistic repertoires, and become aware of their Dominant Language Constellation (DLC) (Aronin & Singleton 2012) defined as the constellation of a learner's dominant languages which function as an entire unit and enable learners to meet all needs in a multilingual environment (Aronin 2016). Becoming aware of linguistic systems can develop a sense of being able to become proficient in a language, which eventually leads to a significant increase in learners' motivation. Cenoz (2009: 176) considers developing positive attitudes as one key aspect of language learning. Therefore, language educators need to ascertain the mind-set of their students towards different languages and their reactions to the learning process. Ideally, such activities then support the role of English, not merely as a desirable language in itself, but also as a gateway to languages (Schröder 2009) in a more general sense.

Nevertheless, schools seem to be faced with the bizarre scenario of monolingualising plurilingual students (Cummins 2005) as a monolingual approach towards languages and language learning at school is still very much the norm in many schools across Europe. Teaching through monolingual language learning contexts means that languages are not integrated languages and students' linguistic repertoires are not treated as one entity. Evidently, this means that the languages that students are encouraged to access is limited and, as a result, learning takes place in an unrealistic environment which Wilson & González Davies (2017) refer to as the plurilingual student/monolingual student (PS/MC) phenomenon. By playing to the PS/MC phenomenon, students are denied a valuable learning resource that is naturally available to them. In this sense, a possible way of building students' plurilingual communicative competence, language awareness and, also, cultural awareness in the AL

classroom would be to incorporate practices “that are generally ignored at school but are common among plurilinguals” (Cenoz & Gorter 2013: 597), for example translanguaging.

2.2 TRANSLANGUAGING AT A GLANCE

The changing dynamics of language use and learning in the 21st century inevitably takes into account the two most observable markers of globalization which are fluidity and movement. It is translanguaging that responds to these markers by envisioning language as a social construct rather than a linguistic object, a dynamic process where a speaker utilizes his/her full linguistic repertoire to engage in language use. With this renewed understanding a vast body of research has emerged over recent years referring to the natural linguistic practices of plurilingual speakers, most notably, code-switching (Milroy & Muysken 1995, Elsner 2013, Corcoll 2013), and translation (Cook 2007, Cummins 2008, 2012, Pym et al 2013; González-Davies 2014), but also including, among others, codemeshing (Canagarajah 2011); translingual practice (Canagarajah 2013); polylingual languaging (Jørgensen 2008, Jørgensen et al 2011); flexible bilingualism (Creese et al 2011) or metrolinguistics (Pennycook 2010).

Translanguaging, as a generic term, relates to the language practices of individuals and communities. Generally speaking, it describes the ability to alternate between languages, and, in contrast to code-switching, goes beyond the notion that languages are closed systems. Translanguaging, much rather, implies that linguistic repertoires are used in dynamic, creative and open-to-change processes. Language users not only mix or switch between different language systems but also constantly gain a new language reality and a new way of acting as a social agent by taking into account different registers and styles. In this sense, translanguaging is a concept highly responsive to language pedagogy which encourages learners’ effective use of all linguistic and cultural repertoires so as to further their ability to perform as language users in diverse socio-cultural settings. Translanguaging, therefore, problematizes native-driven theoretical constructs of “deficiency”, “incompetency” and “interference” and invests on meaning construction through the use of all semiotic resources available to language users. In this sense, the notion of translanguaging is the perception of all language practice as a multi-modal experience, where language users build connections between different semiotic resources such as gestures, sights, sounds, actions, colours,

objects and other linguistic design elements in their engagement in complex-meaning making processes, all of which indicate a “trans” dimension in discursive practices.

2.3 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF PLURILINGUAL EDUCATION AND TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES

As previously mentioned, today’s societies are becoming increasingly plurilingual and pluricultural where language users draw on multiple languages, constantly adapt and adjust their linguistic and cultural resources to accomplish communicative goals in diverse private, public and institutional settings. Addressing the complex nature of human communication, Creese and Blackledge (2015: 21) raise a thought-provoking question: “If languages are no longer viewed as separate entities, (how) should educators develop pedagogy that incorporates the complex, mobile language repertoires and identities of students?”. Many school systems are still far from responding to this emerging phenomenon; they are either driven by monolingual ideologies or allow space for only a few languages which are perceived as ‘prestigious’. This means that the good intention of promoting students’ PCC results in plurilingual students functioning in monolingual spaces.

Striving to develop the individual’s PCC warrants a holistic vision where pedagogical strategies that minimize barriers between languages are executed in an effort to develop the individual’s ability to make use of two or more languages in a variety of skills at varying levels of competence and in varying contexts. To this end, EU·DO·IT aims to support teachers in developing new pedagogies that build on students’ actual lingua-cultural resources in a bottom-up fashion and encourage their strategic translanguaging to enhance communicative practice, meaning-making processes and achievement.

In a nutshell, translanguaging practices allow learners to;

- shuttle between a variety of languages brought by other interlocutors to co-construct meaning,
- use the linguistic resources of a variety of languages to creatively improvise in response to linguistic demands,
- utilize the existing semiotic resources of a variety of languages as mediational sense-making tools (Sayer 2013)
- mediate among a variety of lingua-cultural resources, be conversant with them and make use of them in culturally diverse settings.

Translanguaging pedagogies recognize languages as multisemiotic resources. From this perspective, translanguaging, according to Wei (2017: 17), sees “the divides between the linguistic, paralinguistic and extralinguistic dimensions of human communication as nonsensical and highlights what the researchers call the orchestration of the neural-bodily-worldly skills of languaging”.

Translanguaging also emphasizes the importance of feeling, experience, history, memory, subjectivity and culture (Wei 2017). In terms of language learning, then, it advocates the idea that the novice learners do not “acquire” language, but rather “adapt their bodies and minds to the languaging activity that surrounds them. In doing so, “they participate in cultural worlds and learn that they can get things done with others in accordance with the culturally promoted norms and values” (Thibault 2017 as cited in Wei 2017: 76).

EU·DO·IT envisions translanguaging as a social phenomenon which has direct implications for language learning environments. It involves learners’ reflection on their own translanguaging experiences, assets and challenges in their language use and learning, as well as ecological views addressing to their social environments- i.e. family, friends, peers, colleagues and wider society. As noted by Martin-Beltrán, “engaging in translanguaging may hold a transformative power to shift students’ and teachers’ dominant monolingual ideologies toward more pluralistic understandings of the wider linguistic repertoire students bring to literacy and beyond (2014: 226). Consequently, it bears an implication for language learners that the purpose of using language is for actual communication that is meaningful, natural,

and authentic, in contrast to being classroom-bound and specific to school settings (Crandall & Christison 2016).

With regards to examples, translanguaging pedagogies go beyond code-switching and translation but still maintain these two language-related processes in hands-on classroom practices. Milroy & Muysken (1995: 7) describe code switching as “the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation”, considering code-switching as an active process initiated by a speaker. Elsner (2013) adds a receptive dimension to the understanding of code-switching by describing it as “the receptive and productive use of and alternation between two or more linguistic varieties in discourse situations, including interaction with others and texts”. Whether the focus is on productive or on receptive code-switching: If teachers want to fully use the advantages of code switching, language learning opportunities need to be provided which afford plurilingual language use. Code-switching practices are an important aspect of multilingual and incipient multilingual individuals’ language practices, yet they have historically been considered an undesirable form of language mixing, and code-switching is still sometimes considered to be undesirable within the classroom. However, positive aspects of code-switching, and of active code choice within instructional language learning have recently been shown (Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain 2005, Sert 2005, Garcia 2009, Corcoll 2013, Corcoll & González Davies 2016).

As in the case of code-switching, translation has not been introduced in language learning as a natural learning strategy (or as a skill) in the language classroom since its denigration by the Communicative Approach. This is mainly owing to the negative connotations derived from the use of contrived translation sentences to test grammatical points in the Grammar-Translation Method. This separation, however, goes against widespread practices (Pym et al 2013). Also, studies on plurilingualism seem to conclude that, if carried out in an appropriate pedagogical framework, it develops skills and strategies that facilitate general learning (Cook 2007, Cummins 2008, 2012, González-Davies 2014). This new perspective is gradually being accepted to the extent that translation is included in the CEFR under the strategy “mediation”: “In mediating activities, the language user is not concerned to express his/her own meanings, but simply to act as an intermediary between interlocutors who are unable to understand each other directly – normally (but not exclusively) speakers of

different languages. Examples of mediating activities include spoken interpretation and written translation as well as summarising and paraphrasing texts in the same language, when the language of the original text is not understandable to the intended recipient” (2001: 87). So, we can consider translation as one of the natural plurilingual practices which Cenoz and Gorter consider that “are generally ignored at school but are common among plurilingual” (2013: 597), and that can be introduced in language learning in an interactive and authentic way. For ideas for activities, teachers can consult Duff (1989), González-Davies (2004), Cummins and Early (2014), Kerr (2014), Corcoll and González Davies (2016) and Wilson and González Davies (2017) amongst others. But how can a more plurilingual approach to languages be adopted and fostered within a school setting? The following aspects need to be taken into account:

The role of the teacher as a plurilingual referent: The language teacher must be a language referent adopting an ‘additional language mainly’ approach and not ‘additional language only’ which implies banning students’ L1s from the learning context. The language teacher must have a plurilingual attitude towards languages as much research demonstrates (Anderson 2017, Sugrañes 2017). This implies recognising students’ L1s as valuable resources for learning, therefore acknowledging that their use positively affects academic performance and student’s well-being. In this respect, the teacher should:

- promote plurilingual and intercultural competence among students through the additional language in line with the CEFRL (2001).
- be aware that learning languages implies using languages (Wolff & Legenhausen 1992, Esteve & Martín-Peris 2013).
- insure that languages are taught from an integrated perspective which implies working together with other languages (and if possible) content teachers (Guasch 2011).

The visibility of languages within the school context: Languages need to be made visible within the learning environment. This idea emerges from research developed by Landry & Bourhis (1997) in relation to linguistic landscapes where the visibility of the languages within a given

society portrays how languages are conceived. In this sense, the following language visibility tool (Sugrañes 2018, Flores & Sugrañes 2018) can be employed:

- Are all the languages that students know and learn visible in the learning environment?
- Do all the students feel that their language is recognised and acknowledged, visibly?
- Are school signs, posters in different languages? Which ones?
- Do the different languages at school have different functions? Which ones?
- When you open the door to the school, do you perceive/breathe languages?

The development of plurilingual strategies:

1. The use of translation through TOLC -Translation for Other Learning Contexts- (González Davies 2014). This plurilingual strategy is based on using translation in a plurilingual and informed manner for learning languages. Aquesta estratègia plurilingüe es basa en l'ús de la traducció a l'aula de forma pedagògica i informada per aprendre llengües. Examples of TOLC can be found in the article "Tackling the Plurilingual Student/Monolingual Classroom Phenomenon" (Wilson & González Davies 2017) and the book "Multiple voices in translation classroom" (González Davies 2004). Some of them are the following:
 - bilingual dictations: the teacher dictates in the additional language and the students write in their L1.
 - Translations of cultural references: How do you translate 'kebab' for example?
 - Linguistic collages: Making collages of words in different languages by simultaneous exposure to a variety of different texts with optional responses in a variety of languages.
 - Reading and listening to one text in a variety of languages, thereby juxtaposing the orthographic and sound systems of different languages.
2. The use of PBCS - Pedagogically-Based Codeswitching - (Corcoll 2013). This strategy suggests the use of switching codes for learning. It promotes simultaneous use of various languages and promotes metalinguistic awareness. The students become aware of the similarities, differences and connexions among languages: plurilingual vocabulary comparisons with explicit attention paid to graphological, semantic and

phonological attributes, and to word cognates. Examples of PBCS can be found in the following article: “Switching codes in the plurilingual classroom” (Corcoll & González Davies 2016).

3. Didactic sequences (Esteve 2013): Didactic sequences are a very useful tool for working on plurilingual competence. Specific examples of didactic sequences can be found in the following article “Estratègies de transferència interlingüística en l’aprenentatge de llengües addicionals: un Enfocament Plurilingüe Integrador.” (Esteve & González Davies 2016).
4. The use of TOLC for working on language identity texts -LITs- (Sugrañes 2017). This is an ideal plurilingual strategy to be developed on contexts with a lot of linguistic diversity. Using students’ L1s within the school environment boosts student’s identity (Sugrañes 2017, 2018) and this has positive effects on student’s learning, as students re-tell one text in a variety of languages. To see examples of LITs, refer to the following article: “Translating heritage languages: Promoting intercultural and plurilingual competences through children’s literature” (Sugrañes & González Davies 2014).

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