“Mézclalo un poquito”: Plurilingual practices in multilingual educational milieus

Júlia Llompart
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
Faculty of Philosophy and Letters
Madrid
28049
Email address: julia.llompart@gmail.com

Dolors Masats
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Faculty of Education
Bellaterra
08193
Email address: Dolors.Masats@uab.cat

Emilee Moore
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Faculty of Education
Bellaterra
08193
Email address: Emilee.Moore@uab.cat

Luci Nussbaum
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Faculty of Education
Bellaterra
08193
Email address: Luci.Nussbaum@uab.cat

Corresponding author

Júlia Llompart
julia.llompart@gmail.com

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Júlia Llompart, Dolors Masats, Emilee Moore, Luci Nussbaum

Abstract

We analyse data collected at multilingual schools in Catalonia, taking a plurilingual and socio-cultural Conversation Analysis approach to the interactions studied. The analytical sections of the article show how plurilingual practices are resources for students’ participation in classroom activities; we argue that language learning is a process that is reflected in how students’ participation is achieved and modified in classroom interaction over time, and in the ways in which they mobilise interactional resources for scaffolding their completion of cognitive and communicative activities. Our results suggest that learners set out from an initial stage in which they have little possibilities of participating in communicative activities in the target language, and progressively, through practice, and through the use of interlinguistic (e.g. recourse to resources from other named languages in their plurilingual repertoire) and intralinguistic (lexical substitution and paraphrasing) procedures, they learn to participate in interactions in unilingual mode in that language. We then argue that as plurilingualism is a reality both of social interaction and of learning processes, it should be ‘didacticised’; that is, transformed into classroom teaching methodology. We introduce our understanding of the *didactics of plurilingualism*, an approach based on project-based learning, and discuss its operation on the macro, meso and micro levels.

Key words: bi/plurilingual repertoires, plurilingual mode, unilingual mode, codeswitching, translanguaging, didactics of plurilingualism

Introduction

Language policy laws in Catalonia establish the co-official status of Spanish (or Castilian) and Catalan. To ensure a balance in the social use of the languages and guarantee the transmission of Catalan to children who do not use this language at home, Catalan is the medium of instruction in schools. Spanish and one or two foreign languages are also taught as

core subjects. According to policy (Departament d'Ensenyament 2018), at the end of compulsory schooling (6-16 years) all students must have acquired a B2 level in Catalan and Spanish, a B1 in the first foreign language and an A2 level in a second foreign language. These official requirements must be implemented by schools and specified in their so-called School Language Project (*Projecte Lingüístic de Centre*), a document outlining the actions concerning language education taken in each school (see Departament d'Ensenyament 2018).

Here we discuss the impact of plurilingual practices on learning new languages. First, we present the theoretical framework on which we ground our research, as well as the methodological approach used to study the data analysed. Next, we explore different modes of participation in learning settings and present the route followed by students in developing their communicative skills. Finally, before concluding with some final reflections, we present arguments for 'didactising' plurilingualism.

Theoretical considerations

Engaging in different ways with diverse languages or cultures shapes people's linguistic –or what we refer to as plurilingual– *repertoires* (Gumperz 1964; Gumperz and Hymes 1972); that is, the resources available to them to take part in socially significant interaction (op cit., 137). The repertoire of plurilingual speakers is not only made up of linguistic forms and semantic and pragmatic configurations for producing and interpreting situated social meanings, but also of multimodal forms of expression embodied in discourse (Goodwin 2000, 2007; Mondada 2004). The degree to which plurilingual individuals may participate in communicative situations using unilingual procedures (Alber and Py 1985) –that is, using one language at a time (OLAT; Li and Wu 2009), or features from just one (named) language from their repertoire at a time– varies; as García (2009) argues, language users' competences are always emergent. However, even these emergent competences –or partial competences to

use the terminology set out in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe 2001)– allow users to participate in socially significant interactions.

The competence of plurilingual speakers is "situated, contextualised, (…) highly individualised, and dependent on life paths and personal biographies, and as such, subject to evolution and change" (Coste, Moore, and Zarate, 1997, v-vi). It is shaped by the socially situated interactional norms constructed in the different communities of practice (Wenger 1998) they engage with. Each community has its own, sometimes covert, rules that regulate which language practices are legitimate and which are not, but plurilingual uses are closely linked to the turn-by-turn organisation of the unfolding interaction in the social context and communicative situation in which the interaction takes place. To develop this idea, we refer to Excerpt 1 below, collected at a secondary school. In it, four students –three of Moroccan origin (Naila, Oussira, and Jafar) who share Arabic in Darija variety, Spanish and Catalan, and one of Pakistani origin who speaks Spanish, Catalan and Urdu, but not Arabic (Samira)– are working in the Spanish class on a project about their neighbourhood and are distributing the tasks to be done by each of them.

Excerpt 1[1]

Participants: Oussira (OUS), Naila (NAI), Jafar (JAF), Samira (SAM)

01 NAI	(to Oussira and Jafar) *ana namchi n9alab 3la chi wahad ibghi itsawar*
	i am going to look for someone who wants to be photographed
02	(0.4)
03 OUS	(to Jafar) tsk. (0.2) no jafar tu te encarregas de esto a mi se me da mal
	tsk. (0.2) no jafar you are in charge of this i am not good at it
04	(0.4)
05 NAI	(to Jafar) *jafar* (2.2) *jafar* (.) *tsawar nta*:
	jafar (2.2) jafar (.) you take the pictures
06	(.)
07 OUS	X XX
08 JAF	(to Naila) tú no haces_ / es que *ana andi*[*k graba*_
	don't you do_ / i have [to do the recor_
09 NAI	(to Jafar) [*ana khasni nsawar fotos*

[1] Data collected by Júlia Llompart and analysed in Llompart (2016). See transcription symbols in annex 1.

[i have to take the pictures

From a monolingual point of view, Oussira's utterance in Spanish in line 3 contains an interference in the form of a borrowed verb ('encarregas') from Catalan, and the turns in Darija include borrowings from Spanish (line 8 'graba', line 9 'fotos'). Although the adoption of a specific language or variety may be socially marked by the sociolinguistic context (see Ferguson 1959; Fishman 1967), examples like the previous one do not sustain concepts such as diglossia, and even less the idea that plurilingual speakers have distinctly separate languages/varieties in their minds, as some early bilingualism research argued (Barker 1947; Vogt 1954; Weinrich 1953). From an emic, conversational perspective, the approach adopted by Blom and Gumperz (1972) with the concepts *situational codeswitching* –related to diglossia– and *metaphorical codeswitching* –the use of different codes to produce specific rhetorical effects– would also fail to describe the students' plurilingual uses satisfactorily. Here we align with Auer's (1999) later clarification of the distinction between *codeswitching* (CS), *codemixing* (CM) and *fused lects* (FLs), which helps identify, by taking a profoundly emic analytical perspective:

1) if the participants' orient to language alternation is relevant to achieving discourse or participant-related objectives (CS). In Excerpt 1, the codeswitching to Spanish in line 3 and at the start of line 8 is participant-related. By using Darija to address Oussira and Jafar (line 1) or Jafar (lines 5 and 9), Naila excludes Samira, who does not speak this language, from the conversation. On the contrary, Oussira and Jafar switch into Spanish to respond him include her as a participant in the interaction.

2) if language alternation has no noticeable function (CM), as in the insertion of words in Spanish ('graba' or 'fotos') in the longer utterances in Darija in Excerpt 1; or

3) if the phenomena observed constitute some kind of FL, as in line 3, with the word ‘encarregas’, which is a kind of hybrid form, like many hybrid forms that are typical of bi/plurilinguals’ talk in Barcelona.

The notion of repertoire helps to overcome the idea of languages as separate systems in social life or in people’s minds. In fact, many researchers in sociolinguistics and other language-related disciplines in recent years have started to problematise and question the notion of ‘language’ as it is used to refer to abstract, bounded systems of norms (such as Spanish, Catalan, Arabic, Urdu, etc.), rather than to sets of semiotic resources (see May 2013; García and Li 2014). Some authors opt not to use the word ‘language’ and suggest alternative terms to describe resources for communicative action: ‘medium’, coined by Gafaranga (2000, 2005), ‘third modality’, used by Li (2010), or ‘features’, as proposed by Jørgensen (2008) and Møller (2008). In recent years, there has also been a focus on describing language as it is used –or the deployment of the whole spectrum of semiotic resources used to communicate– and many terms have appeared for this purpose, including *languaging* (Swain 2006), *plurilanguaging* (Makoni and Makoni, 2010), *plurilingual or unilingual modes of interaction* (Lüdi 2011), or *translanguaging* (Williams 1994).

Of these terms, *translanguaging* has been foregrounded in much recent research to talk holistically about how people use the semiotic resources in their repertoire, regardless of the named languages that such resources might relate to. Especially in the field of education, translanguaging aims to describe and promote a transgressive pedagogy intended to break with monolingual practices in linguistically diverse schools. While sharing many similarities, the translanguaging approach differs from the largely European, interactionist approaches to plurilingual modes of communication in educational settings, as developed by authors such as Gajo and Mondada (2000), Nussbaum and Unamuno (2006), Bonacina and Gafaranga (2011), Moore (2014), Llompart (2016), among others. This is because the latter approach pays more

attention to the sequential occurrence of instances in which plurilingual practices allow interactional participants to focus on communicative forms and potential learning. From the emic perspective taken in these studies, similar to Auer's (1999) approach, whether the semiotic resources used come from a named 'language' or otherwise is traced in participants' own interactional orientations.

In these perspectives, learning new resources supposes activating one's whole communicative repertoire as a scaffold; that is, relying on resources already available in order to participate in the on-going activity (Llompart and Nussbaum 2018). Excerpt 2 –which inspires the title of this paper– illustrates how learners engage in this process. The interaction includes the researcher (RES), and two ten-year-old primary students –Kamal (KAM) and Raquel (RAQ)– and takes place after the students have completed a task in pairs in English and need to share the results with the whole class.

Excerpt 2[2]

Participants: Researcher (RES), Kamal (KAM), Raquel (RAQ)

01 RES	sh:\ qui comença/ vosaltres\ que heu acabat primer
	sh:\ who starts/ you\ who have finished first
02 KAM	no no no no no\
03	(1)
04 RAQ	va (.) aunque hables en catalán\
	go (.) even if you speak in catalan
05 RES	vinga\
	come on
06	(.)
07 KAM	vale pero hablo en catalán
	ok but i speak in catalan
08 RES	no\
09 RAQ	mézclalo un poquito\
	mix it up a bit

[2] Data collected by Dolors Masats and Luci Nussbaum. The extract was first analysed in Nussbaum and Unamuno (2006, 112).

Kamal is afraid of speaking English in front of the class and refuses (line 2) the researcher's proposal (line 1) to be the first to share the results of the task they have all just completed in pairs. As his partner encourages him to participate in Catalan instead (line 4), and the researcher implicitly accepts (line 5), the boy agrees, stating he will speak in Catalan (line 7). In line 8, the researcher changes the rules, not accepting Kamal's proposal to speak in Catalan. Raquel then suggests to him that he could 'mix' languages: 'mézclalo un poquito' (line 9). That is, Raquel encourages Kamal to employ his plurilingual repertoire to accomplish the task set by the researcher to be done in English.

This extract is also interesting because it suggests that children's language uses depend on the degree of alignment with the school's language policy (Coulon 1993; Cots and Nussbaum 2008). Kamal, a boy born in Morocco, and Raquel, a girl born in Catalonia, show preference for the use of Spanish when talking to one another (lines 4 and 7). Yet Raquel encourages Kamal participate by mixing English and Catalan, the latter being the language of the institution and the language used by the researcher/teacher to address them.

In the following section of the text we introduce the methodological approach we take to explore plurilingual practices and learning.

A conversational approach to plurilingual classroom interaction

The data we analyse in this article were collected as part of different research projects over several years at different primary and secondary schools in Catalonia. The overarching aim of the research was to understand the dynamics of classroom interaction and language learning when students were engaged in the process of solving specific project tasks in different curricular languages (Catalan, Spanish, English and French). In all cases, one researcher was present and assisted the class teacher. We carried out ethnographic work in these educational settings, collected and transcribed interactional data, and analysed it using Conversation

Analysis (CA) procedures. CA relies on detailed transcriptions and analyses carried out from an emic perspective –that is, from the participants' point of view–, which implies observing and taking into account how interlocutors categorise and position themselves with regards to their linguistic resources.

CA has increasingly captured the attention of researchers interested in second language acquisition (SLA) in the past couple of decades, and the term CA-for-SLA has been coined. Some CA-for-SLA research has focused on the multifaceted ways in which language learners' participation is achieved and modified in classroom interaction over time, and the ways in which interactional resources –including plurilingual ones– are mobilised across encounters (see Moore 2014 for a discussion). By conceptualising learning in terms of participation, this strand of CA-for-SLA research shares similarities with the communities of practice approach, and inspires part of the analysis presented in this text.

In the analysis that follows, we summarise some of the main findings of our different research projects, focusing first on how students mobilise their plurilingual repertoires to participate in learning activities.

Participation for learning

CA-for-SLA researchers sustain that learning emerges from interaction, as it is a situated social practice; learning only takes places through action, and meaning is constructed in the social context in which action takes places (Mondada and Pekarek Doheler 2004). Plurilingual talk, thus, must be analysed in context. The results of our research reveal that plurilingual practices are necessary for learners to be able to participate in meaningful tasks in the classroom (Masats, Nussbaum, and Unamuno 2007; Masats 2008; Moore 2014; Nussbaum 2014; Llompart and Nussbaum 2018). From this perspective, the language uses of plurilingual speakers "should not be expected to operate within the logic of diglossic

practices, instead, they are likely to [...] serve a communicative purpose and contextualise the activities learners co-construct turn by turn" (Masats, Nussbaum, and Unamuno 2007, 127). We begin the analysis by examining plurilingual interactional modes as enabling learners' participation in communicative events in a language they are in the process of learning.

Plurilingual interaction modes

Understanding plurilingual talk implies accounting for the ways in which learners orient themselves to the different resources in their repertoire and use linguistic features *they* identify with different systems during the execution of an activity, as we can see in Excerpt 3. The extract consists in a dialogue between the researcher/teacher and a small group of seven-year-old primary students who, in their English class, are taking turns to complete a form in which they need to spot and write down the name of the place depicted in the work of a local painter whose pieces they are discovering.

Extract 3[3]

Participants: Researcher (RES), Eloisa (ELO), Juan (JUA), Raúl (RAU)

01 ELO	(using Spanish to spell the word Easter) e e\ (.) a ese\ (.) te e erre\
02	(.)
03 RES	*okey easter wha:t*\ (1) *easter*\ *cross this out easter*\
04	(1)
05 JUA	((grabs the paper)) una creu/
	((grabs the paper)) a cross/
06 RES	*yes because you use this word*\
07	(.)
08 RAU	((to Juan)) no: lo hago yo:\
	no: i do it:
09 JUA	yo que no he hecho nada\
	me as i have done nothing
10	(.)
11 RAU	vale\
	alright
12	(.)
13 RES	*okey*\ (1) *easter:: er*\ (.) *easter street*/ (.) *easter house*/
14	(1)

[3] Data collected by Dolors Masats and Melinda Dooly. The extract was first analysed in Nussbaum (2014).

15 RAU *+i^{h}la+*
island
16 (.)
17 RES *yes read it\ easter*
18 (.)
19 RAU *+island+*
20 RES *island very good*
21 (.)
22 RAU ((graps the paper)) ya escribo yo porque no xxx
i'll write as i have not xxx
23 RES *okay*
24 (1)
25 ELO *i:*
26 (.)
27 RES *no no they are in easter here you write here in easte:e*
28 (.)
29 RAU goma:\
rubber:
30 (.)
31 RES *rubber:*
32 (.)
33 ELO xxx
34 RAU *thank you:*
35 (.)
36 RES ((to raúl, louder and smiling)) *welcome* (.) ((to juan)) *what's your*
37 *name/*
38 (.)
39 JUA *juan*
40 (.)
41 RES *juan* (.) *can you cross the word island/* (.) *in the paper* (.) *cross*
42 *it out* (.) ((another kid graps the paper)) *juan juan ju:an*
43 (.)
44 RAU *easter island*
45 RES *easter island* (.) *yes very good*
46 (.)
47 JUA tatxo/
i cross it out/
48 (.)
49 RES *yes* (.) *cross it out*

In this extract, the researcher/teacher is trying to get the children to produce the words 'Easter Island', both orally and in writing. As we can see, she only uses the target language to guide the task (lines 3, 6, 17, 23, 27, 41 and 49), to elicit words (line 13), to give students feedback (lines 17, 20 and 45), to focus on the activity (line 27), to translate a word (line 31) or to distribute turns (line 36). Raúl orients himself towards English when he is attempting to solve

the task (line 19, 44), but switches into Spanish when he is engaged in negotiating with his peers how to proceed (lines 8, 11, 22) or when he needs to ask for supplies (line 29). Juan uses Spanish to address Raúl (line 9), but Catalan to address the researcher (lines 5 and 47). In this community of practice, three languages are used, yet English, the language of instruction in this class, is preferred by the researcher, and everybody orients to it as such during pedagogical activities controlled by her. Children use other languages to participate in managing the activity and when they do not know a word in English (line 29). The fact that other languages are used when students are engaged in activities other than doing the task itself reveals that switching languages is often a contextualisation cue (Gumperz 1982) that signals the kind of action students are performing. Yet, the use of one language or another (Spanish or Catalan) corresponds to the norms of social use in that community of practice. The teacher represents the institution and the children address her in the language of the institution. However, when they address other children they use Spanish because it is the language usually used between pupils in this school.

Despite the children using little English, they can travel through various formulations of the utterance that the teacher is looking for (Easter Island). First, they use a mixed repertoire when they use Spanish to spell the English word ‘Easter’ (line 1) or pronounce the English word ‘Island’ using Spanish features (lines 15 and 19). Finally, they are able to produce ‘Easter Island’ in English (line 44). This extract illustrates that to develop their competence in English, children need first to make use of their plurilingual repertoire to maintain the conversational flow.

Unilingual interaction modes

Unilingual modes of interaction are observable when learners orient themselves towards the exclusive use of the target language. When their competence in this language is emergent,

their talk suggests that they still rely on other linguistic resources from their repertoires to complete tasks. This can be observed in Excerpt 4, in which a six-year-old primary school student describes how octopuses are caught for the teacher and his classmates in Catalan.

Extract 4[4]

Participants: Sergi (SER)

01 SER	un ganxo que és llarg larg\ (.) i que té un pinxo_ (.) i que- (.)
	a hook that is long long\ (.) and that has as a spike_ (.) and that-
02	(.) per: pescar les p_ (.) pop\ (.) tens que anar a bucear\ (.) al:
	(.) to: fish the o_(.) octopus\ (.) you have to go diving\ (.) to:
03	fon:s_ (.) i:_ i:: i amb aquell- ganxo que té un pinxu_ (.) el pesca
	the bottom_ (.) and: and:: and with that- hook that has a spike_ (.) he fishes it
04	a dins\ (.) alguna vegada_ (.) salen a fora (.) i es pesquen a a
	inside\ (.) sometimes_ (.) they come outside (.) and they are fished
05	fora\ (.) s'amaguen però- (.) el miei germà:_ es va al fon:s_ i i
	outside\ (.) they hide but- (.) my brother: goes to the botto:m_ and and (.)
06	e:l_ (.) ja sap onde viuen\
	h:e_ (.) already knows where they live

Sergi's discourse in Catalan contains words in Spanish, which could be interpreted as interferences from L1 to L2. Yet, if we see him as a 'successful multi-competent speaker' (Cook 1991, 190-191) we can observe that, while doing the task set in the Catalan class, he is orienting himself towards the target language and therefore he needs to draw on his whole repertoire, often in hybrid ways (such as the word 'miei', which comes from Caló, a variety of Romani) to participate in this communicative event. As Masats et al. (2007, 126) argue, "It is precisely the possibility [plurilingual speakers have] of using their [plurilingual] resources what scaffolds their participation in learning activities that allow them to construct, over time, unilingual competences in a given language".

Moving from plurilingual to unilingual interaction modes

[4] Data collected by Luci Nussbam. First analysed in Llompart and Nussbaum (2018).

First attempts to communicate in a new language always occur in a plurilingual mode. Teachers use the target language and students respond with embodied actions, by using the few forms they know, or by making use of plurilingual procedures, such as codeswitching, as Excerpt 3, above.

At initial stages (plurilingual mode), learners produce hybrid forms resulting from using word-to-word translations from one of the languages in their repertoire to the target language, and they rely on codeswitching to manage the task or to ask for help to overcome communicative obstacles. We can observe this in Excerpt 5. The extract includes a dialogue between two ten-year-old primary students and a researcher/teacher while the two children are carrying out a pair-work task in English, which consists in associating two cards and justifying the association.

Extract 5[5]

Participants: Bawna (BAW), Pau (PAU), Researcher (RES)

01 BAW	*banana and_ the ladder* (.) *it's colour yellow*
02	(.)
03 PAU	cómo se llama- (.) caer en inglés/
	how do you say- (.) fall in english/
04	(.)
05 BAW	eh_
06	(.)
07 PAU	cómo se dice caer en inglés/ (.) ((to the teacher)) caure que com es
	how do you say fall in english/ (.)((to the teacher)) fall how do you
08	diu caure en inglés/
	say fall in english/
09	(.)
10 RES	*fall*\
11	(.)
12 PAU	*fall*
13 BAW	*fall*
14	(.)
15 PAU	*on the port* (1) *of the_* ((to the teacher)) com es deia/
	on the port (1) of the_ ((to the teacher)) how was it said/

[5] Data collected by Dolors Masats and Luci Nussbaum. The extract was first analysed in Masats, Nussbaum, and Unamuno (2007, 130).

16 (.)
17 RES *fall*\
18 (.)
19 PAU *of the fall of the window*\
20 (1)
21 RES no he entès res\
i didn't understand anything
22 (.)
23 BAW què vols dir/
what do you want to say/
24 (.)
25 PAU a: que això s'ha caigut per la finestra\
a: that this fell out of the window
26 (.)
27 BAW ah- (.) *the purse_ is fall for the w- w- white window*\

Pau and Bawna make efforts to produce their discourse in English (lines 1, 15, 19 and 27). However, they codeswitch into Catalan or Spanish to ask for clarification or for help. The use of one language or another is participant-related: Pau uses Spanish to ask Bawna for help (lines 3 and 7) because it is the language they usually speak, but uses Catalan to ask the teacher for help (lines 7 and 15) because the adult represents the institution. On the contrary, Bawna's codeswitch into Catalan to request a clarification from Pau (line 23), who also replies in Catalan (line 25), indicates that language preferences are not stable and depend on contextual parameters.

Pau and Bawna's discursive practices reveal that they fluctuate between an initial and an intermediate stage in terms of their use of the target language, as they occasionally employ their whole plurilingual repertoires and rely on different mechanisms to overcome communicative obstacles and maintain their orientation towards a unilingual mode of interaction, as we can see in Excerpt 6. The extract includes a dialogue between the same two students (PAW and BAW) while they are scripting a role-play between a shop assistant and a customer.

Extract 6[6]

Participants: Pau (PAU), Bawna (BAW)

01 PAU eres tú que eres el cliente\
it is you because you are the customer
02 (.)
03 BAW *it's a_ a_* (.) *a deu mil money*\
it's a_ a_ (.) ten thousand money
04 (.)
05 PAU deu mil no\ (.) *deu mil moneys*\
ten thousand no\ (.) ten thousand moneys
06 (.)
07 BAW *a ten_*
08 PAU *er_*
09 BAW *ten thousand*\
10 (.)
11 PAU *ten thousand moneys*\
12 (.)
13 BAW xxxx\
14 (.)
15 PAU *yes yes* es que_ sube\ (.) *it's up*\ (.) *it's up navideit*
yes yes it is because_ it goes up\ (.) it's up\ (.) it's up navideit
16 BAW [*thank you*\
17 PAU [*thank you*\ [*bye*\
18 BAW [*bye bye*\

As in the previous extract, Bawna and Pau are conducting the task in English and Pau uses Spanish to manage it. Yet Catalan in Bawna's case (line 3) and Spanish in Pau's case (line 15) are also used as a scaffolding resource to maintain the conversation in English. In Bawna's case, she first produces an utterance using features of both Catalan and English to propose a line for the role-play ('deu mil moneys', line 3), but after Pau's turn she subsequently replaces the word in Catalan with its counterpart in English ('ten thousand', lines 7 and 9), without help. Pau follows the same procedure in line 15, when he first produces half of his utterance in English, half in Spanish ('yes, yes, es que sube'), and then rephrases in English ('it's up'). The students' self-repairs suggest, in both cases, that they simply needed more time to think

[6] Data collected by Dolors Masats and Luci Nussbaum. The extract was first analysed in Masats, Nussbaum, and Unamuno (2007, 137).

before speaking. The sentence produced by Pau in line 15 is completed with a hybrid form. As Pau does not know how to say Christmas in English, he uses the Spanish word (navidad) with an ending which sounds English to him ('navideit', line 15). Pau's decision not to directly use Spanish to overcome a language obstacle, but instead to adopt a hybrid form, indicates his willingness to orient his discourse towards a unilingual mode of interaction in English.

At more advanced stages (unilingual mode), learners perform all three of the actions we have already introduced (i.e. conducting the task, managing the task and overcoming communicative obstacles). At this point, obstacles are solved intralinguistically (i.e. relying only on the target language), by using either lexical substitution mechanisms or paraphrasing, as we can see in Excerpt 7. The data shows a dialogue between two adult students during an English lesson in which they are carrying out a pair-work task, which consists in associating two cards and justifying the association.

Extract 7[7]

Participants: Joan (JOA), Nancy (NAN)

01 JOA *uh*: (3) *it was*\ (3) *here*\ (.) *is where it's put the money after*
02 *buying something*/
03 (3)
04 NAN *yeah*\ (.) *we could put it here but we can't make a pair with the*
05 *purse*
06 (.)
07 JOA *uhu*: (.) *what's else*\

Students have 16 cards and need to form eight pairs. Agreeing on criteria for matching them is not easy as there are various collections of three objects. In Excerpt 7, the students are referring to a flashcard with the picture of some bank notes, another with the picture of a purse, and another with the picture of a cash register on it. In lines 1 and 2, Joan suggests

[7] Data collected by Dolors Masats. The extract was first analysed in Masats (2008, 298).

pairing the flashcards depicting the bank notes and the cash register. As he does not know the word for the latter object, he replaces it with the adverb 'here'. In lines 4 and 5, Nancy, who does not know the word either, uses the same lexical substitution to make her contribution and reject Joan's proposal. Joan's turn was also interesting because he used a second intralingual procedure to overcome his communicative obstacle: he described the object.

Lexical substitution and paraphrasing are two of the procedures used by interlocutors who have developed a high degree of 'communicative expertise' (Hall, Cheng, and Carlson 2006) to maintain the flow of the conversation and favour fluidity over (Nussbaum, Tusón, and Unamuno 2002). Less expert language users, instead, solve obstacles interlinguistically (i.e. relying on other languages they know) by employing codeswitching and hybrid forms, as we have seen in Excerpts 5 and 6.

To conclude this section of the analysis, we argue that language learning is a process that is reflected in the ways learners' participation is achieved and modified in classroom interaction over time, and in the ways in which they mobilise interactional resources for scaffolding their completion of cognitive and communicative activities. Learners set out from an initial stage in which they have little possibilities of participating in communicative activities in the target language, and progressively, through practice, and through the use of interlinguistic (e.g. recourse to other languages in their plurilingual repertoire) and intralinguistic (lexical substitution and paraphrasing) procedures, they learn to participate in interactions in unilingual mode (Masats, Nussbaum, and Unamuno 2007; Masats 2008; Moore 2014). Figure 1 models this process visually.

Figure 1. Language learning as a plurilingual process of cognitive and communicative scaffolding (Nussbaum, Moore, and Borràs 2013, 246).

[insert figure 1 here]

By taking into account this three-stage procedure, language learning can be described as processes in which users move from plurilingual interactional modes to unilingual interactional modes. It is worth mentioning that, in stages 1 and 2, students cannot participate in the tasks without relying on their whole repertoirex. The use of plurilingual resources, thus, acts as a scaffolding mechanism that allows learners to gradually develop competence in the target language and to engage in a communicative event adopting a unilingual mode of participation.

Didacticising plurilingualism

If, as we have argued in the previous sections of this article, plurilingualism is a reality both of social interaction and of learning processes, it should be 'didacticised', or transformed into classroom teaching methodology (Gajo 2007; Duverger 2007; Nussbaum 2013, 2017). In this section, although we talk about a *didactics of plurilingualism*, it would be naïve not to acknowledge that very similar approaches are found in so-called *translanguaging pedagogies*, *multilingual pedagogies*, or *integrated approaches*. The 'didactisation' of plurilingualism, following Gajo (2007), Duverger (2007) and Nussbaum (2013, 2017), operates on three levels: macro, meso and micro.

At the *macro* level, schools might establish curricular approaches which keep languages separate in different subjects (promoting the creation of a syllabus for each language taught), or they might adopt a plurilingual approach and promote the integration of languages across the curriculum (Masats and Noguerol 2016). At the *meso* level, the didactics of plurilingualism involves planning teaching and learning sequences in which different languages, communicative modes and discourse genres are included (Dooly 2016; Nussbaum 2017). The way our team envisages this approach is represented in the diagram in Figure 2. At the *micro* level, the didactics of plurilingualism requires that teachers develop skills for

understanding the plurilingual uses emerging in their classrooms in the interactional dynamics between teacher and students, and among students, such as the interactional extracts presented in this article.

Figure 2: Planning plurilingual teaching sequences (Source Moore 2018, 36).

[Insert figure 2 here]

Concluding comments

Throughout this text we have shown that plurilingual talk is inherent to the process of developing new linguistic resources, since it allows learners to participate in activities without breaking the communicative flow and to acquire the communicative expertise that facilitates, over time, their use of resources belonging to a single language. Far from being an obstacle, plurilingual practices constitute an asset for communicating, firstly, and subsequently for learning; far from being 'problematic', plurilingual uses are creative, emergent forms of communication that are designed and articulated *ad hoc* for situated purposes.

In the same way that plurilingual practices have challenged linguistics and sociolinguistics, they should help question established approaches to language teaching in order to build new methodologies. Empirical studies and theoretical concepts are available in order to draw on the richness that plurilingualism offers to teachers, language-in-education policy makers and other members of the educational community, in implementing a didactics of plurilingualism. There remains a need to expand the body of school-based research based on trials with such truly plurilingual educational. There is also an enormous demand for empirical work on the

assessment of plurilingual competences, which should take into account the ability to use plural resources, rather than just the ability to use a single language.

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Annex 1: Transcription conventions

Pseudonym of participant	ABC
Overlapping	[
Pause	()
Comments	((laughing))
Rising intonation	/
Falling intonation	\
Lengthening of sound	: ::
Abrupt cut off	-
Turn continues	&
Approximate phonetic transcription	+ +
Languages	Catalan
	<u>Spanish</u>

English and Arabic

Translation

FIGURES

Figure 1

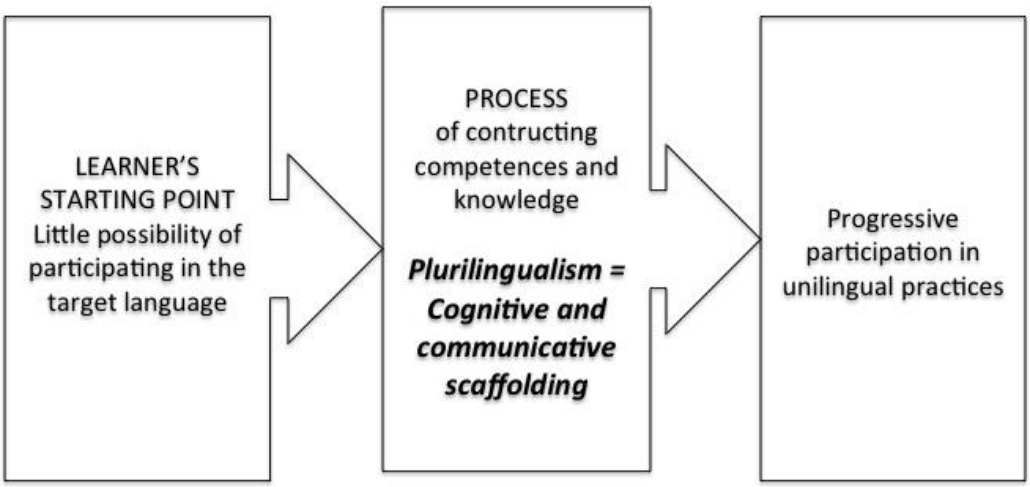

Figure 2