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Review Paper

Dismantling Monolingual Ideologies Through Translanguaging in South African Universities: An Integrative Review

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Abstract: This study is an integrative review of literature on the current state and practice of translanguaging in South African higher education institutions. The study is premised on the observation that, although translanguaging theory and practice have gained considerable attention from scholars in the Global North, a great deal remains to be known regarding its affordances in the Global South. Data was gathered through a comprehensive peer-reviewed literature search from various online scholarly databases using keywords. The study indicates that the published literature on translanguaging in South African universities explores its utility as a pedagogical strategy for teaching STEM subjects. A total of 30 studies published between 2015 and 2025 were reviewed and thematically analysed. This literature is dominated by theoretical perspectives that centre colonially inherited raciolinguistic ideologies about the utility of African indigenous languages in higher education. The study shows that published literature on translanguaging in South African universities broaches themes on its utility as a pedagogical strategy for teaching (STEM) subjects. The literature also focuses on how translanguaging functions as a disruptive pedagogical strategy with the potential to mainstream multilingualism in teaching and learning, consequently dismantling monolingual ideologies and practices that valorise English as the legitimate language of education and social advantage. Translanguaging has the potential to address inequality and serve as a socially just pedagogy with inherent decolonial intentions. Having critically examined and synthesised the literature, the article identifies gaps, provides directions for future research, and localises theoretical innovations.

Keywords: Translanguaging; South African higher education, multilingualism; multilingual pedagogies; indigenous African languages; language policy; monolingual ideologies

Introduction

Although translanguaging as a pedagogical practice has gained significant traction within scholarship, particularly in the West (Atta & Naqvi, 2022; Burton & Rajendram, 2019; Cenoz & Gorter, 2022), it remains largely underexplored in the Global South context. While there is now a considerable corpus of studies on translanguaging emerging from the Global South, many of these studies tend to mechanically draw on the theorisation of translanguaging through Western lenses (Makalela, 2016). In particular, these studies heavily rely on the concept as originally conceived by the Welsh scholar Cen Williams from his research on bilingual schools in Wales in 1994(Cenoz & Gorter, 2022). While this has been a productive theoretical and practical approach to negotiating multilingualism and fostering inclusion in African education systems, the uniqueness of indigenous African multilingualism dictates that the concept of translanguaging be 'Africanised' to speak to these realities. Makalela (2016) concurs that multilingual practices in sub-Saharan Africa have so far been

understood using foreign concepts of plurality, whose notions often run contrary to the meaning-making practices of indigenous African language speakers (Makalela, 2016). Reflecting on how to challenge the colonial framing of indigenous African languages as subservient to Western languages, particularly English, scholars have sought to demonstrate that translingual practices can be a panacea (Charamba & Zano, 2019; Siziba & Maseko, 2023)

Makalela (2016) suggests that precolonial language use among African civilisations was always characterised by language practices that were "porous, flexible and accommodative of differences" (Makalela, 2016, p. 189). This observation suggests that 'translanguaging,' although not known by this term until it was introduced by Williams, is an age-old practice in African communities, probably as old as multilingualism itself. He therefore calls for a re-imagining of this theory and practice from "an anti-colonial lens where the focus is on multilingual practices and status before the colonial invasions starting in the 17th century" (Makalela, 2016, p. 188). He argues that a worthwhile and relevant translanguaging theory and practice ought to consider African values by infusing principles of *ubuntu*, what he terms "ubuntu translanguaging" (Makalela, 2016). This concept can also be extended to digital multilingual practices as "E-Ubuntu Translanguaging (e-UTL)" (Mtanha-Matariro et al., 2025, p. 4507). Despite the advice to incorporate African values in the re-imagination of translanguaging in the African context, scholarship on translanguaging in Southern Africa continues to rely heavily on the Western-constructed conceptions of translanguaging that springboards from the point of viewing languages as static entities, thus reinforcing a monolingual bias foregrounding the utilisation of use of ex-colonial languages as tools for educational success (Makalela, 2016). There is a need to critically examine the state of the literature on translanguaging as a pedagogical practice to challenge multilingual solitudes in higher education, given its affordances as a transformative and decolonial practice that can potentially result in the inclusion of indigenous African languages in teaching, learning and the conduct of university business.

This study is an integrative review of recent literature on translanguaging in South African higher education institutions. It comes on the backdrop of increasing interest in translanguaging as a theory and a pedagogical practice within the global South context. While translanguaging has gained significant popularity within Western scholarship, its affordances remain largely misunderstood and incompletely developed and largely underappreciated within the Global South because of the enduring monolingual ideologies that valorise and legitimatise English as the language of social and economic advantage. Given the documented utility of translanguaging within education spaces, this study is therefore timely to establish the state of the literature and to identify gaps within the literature for further study. Within South African higher education, there has been a discernible 'translanguaging turn' particularly after the directive by the Department of Higher Education and Training that all public higher education institutions enact language polices that promote multilingualism and inclusion of historically marginalised indigenous African languages (DHET, 2002; 2020). This multilingual language policy drive seeks to foster transformation and decolonisation of language use in the university space. Against this backdrop, several institutions have identified translanguaging as one of the practices to challenge monolingual ideologies that dominate South African higher education. This literature review is therefore timely to establish the current state of translanguaging practice in South African universities. The review sought to answer the following questions

i. What are some of the emerging themes on translanguaging in South African higher education?
ii. How can future studies address identified gaps in the literature?

Literature Review

1. The Language Policy Framework For Public Higher Education Institutions In South Africa

The 'multilingual turn' in the South African higher education has been influenced by the promulgation of the Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions (LPPHEI) by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET, 2002; 2020). This policy framework seeks to challenge the legacies of colonialism and apartheid in South African universities by transforming language use through mainstreaming African multilingualism in teaching, learning, research and general university business. By intentionally

seeking to promote the inclusion of historically marginalised indigenous African languages in higher education practices, the language policy framework has an inherent decolonial and transformative intention to foster epistemological access and success, particularly for African language speaking learners in South African universities (DHET, 2002; 2020). This is because the use of unfamiliar languages has been identified as a major barrier against the inclusion of black students, and the subsequent high failure rate among the same (Antia & van der Merwe, 2019; Charamba, 2020; Mavuso, 2020). The DHET language policy directive that every public higher learning institution enacts and operationalises a language policy was aimed at fostering epistemological transformation. Previously, transformation had been conceived in a narrow sense of increasing access to the 'physical university space' by black African learners, even though the curriculum remained largely disseminated in unfamiliar ex-colonial languages (Govender & Naidoo, 2023; Hlatshwayo, 2023). Although increasing visibility of black students in the physical university spaces gave a semblance of inclusion and transformation, language practices tended to conspire in their exclusion from the learning process, thereby perpetuating colonial and apartheid inequalities (Chikoko, 2021; Kiramba, 2018).

Although there is an admission even by the DHET that a move towards complete multilingualism is not likely to be achieved in the near future (Maseko & Siziba, 2023), the fact that all 26 public higher education institutions in South Africa have some kind of language policy in place(Maseko & Siziba, 2023) signals some commitment towards dismantling colonial and apartheid era language practices. It also shows that the transformation project is gaining significant traction within universities. In particular, the commitment to transform language practices and policies is significant in the whole decolonial project (Chikoko, 2021; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2022). While debates on the lack of implementation of these promulgated language policies continue to rage (Dyers & Abongdia, 2015; Zungu, 2021) there is a need to shine the spotlight on how decolonial and transformative practices such as translanguaging are conceptualised and operationalised to foster the inclusion and legitimisation of indigenous African languages as academic languages in South African universities. In particular, there is a need to understand translanguaging from an African perspective, given the suggestion that it is an age-old practice that predates colonialism (Makalela, 2016). This critical literature review is thus important to establish the state of the literature on how translanguaging has been taken up as a transformative and decolonial theory of language use in multilingual institutions, and as an inclusive practice for African indigenous language speaking learners in South African universities. Accordingly, this review contributes to understanding translanguaging through an 'Africanist' perspective. Additionally, it challenges the enduring notion of translanguaging as a practice with Western origins. The next section provides a discussion of translanguaging from the theoretical and pedagogical perspectives. This allows researchers to locate the study within the broader arguments about its affordances in South African universities.

2. Conceptualising Translanguaging

Translanguaging as a theory and practice was originally coined from a translation of the Welsh term 'trawsieithu' or 'drawsieithu,' deployed by Cen Williams in 1994 to denote specific pedagogical approaches that were used to promote the acquisition of bilingual competence in English and Welsh in bilingual Welsh schools(Burton & Rajendram, 2019; Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; Leonet et al., 2017) and the planned alternating use of the two languages in the classroom(Cenoz & Gorter, 2022). Although the term translanguaging has assumed a polysemic character since its introduction into the literature on bilingualism and multilingualism, there is agreement among scholars that it refers to the fluid(García & Lin, 2016) and flexible(Creese & Blackledge, 2011) languaging practices(Madsen & Nørreby, 2019) of bilinguals that challenge the very concept of languages as separate and bounded entities that can be distinguished from each other in practice. A comprehensive definition, therefore, conceives of translanguaging as the fluid practices of bilinguals (García & Lin, 2016) that enable speakers to "draw on all the languages they know to access new languages or communicate a message using more than one language" (McCracken, 2017, p. 25). It thus normalises and legitimises the bilingual practices of speakers who draw from "a fluid and dynamic repertoire that is not compartmentalised into two separate named languages" (Kleyn & García, 2019, p. 72). By this logic, bilinguals and multilinguals thus possess a linguistic repertoire of overlapping systems which they use flexibly

to achieve inclusive, communicative, legitimative, and transformative communication purposes (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Kleyn & García, 2019). Since translanguaging challenges the traditional concept of 'languages' and how they can, or ought to be used, it has been viewed through the lenses of transformation as it allows and legitimises the use of majority languages and minority languages alongside one another (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Maseko, 2022).

In the South African higher education sector, translanguaging has tended to be associated with the decolonial endeavour to dismantle monolingual ideologies and practices that legitimise English and Afrikaans to varying extents (Banda, 2018; Siziba & Maseko, 2023). Because of this promise and perceived potential, there is a discernible 'translanguaging turn'(Rajendram, 2019) within scholarship focusing on South African higher education. Such scholarship has sought to understand the application of translanguaging in different aspects of pedagogical practices in pervasively multilingual classrooms. Pedagogical translanguaging is the systematic and planned use of translanguaging as a teaching and learning strategy (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). While translanguaging has been applied in lower levels of education, particularly to understand how practices involving indigenous languages are used to foster and promote understanding of subjects such as Mathematics and Science(Charamba, 2022; Charamba & Zano, 2019), studies focusing on higher education have been more concerned with its transformative aspects, particularly its potential to dislodge English hegemony in teaching and learning, and the conduct of university business(Siziba & Maseko, 2023). This review focuses on studies relating to the latter to examine how translanguaging is framed by such scholarship. Crucially, researchers are aware that the application of translanguaging is not limited to the educational sphere but also transcends other areas of practice, such as music and artistic performances (Hollington, 2018), the legal sphere (Runcieman, 2022), as well as in the construction of urban linguistic landscapes (Gorter & Cenoz, 2015). However, the scope of this review is limited to South African higher education, given the call for transformation and decolonisation of university language practices made salient by the LPPHEI.

Methodology

This study followed an integrative literature review approach to examine how translanguaging has been adopted by universities in South Africa. The review involved critically analysing and synthesising existing literature on translanguaging in South African higher education to establish emergent themes in the literature. The intention was to understand how translanguaging is currently viewed and appreciated as a pedagogical strategy that challenges pervasive and enduring monolingual ideologies in universities. As a noncontact method, the review did not involve the participation of humans or other animate objects.

To gather literature, which constitutes 'data' for this study, a comprehensive online peer-reviewed literature search was conducted from various scholarly databases. These included Google Scholar and other electronic resources such as online journals and books. The study focused on resources under the broad discipline of applied linguistics, and specifically the subjects of multilingualism, multilingual pedagogies, and decolonial language policy studies. To conduct the literature search, keywords and phrases such as 'translanguaging in South African Universities, Translanguaging in South African higher education, multilingual pedagogies in South African universities' were used. The literature search yielded several journal articles and book chapters on the subject. The researchers then selected a total of 30 publications from 2015 and 2025 for inclusion in the study. These publications focused on the theory and practice of translanguaging in South African higher education.

Although there were a number of articles and book chapters focusing on primary education, these were not included in the review. Thematic saturation was used to determine the literature sample. While it is noted that the dynamics of translanguaging in lower levels of education may not be very different from those in higher education as the context is the same, this analysis is limited to literature focusing on South African universities since these institutions are bound by language policies that they crafted in line with the DHET (2002; 2020) language policy directives. The analysis involved categorising the literature and organising it into themes on various levels. The thematic structure of the review enabled us to distil streams of related ideas and arguments emerging from the literature (Torraco, 2016). This also allowed the researchers to make sense of the past and current state of the literature and to propose directions for future research.

The Findings

Predictably, the 'multilingual turn'(Liu & Fang, 2022) within the South African higher education landscape has witnessed the emergence of literature that demonstrates how South African universities are responding to the call by the DHET for the promotion of multilingualism and the foregrounding of indigenous African languages within the university spaces. While translanguaging has been touted as one of the strategies of mainstreaming these languages in teaching and learning, a lot remains to be known regarding the mechanics of implementation. Notably, much literature on translanguaging has tended to focus on the analysis of university language policies to show how they enable translanguaging as a pedagogical practice that can potentially transform language practices and mainstream historically marginalised indigenous African languages in teaching and learning (Siziba & Maseko, 2023). Within the frame of this scholarship, translanguaging is often presented as a transformative, inclusive, disruptive and socially just (Charamba & Nkomo, 2022; Hurst & Mona, 2017) pedagogical and decolonial strategy (Mbirimi-Hungwe & Matariro-Mutanha, 2024; McKinney, 2020; Ngcobo et al., 2021). It can further challenge monolingual ideologies, the hegemonic dominance and legitimacy of ex-colonial languages in teaching and learning (Letsela, 2021; Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2019). Additionally, translanguaging can dismantle the general abyssal thinking (García et al., 2021) which fosters raciolinguistic ideologies of African languages as being inherently less intellectualised and lacking the capacity to function in knowledge production and dissemination (Khumalo & Nkomo, 2022; Prah, 2017).

Analysis of university language policies to understand how they seek to empower African languages is gaining momentum. The argument has been that if universities are sincere in their commitment to adopt multilingual pedagogies, provisions that legitimise such practices must be engendered in their language polices. Maseko and Siziba (2023) critically analysed the principles for the provision of translanguaging in the language policy of one university in South Africa. They observe that while the language policy of their study's focal university commits to promoting translanguaging practice, the sincerity of this commitment is betrayed by how these policy provisions are worded. In particular, they question the use of ambivalent, escapist and vague terminology in the provisions, and argue that this could be an avenue that can be exploited by university authorities to insulate themselves from answering difficult questions associated with non-implementation (Siziba & Maseko, 2023). Such wording, they argue, often reproduces power-inflected practices that reveal the enduring contestations between indigenous and ex-colonial languages. Although policy wording is important as it reveals the dispositions and ideologies of university authorities towards multilingual practices, there seems to be a dearth of studies that specifically zero in on provisions for translanguaging. This is despite that most of the 26 public universities in South Africa identify translanguaging as a multilingual pedagogy that should be cultivated and promoted. While policy analysis to understand university attitudes and dispositions towards translanguaging is important, there is a need to understand how policy is related to practices.

Much literature seems to be skewed towards investigating how translanguaging is perceived by lecturers and students in universities (Alfian, 2022; Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2019; Mpofu, 2025). Findings from most of these studies show that translanguaging is perceived as a useful strategy to challenge monolingualism and the legitimacy of English as a medium of instruction, consequently relegating indigenous African languages to marginality in the university space. Mpofu (2025) shows that lecturers often exhibit positive dispositions towards students' translanguaging practices, while also acknowledging its affordances in fostering epistemic access through improved comprehension of content. Mbirimi-Hungwe (2019) sought to understand the attitudes of both lecturers and students towards translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy. She argued that being aware of their depositions was important in the drive to convince them to accept and adopt it in teaching and learning, respectively. This suggests that the current state of acceptance of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy is high, eventhough translanguaging is not yet fully understood and appreciated by all faculty members in institutions (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2019). Notably, there has been a tendency to focus on STEM classes since the widespread belief is that poor performance in STEM subjects is linked to the exclusive use of the unfamiliar English language to teach unfamiliar subjects such as Mathematics and Science to African language-speaking learners.

Despite the documented affordances of translanguaging, studies show that monolingual ideologies that foreground English persist (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2019; Mbirimi-Hungwe & Hungwe, 2019). This tends to foster epistemic exclusion of a majority of students who speak indigenous languages as their First Language (L1). Epistemic exclusion implies that while black African learners now have considerable access to the physical university space, contrasted with colonial times, they remain handicapped when it comes to accessing the curriculum, which is conceptualised, packaged and delivered in foreign languages (Antia & Dyers, 2016; Kiramba, 2018; Mbirimi-Hungwe & Hungwe, 2019). By revealing its potential to promote inclusion of African language speaking students in classroom discourses, these studies show that translanguaging has inherent decolonial, transformative and social justice affordances.

Given the foregoing, emerging literature has also sought to understand how the practice of translanguaging can foster the inclusion of learners from marginalised linguistic backgrounds. In that endeavour, Hurst and Mona (2017) show how translanguaging can be a socially just and inclusive practice that addresses language inequality in higher education. By focusing on "the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies in an introductory course at the University of Cape Town in 2015 and 2016"(Hurst & Mona, 2017, p. 126) through reflective practices of lecturers and student assessments, their findings align with the documented affordances of translanguaging as an empowering practice that can potentially challenge prevalent English monolingualism in South African higher education institutions(Antia & van der Merwe, 2019; Chimbunde & Kgari-Masondo, 2022; Makalela & McCabe, 2013). While students may respond positively to translanguaging as a multilingual pedagogy, some studies have revealed that ambivalent attitudes also exist (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2019). Studies have thus framed translanguaging as a subversive and disruptive practice that can potentially emancipate indigenous African languages from the clutches of colonialism by celebrating fluid multilingualism as a cultural competence, rather than a linguistic handicap (Makalela & Silva, 2023). This linguistic handicap view associates translanguaging with being a liability that often leads to dysfunctional communication, and a pedagogical practice that is still rudimentary, incompletely developed and lacks systematicity (Mpofu, 2025). This disposition is influenced by an overemphasis on Western theories of language acquisition, which view errors or misinventions between many languages as an impediment (Makalela, 2016). Consequently, this entrenches monolingual ideologies that favour the use of English in education and other high domains as a vehicle for upward social mobility (Siziba & Maseko, 2024). Because of translanguaging's potential as a socially just pedagogy (Hurst & Mona, 2017), it is often portrayed as a decolonial practice.

Decolonial scholarship has touted translanguaging as a strategy that not only challenges epistemic exclusion (Kiramba, 2018) but also resists the coloniality of language (Veronelli, 2015) that persists at different societal levels in South Africa(Molate & McKinney, 2024). In this light, translanguaging also serves a humanising function for the dehumanised ex-colonial subjects, thus providing a safe space for learners, particularly in their first year at university (Yafele, 2021). As a strategy to resist coloniality, translanguaging demystifies the enduring myth about indigenous African languages as inherently deficient in dealing with academic matters robustly and efficiently in the same way English is thought to do. Predictably, there have been attempts to project and promote translanguaging as an alternative pluralistic strategy that can lead to improvements in text comprehension and grasping of concepts, particularly among first-year students in South African universities (Ngcobo et al., 2021; Yafele, 2021). The observation was that additional cultural resources "acted as a catalyst for improved comprehension and learning of another language and the subject content of the intervention" (Yafele, 2021, p. 417). This was possible because translanguaging enabled readers to also rely on their cultural background to critically appraise and make sense of any given text (Yafele, 2021). Additionally, recent studies have investigated the use of translanguaging in academic essay writing by university students (Ngcobo et al., 2021). Ngcobo et al show that students who lacked proficiency in English found translanguaging to be empowering and reassuring, which helped them to successfully execute the task, while those who were proficient in English described the practice as "neither here nor there" (Ngcobo et al., 2021, p. 93). This also suggests an indifference towards the translanguaging strategy among some students, a finding that resonates with previous studies (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2019).

Discussion

Thus far, reviewed literature reveals that studies on translanguaging are mainly confined to practices in the physical university spaces and classrooms, yet language use transcends classroom walls. In the same vein, it is also evident that university language policies analysed by previous studies do not provide for translanguaging in online and virtual spaces. This probably explains the dearth of literature that broaches translanguaging practices in online spaces. While classroom translanguaging dominates this literature, it is mostly focused on the spoken and rarely on written materials. However, this may be changing, albeit at a slow pace. For example, studies proposing frameworks for integrating translanguaging in digital spaces are beginning to emerge (Mtanha-Matariro et al., 2025). Similarly, there is emerging interest in understanding how translanguaging can help learners develop academic reading and comprehension skills (Yafele, 2021). So far, much translanguaging literature in the South African higher education context is limited to investigating the dynamics of language use involving English and one or more African indigenous languages, yet African languages have been in contact even before the advent of English in Africa. This has the consequence of projecting English as the legitimate language and a model for African languages to approximate or emulate. Consequently, literature reveals no study that has sought to analyse and understand translingual practices among African languages themselves.

Another pertinent observation from this critical review is that most studies tend to mechanically adopt translanguaging theory in its original conception based on Western ideologies and data. However, emerging research has shown that the translanguaging theory can be adapted to fit the African circumstances and data. Theoretically, there is a need to develop and adopt an Africanised theory of translanguaging, given that these practices have always been prevalent in Africa, even before colonialism. Makalela has begun to explore such ways by introducing the concept of 'Ubuntu-Translanguaging' as an alternative framework that "shifts the gaze from language divisions to complex repertoires that are fluid in everyday meaning-making interactions" (Makalela, 2016, p. 191). The concept of Ubuntu Translanguaging is based on "the African value system of ubuntu that is understood within this frame of reference: I am because we are; we are because I am"(Makalela, 2016, p. 191) argues that the very creation of new linguistic boundaries by colonial masters served to sow seeds of disunity among African language speakers, who, before colonialism, used their linguistic resources fluidly and flexibly among themselves without observing any of these boundaries(Kleyn & García, 2019). By extending this notion of human interdependence to languages, it is possible to appreciate the argument that African languages have always been interdependent, suggesting that crossing language boundaries existed before colonialism, and certainly before the 'invention' of the term 'translanguaging.' An appreciation of this dynamic will thus feed into emerging discourses on 'decolonising multilingualism'(Tyler, 2021) by aligning with an Africanised translanguaging theory (Molate & McKinney, 2024). There is evidence that scholars have begun to take up Makalela's alternative translanguaging framework to explain languaging practices in South African higher education (e.g., Hurst & Mona, 2017; Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2019).

The study's findings have implications for pedagogy and institutional language polices. While there is ample evidence that translanguaging has beneficial effects when teaching unfamiliar concepts in STEM subjects at lower education levels, it is yet to be fully embraced and adopted as a pedagogical strategy in higher education institutions, owing to the enduring monolingual ideologies that valorise English as the legitimate language. There is therefore a need for universities to enforce translanguaging as a legitimate teaching and learning strategy. Part of this could involve its legitimisation and use in summative assessments. Otherwise, if summative assessments are conducted in English, as is the case currently, these monolingual ideologies will likely persist. Additionally, university language polices need to explicitly spell out a regime of sanctions and policies for educators who penalise learners for engaging in translingual practices. This could help entrench translanguaging as a legitimate learning strategy.

In sum, the findings of this study contribute to the burgeoning literature on translanguaging within African institutions of learning and the Global South broadly. Specifically, they provide insights into how translanguaging can be deployed as part of a decolonisation, transformation and social justice agenda, particularly for those African countries still grappling with language policy formulation. Other African

countries can take a leaf from the DHET's approach to the promotion of African indigenous languages as a decolonial and social justice imperative.

Conclusion

This study presented an integrative literature review on translanguaging theory and practice in South African higher education institutions, especially against the backdrop of the DHET directive for universities to enact and operationalise institutional language policies that foreground multilingualism, particularly in indigenous African languages. The study observes that the 'multilingual turn' in South African higher education has been characterised by university policies that commit to fostering inclusion, transformation and decolonisation by embracing socially just pedagogical practices that address linguistic inequality and inequity occasioned by the twin historical phenomena of colonialism and apartheid. Accordingly, translanguaging has been included as a humanising and decolonising practice in a number of university language policies. The review has shown that translanguaging is generally viewed in a positive light, although its full potential is yet to be realised in universities.

The study also observes how enduring monolingual ideologies often view translanguaging only as far as it being about dislodging, or at worst, approximating the status of English in teaching and learning. Dominant conceptualisations of translanguaging have been influenced by Western ideologies about languages, yet as some scholars have argued, translanguaging practice is nothing new; what is new is perhaps the 'term' – its origin from Cen Williams' research perhaps coincided with the influx of immigrants into Europe, presenting a new kind of multilingualism. In Africa, multilingualism and, by implication, translingual practices, had been the norm since early African civilisations (Makalela, 2016). There is a need for more studies to adopt Afrocentric conceptualisations of multilingualism and multilingual pedagogies that appreciate the primacy of translanguaging as being, primarily, an age-old African reality, rooted in the way African languages interacted even before colonialism. This study, therefore, implores researchers to explore these marginally treated theoretical and pedagogical aspects of translanguaging in South African higher education institutions.

Additionally, the review revealed that a majority of studies tend to focus on translanguaging experiences and practices in the physical classroom space, yet there has been a sharp rise in the use of virtual classrooms as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant new world of learning and work. Universities can thus revise their language policies to provide for the embedding of translanguaging in assessments and other learning management systems. In practice, lecturers and educators should facilitate the use of translanguaging in their assessment designs. This could involve the use of open-ended tasks that allow learners to respond using their full linguistic repertoires flexibly without observing rigid 'language boundaries'(Charamba, 2020).

While this study is important to capture the state of the literature on the subject, it has some limitations in its scope and methodology. Since the scope of the review was limited to studies of translanguaging in South African higher education, it focused only on secondary literature, thus neglecting the lived experiences of learners and lecturers, which could have further enhanced the study. Future studies could therefore incorporate these perspectives to comprehensively understand the practice of translanguaging from the point of view of those who implement or are affected by it. There is also a need for studies that will examine translanguaging in South Africa from a local/global comparative perspective. Since most studies focus on translanguaging face-to-face contact situations, future studies could also examine its use in virtual classrooms and other online university spaces to understand how universities live up to their language policies and how their commitment to multilingualism is concretely realised or negated.

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