Open translanguaging as internal localization: towards inclusive and equitable access of quality OER

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Research aim

This qualitative research explored the perceptions of university students training as African language teachers in drawing on their expertise to create resources in their own mother tongues through open translanguaging for the purposes of sharing them openly for educational purposes.
This presentation is guided by the following questions:

- What would open translanguaging as a form of internal localization involve?
- What practical steps would open translanguaging involve?
Translanguaging

• García (2009:140) describes translanguaging as an “act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential”.
Translanguaging

• Makalela (2018:5) uses multilanguaging and ubuntu translanguaging to refer to “instances where speakers have acquired more than two languages simultaneously and where there is more than one language of input and output in a discourse for meaning making”.
Open Translanguaging

• **Open translanguaging** (Olivier, 2020) involves students utilizing their individual and communal linguistic repertoires.

• This form of localization is considered internal localization (Olivier, 2020) as the focus is on student agency and translanguaging within the classroom.
Why do we need to localise?

• Tel Amiel (2013:136):
  “An often-ignored barrier to remix and revision is the English-language and western bias of the Internet and particularly OER”.
Why do we need to localise?

• Hegemony of knowledge from the West or Global North

• Decolonization of the curriculum

• To counter linguistic imperialism > linguicism
  Phillipson (1992:47) states that: “the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages”.

_Jako Olivier (2021)_)
Why do we need to localise?

• The need for culturally appropriate and situated learning.
• Open Educational Resources (OER) make localisation possible.
• Paquette’s (1979) *pédagogie ouverte* – foundational values of open pedagogy:
  • autonomy and interdependence,
  • freedom and responsibility, and
  • democracy and participation.
• But consider: clarity of the language of learning and teaching
Localisation vs. Adaptation

• Adaptation: changing the content and format
• Localisation: changing the content and format for a specific context
Localisation

• Wolfenden and Adinolfi (2019) – defining localisation:
  • (1) adaptation where the content is made relevant and
  • (2) translation where the text is converted from one language or language variety to another that is appropriate for the target learning context.

• Wiley et al. (2014): localisation is one of the most important but also least understood elements of OER.

• Localising OER - rendering content in other languages but also ensuring that the technology is appropriate for the context (Oates & Hashimi, 2016).
Open educational resources and multilingualism

• UNESCO Recommendation on OER (UNESCO, 2019) notes that member states should be: “…supporting OER stakeholders to develop gender-sensitive, culturally and linguistically relevant OER, and to create local language OER, particularly in indigenous languages which are less used, under-resourced and endangered” (UNESCO, 2019:8).
5Rs (+1R)

- Wiley (2021): “The terms "open content" and "open educational resources" describe any copyrightable work (traditionally excluding software, which is described by other terms like "open source") that is either (1) in the public domain or (2) licensed in a manner that provides everyone with free and perpetual permission to engage in the 5R activities:
  - **Retain** - make, own, and control a copy of the resource (e.g., download and keep your own copy)
  - **Revise** - edit, adapt, and modify your copy of the resource (e.g., translate into another language)
  - **Remix** - combine your original or revised copy of the resource with other existing material to create something new (e.g., make a mashup)
  - **Reuse** - use your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource publicly (e.g., on a website, in a presentation, in a class)
  - **Redistribute** - share copies of your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource with others (e.g., post a copy online or give one to a friend)

- Olivier (2020):
  - **Recontextualize** – the right to append, adapt or modify content to be relevant to a specific learning context while considering existing biases and hegemony of knowledge from the West and the Global North.
Towards internal localisation

• **External localisation** happens before learning and is done by content experts with or without the aid of language practitioners.

• **Internal localisation** is done by students throughout the learning process.
OER Localisation

Ivins (2011) - principles of localisation

• Principle 1: Localization must involve locals
• Principle 2: Localization is bolstered by a community of practice
• Principle 3: Localization must be done in appropriate formats
• Principle 4: Effective localization is proportional to understanding local contexts
OER Localisation Checklist

Content
• Theoretical underpinnings
• Contextual references
  • Geographical,
  • Socio-cultural,
  • Political etc.
• Regulatory and legal differences
• Culturally sensitive content
• Origin of authors and works
• Examples and cases

Format
• Language
  • Translation
  • Bilingual/multilingual content
  • Language variety aspects
• Appropriate mode of communication
• Graphical and multimedia content
  • Representativity
  • Bias
• Accessible file format and platform
Context

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:South_Africa_in_Africa_(mini_map_rivers).svg

NWU Profile 2017/2018
Context

• Total students: 58 356 (2020)
• Staff: 3 955 (2020)
• Three residential campuses: Potchefstroom, Vanderbijlpark and Mahikeng
• The Unit for Open Distance Learning has 66 learning support centres throughout (mainly rural) South Africa and Namibia for broadcasts of live class meetings as well as a total of 97 examination centres
Methodology

• This qualitative study involved analysis of OER artefacts, reflections by students and semi-structured interviews.

• Part of a larger project:
  • *Self-directed language learning for student teachers of African languages in multimodal open learning ecologies*
• University language distribution (HEMIS data)
  http://www.dhet.gov.za/HEMIS/Enrolment/Enrolment%20-%202017/2017%20Table%202.7%20for%20all%20institutions%20including%20languages.xls
Sampling, data collection and data analysis

• This qualitative study involved analysis of OER artefacts, reflections by students and semi-structured interviews.

• Student teachers:
  • isiZulu: n=163 (6 classes)
  • Sesotho sa Leboa: n=61 (4 classes)

• Final sample: 83 students

• Inductive thematic analysis
Data analysis

• Pre-activity reflections:

‘Most sources are available in the English language now. I was finding it challenging to translate from English to isiZulu.’ (P20, Q4, 7 Aug. 2021)

‘My wish is that sources be made directly available in isiZulu. It should be books originally composed in isiZulu not those interpreted.’ (P20, Q6, 7 Aug. 2021)

‘My view about the available resources is that they are insufficient, there must be voice recordings where a person would be heard speaking their indigenous language.’ (P64, Q6, 10 Aug. 2021)
Data analysis

• Pre-activity reflections:

I would like to be given an opportunity to participate in the creation of the resources that are used because that is where I will see that I have gained sufficient knowledge that enables me to be part of the creation process that will help others with my knowledge about the language. (P74, Q7, 12 Aug. 2021)

Yes, as I am a first-year student this year, all the work I have done and do well must be kept and used as resources for the following students. (P71, Q7, 11 Aug. 2021)

I will be able to include my own views as a student and it will assist others because I know about student needs as a student myself (P55, Q7, 10 Aug. 2021)
Data analysis

• Pre-activity reflections:

‘[P]eople fluent and knowledgeable in two languages [IsiZulu and English] could contribute positively to the creation of learning resources.’ (P43, Q7, 10 Aug. 2021)

‘As a Zulu person I am proud of my heritage. I want to pass the same pride to my learners, giving them a solid foundation so that they will love and aspire to learn more about their language. As my mother tongue it has influenced how I live and think, it has an influence in my humanity that I have today.’ (P51, Q4, 10 Aug. 2021)
Data analysis

• Other student views:

‘[B]ecause I don’t understand the isiZulu academic language enough to create resources, hence I translate most of my information to English before submitting.’ (P24, Q7, 8 Aug. 2021)

‘Most sources are available in the English language now. I was finding it challenging to translate from English to isiZulu.’ (P20, Q4, 7 Aug. 2021)

‘My wish is that sources be made directly available in isiZulu. It should be books originally composed in isiZulu not those interpreted.’ (P20, Q6, 7 Aug. 2021)
Data analysis

• Other student views:

‘Learning such deep isiZulu energised me a lot, and I learnt new approaches that I can use in the class as a future teacher.’ (P16, Q4, 5 Aug. 2021)

‘All the time I teach myself new words that I can use in reading and writing by reading novels and poems, dictionaries etc.’ (P54, Q2, 10 Aug. 2021)

‘I would like to have access to a translator for academic language because I find that the language that is used is quite complex for me to understand. I have come across words that I have never seen before though I did Home Language isiZulu at high school. I sometimes use Google translate but it is not that useful.’ (P51, Q8, 10 Aug. 2021)
Some recommendations

• Translanguaging with OER should be supported and encouraged in classes. Perhaps by means of annotations on OER.
• Start with your field of expertise in your language.
• Consider harmonization for resources in related languages.
• Share terminology
• Use appropriate Creative Commons licensing.
• Start locally and with teams.
Jako Olivier (2021)

- Preparation and scaffolding of student skills
- Language and needs audit
- Students identify relevant OER
- Form core groups
  - Content expert
  - Language and culture expert
  - Lexicographical expert
- Localise: Adapt and translate
- Quality check – peer review
- Publish with open licence
Main findings

• Open translanguaging depends on language and access realities

• Students are motivated and generally positive towards open translanguaging practices

• More support would be necessary from the community, lexicographers and language practitioners

• Language standardisation and language variety

• Artefacts promise, but quality control is essential
Reference list

Amiel, T. 2013. Identifying barriers to the remix of translated open educational resources. *The International Review of research in open and distributed learning*, 14(1):126-144.


Thank you
Ke a leboga
Ngiyathokoza
Ke a leboha
Siyabonga
Ndo livhuwa
Inkomu
Ngiyabonga
Enkosi
Dankie

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