

Book Review / Kitap İncelemesi

EDITOR(S) EDİTÖR(LER)	:	Maria Luz Elena Nabong Canilao Robin Atilano De Los Reyes
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Summary

Translanguaging for Empowerment and Equity: Language Practices in Philippine Education and Other Public Spaces, edited by Maria Luz Elena Nabong Canilao and Robin Atilano De Los Reyes, offers a critical examination of the role of translanguaging in promoting linguistic justice and social equity in the Philippines. Published by Springer in 2024, this volume situates itself at the intersection of multilingual education, postcolonial studies, and sociolinguistics, addressing the persistent effects of colonial language policies that have historically marginalized local languages and their speakers. By exploring translanguaging practices across various domains—from classrooms to media and legal settings—the book argues for the decolonial potential of translanguaging as a tool for reclaiming linguistic and cultural identities. This review critically evaluates the book using the Five C's approach introduced by Ulum (2024). It focuses on its context, content, strengths and weaknesses, comparisons with other key works in the field, and overall contributions to the discourse on multilingualism and equity.

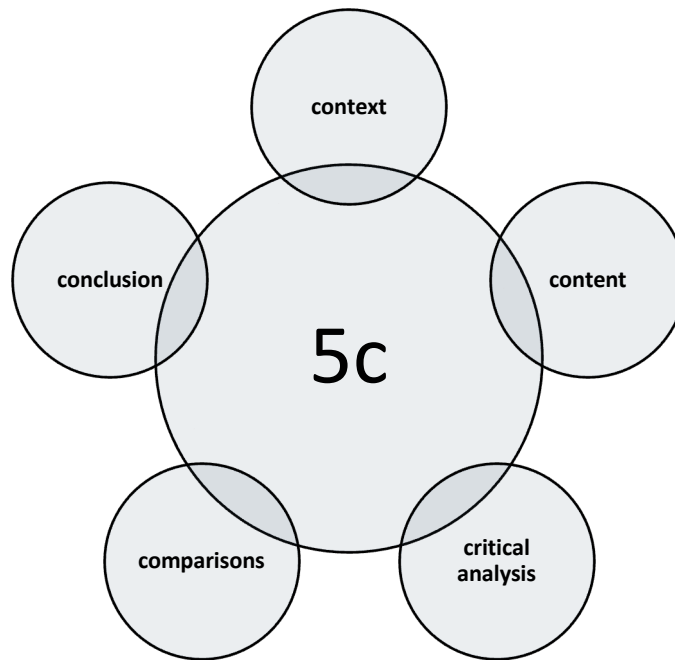


Figure 1. 5c Approach to Book Review

Evaluation

Context

Translanguaging for Empowerment and Equity: Language Practices in Philippine Education and Other Public Spaces, edited by Maria Luz Elena Nabong Canilao and Robin Atilano De Los Reyes, was published by Springer in 2023. This volume emerges at a critical juncture in global education, where the dynamics of multilingualism, colonial legacies, and the demand for linguistic equity are more prominent than ever. The book focuses on the Philippine context, where the historical imposition of English and the persistent monolingual ideologies in education have marginalized local languages and, by extension, the identities of their speakers. The editors and contributors of this volume challenge these entrenched ideologies by positioning translanguaging as a pedagogical and sociocultural practice that can foster empowerment and equity. In doing so, the book aligns itself with broader global movements that advocate for recognizing and validating multilingual practices in education, particularly in postcolonial societies. As described in the book, the Philippine educational landscape is deeply influenced by its colonial history, with English being privileged as the language of power and prestige. Despite efforts to integrate local languages through policies like the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), English dominates formal education and public spaces, marginalizing other languages. This context sets the stage for the book's exploration of how translanguaging can serve as a tool for reclaiming linguistic and cultural identities, promoting social justice, and addressing the inequities embedded in the education system and other public domains.

Content

The book is organized into three distinct parts, each offering a focused exploration of translanguaging in different social and institutional contexts in the Philippines. Each section presents empirical studies that contribute to understanding how translanguaging operates within multilingual spaces.

Part I: Translanguaging in Philippine Education

The first section, Philippine Education, comprises five chapters, each tackling the challenges and possibilities of implementing translanguaging in educational settings. Chapter 1, authored by Canilao, provides a foundational discussion on translanguaging in multicultural classrooms, examining its pedagogical implications and directions for future research. Chapter 2 focuses on the prospects of translanguaging within Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), particularly in primary education. Chapter 3 presents a study on language attitudes towards translanguaging among young adult learners, assessing the sociolinguistic factors influencing receptivity. Chapter 4 explores university students' translanguaging practices, emphasizing their agency in shaping multilingual learning environments. Chapter 5 examines how translanguaging manifests in transgressive schools, illustrating the dynamic interactions between language policies and actual classroom practices.

Part II: Translanguaging in Other Public Spaces

The second section, Other Public Spaces, shifts the focus from education to the role of translanguaging in government, media, and religious domains. This section investigates how multilingual communication operates in public discourse and institutional settings. Chapter 6 analyzes translanguaging in local-language news broadcasts, exploring how journalistic practices mediate linguistic hybridity. Chapter 7 examines translanguaging in radio news interviews within the Zamboangueño multilingual context, highlighting its role in maintaining objectivity and inclusivity. Chapter 8 provides a qualitative inquiry into the linguistic landscapes of Philippine regional trial courts, unpacking multilingualism's legal and social implications. Chapter 9 investigates the function of translanguaging in religious sermons, revealing how local languages shape public engagement in faith-based discourse.

Part III: Translanguaging and Linguistic Human Rights

The final section, Translanguaging and Promoting Linguistic Human Rights, consists of three chapters exploring the broader implications of translanguaging in language rights, linguistic justice, and equitable access to multilingual education. Chapter 10 highlights the commonplace nature of translanguaging in Philippine education and advocates for equitable assessment practices for multilingual learners. Chapter 11 delves into the investment in translanguaging as a right, emphasizing its role in dismantling linguistic hierarchies. Chapter 12 serves as the concluding chapter, synthesizing key insights from the book and advocating for continued research and advocacy for translanguaging in various spheres of public life.

This volume provides a comprehensive and contextually grounded examination of translanguaging in the Philippines. Its three sections bridge educational theories, media discourses, legal frameworks, and linguistic justice perspectives.

Critical Analysis

Translanguaging for Empowerment and Equity is a timely and essential contribution to multilingual education and linguistic justice discourse. One of the book's primary strengths is its thorough examination of translanguaging from multiple perspectives—educational, governmental, media, and legal—making it a comprehensive resource for understanding the complex role of language in shaping social relations and power dynamics in the Philippines. The volume's focus on the Philippine context is particularly significant, as it provides a detailed exploration of how colonial legacies continue to influence language policies and practices in the country. By situating translanguaging within this historical and sociopolitical framework, the editors effectively highlight its potential to disrupt these legacies and promote more equitable linguistic practices. The book's emphasis on the decolonial potential of translanguaging, particularly in Chapter 1 and Chapter 11, aligns with global trends in language education that seek to empower marginalized communities by validating their linguistic and cultural identities. However, the book is not without its limitations. While Chapter 2 (on MTB-MLE in primary education) and Chapter 6 (on translanguaging in news broadcasts) are rich and informative, they primarily focus on formal educational settings and structured public spaces such as media and legal systems. Less attention is given to how translanguaging might be applied in more informal or community-based settings, such as interpersonal communication, grassroots activism, or everyday multilingual interactions outside institutional frameworks.

Additionally, while the book makes a strong case for the benefits of translanguaging, Chapter 10, which discusses equitable assessment for multilingual learners, could have engaged more critically with the challenges of translanguaging in assessment practices, particularly in contexts where English remains the dominant language of formal evaluation. Similarly, while Chapter 12 suggests broader applications of translanguaging, it could have benefited from explicit cross-contextual comparisons with other multilingual societies beyond the Philippines. Despite these limitations, *Translanguaging for Empowerment and Equity* makes a significant contribution to the field of multilingual education. Its interdisciplinary approach—combining insights from education (Chapters 1-5), media studies (Chapters 6-7), and legal studies (Chapter 8)—provides a comprehensive understanding of how translanguaging functions as a tool for empowerment and equity in various public spaces. This volume will be valuable for scholars, policymakers, and educators seeking to understand and implement translanguaging practices in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Comparisons

This volume can be compared to other key translanguaging and multilingual education works. For example, García and Li Wei's *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism, and Education* (2014) is a foundational text exploring translanguaging from theoretical and practical perspectives. While García and Li Wei provide a broad overview of translanguaging in various educational contexts globally, Canilao and De Los Reyes' volume offers a more focused examination of the Philippine context, providing valuable

insights into how translanguaging can be applied in a specific sociopolitical and cultural setting.

Another relevant comparison is with *Translanguaging as Everyday Practice*, edited by Marilyn Martin-Jones and Adrian Blackledge (2015), which also explores translanguaging in diverse global contexts. Martin-Jones and Blackledge's work emphasizes the everyday nature of translanguaging practices among multilingual speakers, particularly in informal settings. In contrast, *Translanguaging for Empowerment and Equity* focuses more on formal educational and public spaces, offering a complementary perspective highlighting translanguaging's institutional dimensions.

Finally, the book can be compared to *The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning* by García, Johnson, and Seltzer (2017), which provides practical guidance for implementing translanguaging in the classroom. While García et al. focus on classroom practices, Canilao and De Los Reyes expand the scope to include public spaces beyond the classroom, offering a broader understanding of the potential of translanguaging to promote linguistic equity across various domains.

Conclusion

Translanguaging for Empowerment and Equity: Language Practices in Philippine Education and Other Public Spaces significantly contribute to multilingual education and linguistic justice. The book provides a comprehensive and nuanced exploration of translanguaging in the Philippine context, highlighting its potential to disrupt monolingual ideologies and promote equity in educational and public spaces. While the volume primarily focuses on the Philippine context, its insights are relevant to other multilingual and multicultural societies, making it a valuable resource for educators, policymakers, and researchers interested in promoting linguistic justice through translanguaging. The book's interdisciplinary approach and its emphasis on the decolonial potential of translanguaging make it a timely and essential work in the field. However, future research could benefit from a more critical engagement with the potential challenges of implementing translanguaging in contexts where monolingual ideologies are deeply entrenched.

Additionally, expanding the scope to include more informal and community-based settings would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of translanguaging in promoting linguistic equity. Overall, *Translanguaging for Empowerment and Equity* is recommended for anyone interested in understanding the transformative potential of translanguaging in education and public life, particularly in postcolonial contexts like the Philippines. The volume offers theoretical insights and practical examples that can inform efforts to create more inclusive and equitable linguistic practices in various domains.

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