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# Edulingualism: linguistic repertoires, academic tasks and student agency in an English-dominant university

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## ABSTRACT

This article reports on a study that examined how a group of plurilingual students use their linguistic repertoires to achieve a number of purposes such as performing identity, learning and socialising, and negotiating with structure in an English-dominant university. In order to capture the dynamic relationship between language-as-resource, academic tasks and agency in this particular context, the article proposes ‘edulingualism’ as a conceptual and analytic lens. To this end, the article examines multiple data sets (narratives, reflective accounts, recorded interactions and texts) that show how, by mobilising their multilingual resources, these students achieve their purposes and take ownership of their learning experiences within a monolingual learning space.

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## KEYWORDS

Edulingualism; linguistic repertoires; identity; learning and socialising; agency

## Introduction

Studies on multilingualism in the primary and secondary education sectors have flourished in the past two decades (e.g. Castellotti & Moore, 2010; García, 2009; García & Kleyn, 2016; Jorgenson, 2008; Saxena & Martin-Jones, 2013). This growing body of research has challenged established notions of language competence that define it as a complete and discrete entity, and has instead focused on the linguistic repertoires that multilingual students deploy to achieve specific purposes. Among other contributions, this research has highlighted the importance of linguistic repertoires as resources for identity performance, learning and socialising. Less research attention, however, has been paid to how students in Anglophone higher education contexts deploy their linguistic repertoires to achieve such purposes.

This article examines how a group of post-graduate plurilingual students at an Anglophone university use their linguistic repertoires for identity performance, learning and socialising and mediating between agency and structure. The article argues that to capture the dynamic relationship between linguistic repertoires, academic tasks and agency in a setting as specific as higher education, a context-sensitive way of conceptualising and analysing such relationship is needed. To this end, the article offers ‘edulingualism’ as a new conceptual and analytical lens that encapsulates how this relationship takes place in an Anglophone higher education setting. The paper aims to make a contribution to the emerging body of research in the area of multilingual universities, in particular in relation to Anglophone and English-medium settings.

In the sections that follow, the article offers a critical review of the relevant literature that has informed the study reported here. It then presents the methodology used, followed by a discussion of the main findings, with a particular focus on identity work, learning and socialising. Based on these results, the article explores some principles for the (re)design and delivery of the curriculum. Finally, it concludes by reflecting upon edulilingualism as a conceptual and analytic lens, and its possible application in monolingual educational contexts of post-secondary education.

## Literature review

### *Language expertise and multilingual repertoires*

Recent research on linguistic diversity (e.g. Bloomaert & Backus, 2013; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Marshall & Moore, 2013, 2018; Preece et al., 2018) has challenged established notions of language competence that define it as a complete and discrete entity. Instead, this growing body of research favours the notion of 'language expertise' introduced by Rampton (1990) and further elaborated by Leung et al. (1997). In this work, language expertise is conceptualised as a gradual, life-long process by which speakers continuously develop linguistic repertoires, understood as all the languages known to an individual, through social interaction and co-action in particular settings. This includes all the 'bits of language' a speaker has accumulated along their life trajectory (Bloomaert & Backus, 2013, p. 28), and as such it emphasises communicative capability rather than the complete mastery of languages as distinct units.

This approach to expertise has also been accompanied by a renewed interest in linguistic repertoires as resources that multilingual individuals deploy to achieve specific aims in everyday activities (e.g. Bloomaert & Backus, 2013; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015). Research in this area has highlighted the importance of recognising linguistic repertoires as resources, rather than barriers, for a number of purposes such as identity performance and learning and socialising in educational contexts (e.g. Canagarajah, 2013; Codó, 2018; Cooke et al., 2018; Lin, 2013; Preece et al., 2018). In a recent study of English-as-an-additional-language university learners in Canada, Marshall and Marr (2018, p. 34) concluded that repertoires are socially and discursively constructed, hybrid, in flux and 'negotiated between languages and identities'.

Together with this shift in conceptualising multilingualism and its strong focus on multilingual repertoires as resources, a number of researchers in the field (e.g. Canagarajah, 2013; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Pennycook, 2010) have moved away from examining language as a formal system in order to focus more closely on 'languages as emergent from contexts of interactions' (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015, p. 3). This is the approach followed in this article. By examining language as emergent from localised interactions, the dynamic relationship between multilingual resources, academic tasks and agentive behaviour takes centre stage. Context is thus considered more than just a backdrop. Rather, context shapes and is shaped by the interactions, the languages, the interactants, and the tasks in which they are involved.

### *Conceptualising multilingualism in higher education: in search of a new term*

Previous work on multilingualism in educational settings has used a number of related terms to define languages in interaction, mostly as used by children and young adults

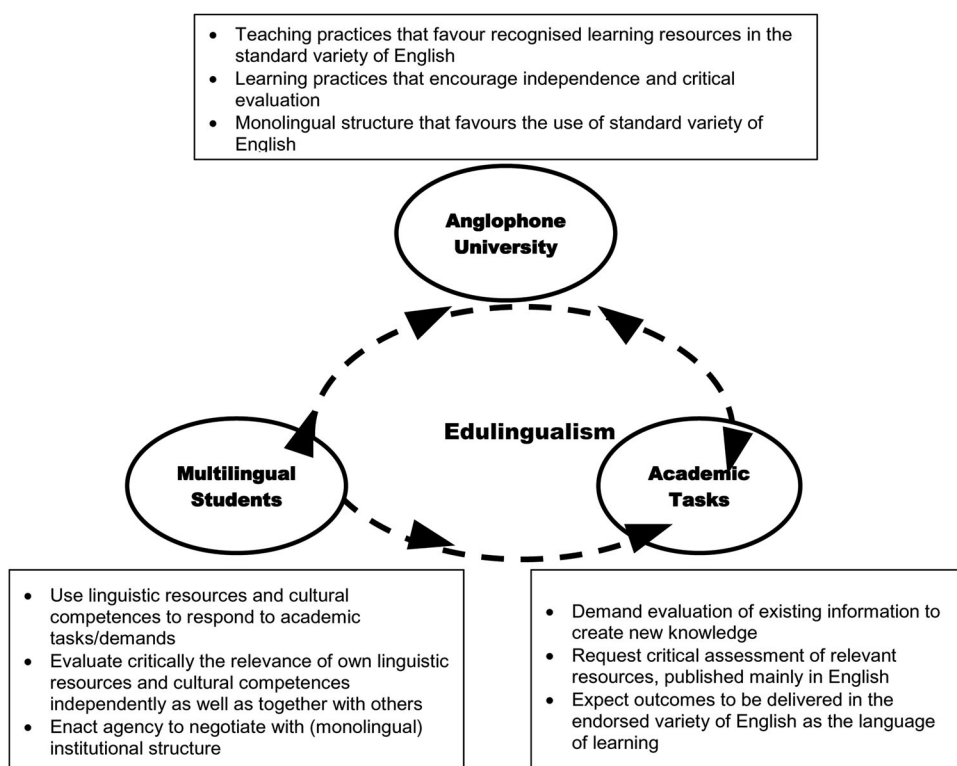
in primary, secondary or complementary school contexts. These include 'bilingualism', 'code mixing', 'codemeshing', 'multilingualism', 'plurilingualism', 'polylingual languaging', and 'translanguaging' (e.g. Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Canagarajah, 2011; Conteh, 2018; Creese & Blackledge, 2010, 2015; García, 2009; García & Kleyn, 2016; Jorgenson, 2008; Marshall & Moore, 2013; Mazak & Carroll, 2017). This array of terminology, which Marshall and Moore (2018, p. 20) call 'the panoply of lingualisms', has been nonetheless used to describe similar phenomena albeit with differing views on their context of occurrence, the practices involved in them, and their social or individual dimensions.

The focus on the individual within particular social contexts has resulted in a growing research interest in linguistic diversity as a learning and social resource. The relationship between linguistic repertoires, individual trajectories and context has attracted special attention within the field of higher education (e.g. Andersson et al., 2013; Madiba, 2013; Mazak & Carroll, 2016; Preece et al., 2018; Wei, 2011), possibly as a result of widening participation efforts in many English-speaking countries (Lazar et al., 2016). Preece et al. (2018), for instance, conducted a study that aimed at documenting linguistic diversity on an MA course by investigating how 'bi/multilingual students made use of linguistic diversity in higher education in a London university.' (p. 289). They concluded that students draw on 'linguistic diversity in a number of ways for their studies as well as to develop their social networks in the university.' (p. 292).

Similar recent research within the context of Anglophone higher education has favoured the term 'plurilingualism' to describe students' individual linguistic repertoires in several languages (Marshall & Moore, 2018; Preece, 2020; Preece & Marshall, 2020). In the editorial of a recent special issue, Preece and Marshall (2020) list the distinguishing features of plurilingualism as an analytic term. Plurilingualism, they argue, refers to the ability to use and switch between multiple languages, in a flexible and hybrid manner. It recognises a speaker's knowledge of not only multiple languages but also their cultures. According to Preece and Marshall, such knowledge is constantly changing along the life history of the plurilingual speaker. Plurilingualism also focuses on 'agency and the social situatedness of individuals' plurilingual practices' (p. 120), thus allowing for an analysis of the relationship between the social and the agentive.

Despite the notable contributions made by this and other research in the field, the present study argues for the need to identify a specific, context-sensitive way to conceptualise and empirically analyse the dynamic relationship between the practices of adult plurilingual students and their academic and social activities in English-dominant universities. As context in studies of this nature is not just a backdrop but rather a shaping element of the people and practices investigated, and considering that the key features of such practices in post-secondary education are different in aim, variety, purposes and ways of assessment from those in other learning spaces, this study proposes the term 'edulingualism' to capture such practices in Anglophone higher education contexts.

As a theoretical concept, edulingualism provides the basis for understanding the dynamic relationship between the key elements in Anglophone higher education contexts as described in Figure 1. Thus, it helps to throw new light onto how the demands of the university, the academic tasks set by faculty, and plurilingual students interact. As an analytic lens, edulingualism helps the patterns that support and shape such relationship to emerge, highlighting the tensions, interconnections and contradictions that result from the interactions.



**Figure 1.** The constitutive components of Edulingualism.

Edulingualism also stresses the need to examine student/student interaction and, possibly more importantly, how such interaction happens both in and out of the classroom. Expanding the locus of research in this way also provides a window onto how students like the ones in this study use their multilingual resources to take ownership of the learning process. Finally, and similar to translanguaging in its transformative, creative and critical nature (e.g. Creese & Blackledge, 2015; García & Wei, 2014), edulingualism, with its focus on agency, also brings 'empowerment' into consideration as it looks at students' agentive power to become active participants of the academic practices they are involved in and thus reach their full potential through ownership, self-efficacy, and autonomy.

### **Anglophone universities and student agency**

Researching plurilingual students in Anglophone universities through the lens of edulingualism also offers an opportunity for a different view on how agency can be negotiated within a structure where English is the dominant language and where interactions tend to be highly regulated. The relationship between agency and structure has traditionally been explored following the influential social theory developed by Giddens (1979) with its focus on structuration. A key component of structuration involves 'the *duality of structure*, which relates to the *fundamentally recursive character of social life, and expresses the mutual dependence of structure and agency*' (p. 69, emphasis in the original). The main principle behind structuration is that agency is reducibly mixed with structure in that the former

is always already patterned by the latter. This approach to defining the relationship between agency and structure, however, does help to explain some of the agentive behaviours of the multilingual students in the present study as will be discussed below.

A more useful approach to analysing the relationship between agency and structure observed in these excerpts is presented in Archer's (1995) social theory. Although a detailed account of her work is beyond the scope of this article, the three cycles in her theory – structural conditioning, social interaction and structural elaboration – are relevant to the study reported here. Structural conditioning, Archer (1995, p. 327) explains, exists 'by the prior distribution of resources, of life chances, of vested interests and of bargaining powers that are mediated to agents situationally'. The second cycle, social interaction, is 'conditioned by the former, by other structural factors which also impinge on agents, by social affinities and antagonisms between them, and ultimately by the reflexive monitoring of an *inalienably innovative agency*' (emphasis added). Structural elaboration, the third cycle, is 'dependent upon how (or whether) in the precise combination of conditioning and contingency, bargaining power is converted into negotiating strength between corporate agents'. In this way, structure and agency, albeit interrelated, are not irreducible to one another as described in previous theories, but they shape one another through conditioning, interaction and elaboration. By finding new and creative ways to negotiate their identities and use their linguistic repertoires for their academic tasks, plurilingual students like those in this study are seen to interact with structural conditioning, thus providing examples of 'negotiating strength' leading to structural elaboration. This is further illustrated below.

## **Methodology**

This section provides a detailed account of the context, repertoires, tasks and participants. In particular, it pays special attention to the university and its related physical areas (e.g. its cafeteria) as learning and socialising spaces.

### ***Context: the Anglophone university***

The study took place at a university located in London, United Kingdom, over the 2017–18 academic year. The history and ethos of the university have attracted students from more than 180 countries worldwide, and its central location has added to such attraction.

This university represents a particular learning space that offers students an interesting mix of physical arrangements (classrooms layouts and social spaces such as its cafeteria) where they can both learn and socialise, and social and cultural activities which have language at their core (e.g. language festivals), thus providing a dynamic relation between space, activities and languages. Within edulingualism the term 'learning space' refers not only to the classroom but also, and more broadly, to any physical or virtual space (e.g. libraries, cafes, home, virtual classrooms) where learning takes place, thus blurring the traditional in- versus out-of-class divide, and providing a more fluid understanding of the use of linguistic resources for learning and socialising. The multiplicity of written and spoken languages that can be experienced in its social and cultural activities is one of the defining elements of the university. Despite this, the multilingual practices within an English dominant structure such as this also offer an interesting locus

for research where the relationship between languages, tasks and activities, and space can be seen to co-exist and resist, conform and discord, all at the same time. Within this particular learning space, the study examined such relationship in the context of a postgraduate module on the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) postgraduate course.

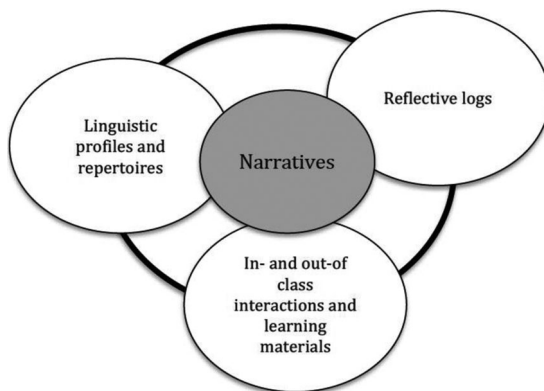
### **The study and the tasks**

In order to gain a better understanding of how linguistic repertoires and academic tasks relate to space as encapsulated in edulingualism, this study examined:

- How the participants drew on their linguistic repertoires to perform identity, learn and socialise, and negotiate agency;
- The contributions they made to the academic practices of the university, as a result of their agentive behaviours; and
- The implications that the participants' plurilingual practices had for teaching and learning at this Anglophone university.

To this end, the study brought together the participants' narratives of personal trajectories and use of linguistic repertoires as resources in and out of class with related artefacts such as linguistic profiles, class observations, learning materials, recordings of interactions, and reflective logs by means of narrative networks. A narrative network is a 'group of stories, texts and artefacts collected around the emerging issues in core narratives' (Gimenez, 2010, p. 206). A visual representation of the networks is shown in [Figure 2](#).

After having been informed about the study and what it would require of them, those participants who agreed to take part were asked to sign an informed consent form. The participating students were then asked to get involved in a number of tasks. These tasks represented a mix of activities designed to generate data for the study and of academic tasks the students had to do as part of their course. The data-generating tasks included:



**Figure 2.** Narratives networks for Edulingualism.

- Completing an on-line survey about their demographic details and language practices (e.g. languages they knew, relationship with each language and context of use). This information created the participants' linguistic profile (see below and Appendix 2);
- Taking part in a face-to-face interview with the researcher. In order to encourage participants to narrate rather than answer questions, the interviews were loosely organised around thematic prompts which consisted of textual and visual clues (Gimenez, 2010);
- Recording in- and out-of-class discussions about university academic tasks. The in-class discussions were recorded on Dictaphones provided to the participating students by the researcher and the out-of-class interactions were recorded on the participants' mobile phones. Once they were happy to share the data they had recorded, it was sent to the researcher; and
- Keeping a reflective log on their language practices and how they use their linguistic repertoires at university.

The academic tasks included samples of learning materials and drafts of assignments which documented the use of their linguistic resources. These were donated by the participating students.

### ***The participants: plurilingual students in an English-dominant university***

All the students on the TESOL course at the time of the study were invited to participate, and received information about the study and their rights and commitment if they decided to take part. Eight students (5 male and 3 female) agreed to participate. The participants, all language professionals, came from Bangladesh, Colombia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen. They speak 3–5 languages at various degrees of proficiency in a number of contexts such as home, social spaces, school and university and for purposes such as socialising, teaching and learning. A detailed linguistic profile of the participants is provided in Appendix 2.

As discussed in the next sections, their international status and experiences as language professionals have meant that the participants are well versed in how to mobilise their linguistic repertoires for the purposes of learning and socialising. This may also explain their plurilingual agency in a monolingual educational context, adding to their ownership, self-efficacy, and autonomy as plurilingual agents.

Analysed together, and equally contributing to edulingualism, context, repertoires, tasks and participants offer instances of located plurilingual practices in which linguistic repertoires are used for a number of purposes. These are examined in the following section.

## **Results and discussion**

This section examines instances of plurilingual practices in which linguistic repertoires are deployed for performing identity, learning and socialising, and negotiating agency through the lens of edulingualism.



### *Linguistic repertoires as identity performance*

Identity performance is a process of self-reassurance through which people constantly make both conscious and unconscious choices to present themselves in a particular way, and to achieve specific outcomes through social interactions (Goffman, 1956). This process is illustrated in the recorded interaction<sup>1</sup> between Afaf and Rose<sup>2</sup> in Excerpt 1 below.

**Excerpt 1:** *Such a sign of respect and recognition, right?* (A = Afaf [Saudi Arabia], R = Rose [Indonesia] in class).<sup>3</sup>

- A: Well yeah I do ... with people who understand Arabic I do ... sometimes I may say to them simple things like As-salam alaykom (hello) when I see them
- R: As-salam alaykom, that's hello, right?
- A: Well done! Yes! {excited}
- R: That's all the Arabic I know [laughs]
- A: [laughs] but you know what? Some of our tutors  
say to me As-salam alaykom, and I reply back in Arabic. I love it, it's such a sign of respect and recognition, right?

This brief extract of plurilingualism within an Anglophone university shows two key features of identity. First, identity emerges as co-constructed and reinforced through social interaction in this academic context. In her conversation with Rose, another student, and some of her tutors, Afaf's builds and strengthens her identity as a plurilingual speaker. This is also supported by Rose's, a Banjarese speaker, use of bits of Arabic to engage with and reinforce Afaf's identity work. Secondly, identity appears as inseparable from self and action as previous studies have argued (e.g. Barkhuizen, 2017; Canagarajah, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Lin, 2013). Afaf and Rose use their linguistic resources to present themselves as plurilingual agents capable of making an impact on the context they are operating (Afaf) and developing a sense of unity with other plurilingual students (Rose).

This close link between being (plurilingual) and doing (multilingual identity) recurs in this educational setting, probably as a result of its monolingual nature. As multilingual selves, the participants in this study provide a number of such instances. In his narrative, Samawade, for instance, provides a compelling example: 'I'm a man, a husband, a father, a student at this uni, a speaker of many languages ... I live, I am, I do; I can't divide myself.' The identity performance in his narrative also resonates with views of repertoires as linguistic representations of a person's life stories, their struggles and successes across space and time (Busch, 2012; Codó, 2018; Wei, 2011).

The participants also seem fully aware of their multilingual identity and, in a number of cases (e.g. Ar, Bama, Din, Samawade), being multilingual has helped to shape who and what they are. As Din reflects in his log: 'Being multilingual has offered me lots of opportunities like travelling, getting to know other people and their cultures, but above all it's given me a better view and understanding of the world.' In the same vein, Terry's narrative offers a similar view on plurilingualism, conceptualised by him as a chance to increase one's self-awareness, and providing a more rounded picture of the world, reality and oneself:

I think speaking more than one language helps you look at things from different perspectives, languages get you closer to the different facets of the world and reality and to yourself too. It gives you a better picture of the world and yourself in it.

As these quotes show, for the participants being plurilingual is not just being able to speak several languages, it is a way of being and acting in the world. This position seems to resonate with Creese and Blackledge's (2015) notion of 'identity repertoires'.

Unlike participants with conflicting views on being multilingual in previous research (e.g. Codó, 2018; CurdtChristiansen, 2016), most students in this study feel fortunate to be plurilingual (e.g. Ar: 'I am lucky to speak several languages'). As language professionals, they are also aware of the cultural capital that plurilingualism represents and how 'being plurilingual' can be used to enhance academic work, supporting their sense of ownership, self-efficiency and autonomy. In his narrative, Samawade exemplifies this as:

I think [...] I think it gives me an advantage over people who are monolingual. I feel better equipped and academically more prepared to understand other people and cultures I believe. My languages have been a great help with reflection and criticality.

By the same token, the participants in this study seem to have a higher level of awareness of and reflexivity about the importance of linguistic resources to perform their plurilingual identities and to achieve specific outcomes in the particular learning space in which they are operating. This level of awareness and reflexivity appears to be an important condition for empowering other plurilingual speakers who may be less conscious and assertive of their linguistic capital.

At the same time, the academic context where they are operating requires their identities to be negotiated and renegotiated (Canagarajah, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2015). As these plurilingual students engage with a monolingual learning context, their identities have to be socially renegotiated and reinforced as the data analysed in this section exemplify. The social construction and renegotiation of identities in English-dominant learning spaces like the university in this study, however, can only happen if plurilingual speakers are aware of the negotiating strength they can draw from their linguistic resources, and if monolingual contexts offer the opportunities for this realisation, as will be discussed below.

The interplay between the identity of these plurilingual students, the academic tasks and the Anglophone educational context emerges in the data presented here. Seen through the lens of edulingualism, the excerpts show how the participants go about constructing and co-constructing, negotiating and re-negotiating their plurilingual identities as they discuss and engage in the specific academic tasks set by the faculty in this particular educational context.

### ***Linguistic repertoires as learning and socialising***

As capital, linguistic repertoires can provide plurilingual speakers with access to learning resources that may not have been considered in the existing academic practices of learning spaces where a given language plays a dominant role. As Bama explains in Excerpt 2 below, he can resort to his linguistic repertoires to access resources he considers will be a 'brilliant' addition to the academic task on which he is about to embark, exhibiting at the same time his sense of ownership, self-efficacy and autonomy.

**Excerpt 2:** *It shouldn't I'd say* (B = Bama [Yemen], D = Din [Sudan] in class)

- B: I've got a brilliant article on the topic; it's in Arabic though [it  
 D: [That's not a problem, is it?  
 B: Don't think so ... as long as I can summarise the main ideas and reference it right, then it shouldn't I'd say ... it deals very clearly with the differences between مَسْئُول (managers) and مُنْتَبِر (leaders) in educational contexts  
 D: Great!

This interaction also illustrates the tensions that arise from plurilingual students' trying to exercise their self-efficacy and autonomy when engaging with academic tasks in a monolingual educational context. Although there is sometimes a certain degree of hesitation in participants like Din ('That's not a problem, is it?'), most of them display a positive attitude towards using their linguistic capital to enhance their academic work.

The following extract from Terry's assignment (see [Figure 3](#)) serves to exemplify this point in case. His essay incorporates sources that had been published in Spanish and which were therefore not part of the recommended reading list for the module. By using his linguistic repertoires as a learning resource, Terry was not only able to enrich the quality of his assignment like Bama did, but he was also able to provide an interesting context-specific application of a particular theory that would have not been otherwise possible.

Thus, linguistic repertoires are seen as enablers that provide access to knowledge and learning, facilitate a better understanding of academic and intellectual practices, and reinforce the participants' ownership, self-efficacy and autonomy. As Bama reflects in his log: 'Each of my languages has a speciality. I prefer to read about technology and computing in English. But for certain topics in history and religion, Arabic is far better for me.' A similar approach to deploying linguistic repertoires for academic tasks is provided by Joy's narrative:

I seldom search for ideas in an international journal that I used to read when I was at Dhaka called *Anuranan* ... you see, I like the way they deal with topics and even when in the end I may not use any of the articles there for direct quoting, I get ideas and things that are relevant to my professional context.

It is also worth noting in this case the interesting point that Joy's narrative makes about repertoires being a link between learning spaces, reminding us once more that repertoires are maps of identity, and lived experiences and spaces (Creese & Blackledge, 2015).

In the context of the study reported here, linguistic repertoires also emerge as tools for social networking. As previous research has shown (e.g. Preece et al., 2018; Wei, 2011), linguistically diverse students use language as a tool 'to develop their social networks in the

*This theory has been applied to other educational contexts, in particular in the developing world. In his research Gomez (2017), for example, provides instances of the outcomes of applying the theory to managing a small school in Mexico City. A related study (Alvarez, 2015), shows how the team-work in public secondary schools was used to improve the quality of teaching in Uruguay. These studies actually show*

**Figure 3.** Terry's draft assignment incorporating his linguistic repertoire.

university' (Preece et al., 2018, p. 292). The participants in the present study, however, seem to use their linguistic resources not only for establishing new networks at university but also for maintaining existing ones in their countries, something possibly also resulting from their international status and experiences as language professionals. This is illustrated in the following interaction between Terry and Bama:

**Excerpt 3:** *WhatsApp a colleague home* (T = Terry [Colombia], B = Bama [Yemen], A = Ar [Malaysia] at the cafeteria)

- T: ... I mean once I have the basic idea for my writing I just WhatsApp a colleague home to discuss my plans ... I [go ...
- B: [I wish I could do that ...
- A: Yeah, sounds really useful
- T: I just go hey [name of colleague] tenes tiempo para mi? (have you got time for me?) you know which is my favourite way of starting the conversation with him=
- A: = [laughs
- B: = [laughs

As can be seen, Terry is able to navigate through his linguistic repertoires for particular purposes such as discussing his ideas for an assignment with colleagues in his native country while, at the same time, maintaining professional and personal links with them, a practice previously observed in studies of mobile multilingual academics (Gimenez & Morgan, 2017).

As the students focus more closely on their academic tasks, a clear picture of the role that their linguistic repertoires play in this particular educational context starts to emerge. Thus, we see how they use their repertoires both to access knowledge and ideas that would help them enhance their academic work and to establish new as well as maintain existing social networks. The relationship between repertoires and learning and socialising in and out of class, and at and beyond the university seem to appear more clearly as instances of edulingualism which help to capture the academic behaviours of the plurilingual students as social agents operating within a monolingual structure. This is further examined in the next section.

### ***Linguistic repertoires as agency***

As explained above, this study applied Archer's social theory to understand multilingual agency within an English-dominant university. The participants' agentive behaviour is thus examined in terms of 1. the resources, experiences, and bargaining powers that they have gained situationally (Archer's structural conditioning); 2. the level of self-direction and reflection that they deploy as a mediation tool (Archer's social interaction); and 3. the strength they put into negotiating with structure which will ultimately lead to change (Archer's structural elaboration).

As to structural conditioning, the profiles of the participants offer a clear indication of the linguistic repertoires they have accumulated along their life trajectories, through their experiences at home, in social spaces and at school. They speak a number of languages, which has given them access to a variety of life and educational experiences in their own country and abroad, and this in turn has afforded them bargaining powers to deal with structural factors. In connection to social interaction, Archer's second cycle, the

participants' narratives show vivid examples of self-direction, self-efficacy, and reflection upon the value of and creative use of their repertoires in mediating between their plurilingual identities and the English-dominant structure they are operating within. Rose's narrative, for instance, which also exemplifies a transition between the second and third cycles in Archer's theory, positions her as a very creative and resourceful user of her linguistic repertoires:

don't think it's a problem as some people think. I use all the languages or pieces of languages I know to create rapport with people, to read materials which are not in English and I know will give me extra points, and ... and if a lecturer says I can't read in the language of that publication, I offer to translate {smiling}. This way universities would meet multilingual students half way.

This example of self-direction, self-efficacy, and reflection as mediating tools is also reflected in Bama's interaction in Excerpt 2 and Din's narrative above. It is interesting to note at this point that these instances of social interaction have increased the visibility and legitimacy of these students as social agents, a necessary condition for influencing structure.

The other condition for influencing structure that may lead to change is negotiating strength, Archer's third cycle. As a group of collective agents, the participants in this study seem to have similar aims and goals which include gaining visibility and legitimacy for themselves as plurilingual students and for their repertoires, as shown in Rose's narrative above, and recognition of the linguistic capital they have accumulated along their trajectories as students. Samawade's reflective account offers a clear example of such a claim:

I want them [lecturers and other students] to realise my languages are important. They are important not just because I worked hard for a long time to learn them but because they've given me different perspectives which I can bring to class and share with other students on the MA who don't speak the same languages. This should be allowed at uni.

As we can see, in his ownership and self-efficacy reflection Samawade positions himself as capable of negotiating strength ('I want them' 'which I can bring to class') which, given the right conditions, may lead to structural changes. Such negotiating strength represents the mechanism through which cultural factors may penetrate the structural field.

The linguistic repertoires that the participants deploy in the study reported here represent resources that, as social agents in a monolingual higher education context, they use for a number of particular purposes such as to perform identity, learn and socialise, and negotiate agency with structure. The dynamic relationship between such repertoires, purposes and context seems to require a specific theoretical and analytical framework. Edulingualism, with its focus on how languages and linguistic repertoires are used in a post-secondary Anglophone academic context, offers a tool to theorise about and examine the dynamic relationship between repertoires, academic tasks and monolingual learning spaces such as the one examined in this article.

### **(Re)Design and delivery of the curriculum in English-dominant contexts**

Efforts for gaining visibility and legitimacy as plurilingual students, such as Afaf's greetings to lecturers and other students in Arabic and Bama's and Terry's use of sources in languages other than English for their assignment, have started to change the structure

and academic practices of the university. On the TESOL module, the immediate context of the present study, students are now encouraged to use their linguistic repertoires to access knowledge and perspectives which would be otherwise not possible if they were only allowed to read sources published in English. Similarly, the reading list for the module now invites students to co-construct it by adding relevant sources in any of their languages.

The (re)design of the curriculum and its delivery should aim to empower plurilingual students by helping them to learn to mobilise their multilingual resources to achieve a variety of academic purposes (e.g. to complete academic tasks). As a starting point, the redesigned curriculum should provide opportunities for students to become aware and reflect upon the academic capital that their multilingual repertoires represent. These opportunities could include the use of multilingual texts in an attempt to encourage multilingual academic literacies (Lin, 2013), and multi-cultural and multi-lingual collaborative readings of complex texts to encourage critical thinking skills (García & Kleyn, 2016). As seen in the behaviour of the participants in this study, awareness and reflexivity are requirements for change to take place as a result of social interaction and structural elaboration.

The curriculum should also encourage a more dialogic process in which academic practices benefit from the contributions of plurilingual students. This could range from students informing teaching and learning activities based on their cultural and linguistic capital to contributing to module reading lists with relevant sources in the languages they know. Finally, the linguistic democratisation of the curriculum should accord recognition to the value of plurilingualism and the contributions that plurilingual and pluricultural students can make if encouraged. This is particularly pressing in educational contexts where assumptions, models and frameworks based on the supremacy of English as the only language of learning have gone unchallenged.

## Conclusion

In this article, I have presented and analysed instances of plurilingualism in an English-dominant university in an attempt to show how linguistic repertoires, tasks and social space are interwoven in student-student interactions in and out of class. In line with recent research on language as a result of located interactions (e.g. Canagarajah, 2013; Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Pennycook, 2010; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015; Wei, 2011), the article has focused on the dynamic relationship between language and tasks as they emerge from the interactions of plurilingual agents in a specific learning space. To examine this relationship, the article has used edulingualism as a useful conceptual and analytical framework through which issues of plurilingualism in general and of multilingual repertoires as resources for identity work, learning and socialising, and agency in a monolingual learning space in particular can be better understood.

It goes without saying that as a conceptual and analytic lens edulingualism has its own limitations, the main one being the specificity of the interactions and contexts it examines. In this particular case, it has also been used to understand the agentive behaviours of plurilingual language professionals operating in an English-dominant university. Future research could expand its application to examine interactions between less 'open

ready' plurilingual speakers as well as other monolingual post-secondary contexts such as institutions of further education.

## Notes

1. Only students who had consented to participate had their interactions recorded.
2. Names of participants are pseudonyms used to protect their identity and anonymity.
3. Transcription conventions are provided in Appendix 1, and translation of languages other than English is given in brackets.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Transcription conventions

Underlined text: Words that have been emphasised by the speaker.

[text: overlap

... : pause

{text}: comments by transcriber

### Appendix 2: Linguistic profile of the participants

Name	Gender, Country of origin	Languages	Linguistic resources/use	
			People (language/s)	Spaces (language/s)
<b>Afaf</b>	Female, Saudi Arabia	Arabic (A), French (F), and English (E)	Family (A), friends (A, F), teachers, colleagues (A, E)	Home (A), social spaces (e.g. cafes) (A, F, E), school and university (A, E)
<b>Ar</b>	Female, Malaysia	Malay (M), German (G), Spanish (S), English (E), Mandarin (Man)	Family (M) friends (M, G, S), teachers (M, E)	Home (M), social spaces (M, G), school and university (M, E, Man)
<b>Bama</b>	Male, Yemen	Arabic (A), French (F), English (E)	Family and friends (A, F), teachers, colleagues (A, E)	Home (A, F), social spaces (A, F), university (A, E)
<b>Din</b>	Male, Sudan	Arabic (A), Swahili (Swa), English (E)	Family and friends (A, Swa), teachers (E)	Home (A, Swa), social spaces (A, Swa), school and university (E)
<b>Joy</b>	Male, Bangladesh	Sylhety (Syl), Bangla (B), Hindi (H), English (E)	Family (Syl, B), friends (B, H), teachers (B, E)	Home (Syl, B), social spaces (B, H), school (B), university (E)
<b>Rose</b>	Female, Indonesia	Banjar (Ban), Indonesian (I), Arabic (A), English (E)	Family (Ban), friends (Ban, I, A, E), teachers (I, E)	Home (B), social spaces (Ban, I, E), school (I), university (A, E)
<b>Samawade</b>	Male, Somalia	Somali (Som), French (F), Spanish (S), English (E)	Family (Som), friends (Som, F, S), teachers (Som, E)	Home (Som), social spaces (Som, F), school (Som), university (E)
<b>Terry</b>	Male, Colombia	Spanish (S), French (F), Italian (Ita), English (E)	Family (S, Ita), friends (S, E), teachers (S, E)	Home (S, Ita), social spaces (S, E), school (S), university (E)