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#### Lesson Plan

**Handout 1:** Translanguaging Example

**Handout 2:** Translanguaging Strategies & Brainstorming Cluster

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Pens, highlighters, writing pads, and white-board markers

### LEARNING GOALS

At the close of the workshop, students will be able to:

- Define translanguaging and explain the benefits of multilingual brainstorming
- Apply a brainstorming strategy to address anxiety, begin responding to an assignment, or complicate their ideas

### OVERVIEW

In this workshop, three primary activities take place:

- Instructor leads a discussion of an example of translanguaging in French and English
- Students review translanguaging strategies and select one to practice.
- Students spend time implementing a strategy and then reflect on their experience.

## LESSON PLAN

Introduction

Frame the next hour as an opportunity for participants **to use all of their language resources as they brainstorm or pre-write**. Emphasize that while students will be working towards a specific assignment, they will be practicing strategies they can apply again in the future.

Make sure all students have an assignment for a paper, personal statement, grant application, etc., or an idea for an independent writing project. (If the group is small, ask students to go around the room and describe what they are working on.)

**Say:** Since this workshop is focused on independent writing, it may feel a little different from other Writing Center workshops you have attended. Of the center's more than twenty workshops, many are focused on introducing new concepts or skills. Others, like today's, are focused on helping you *apply* these concepts to develop a specific writing project.

Part One: Introducing Translanguaging (10 min)

1. **Ask students:** Do you speak/read/write more than one language? When you are brainstorming or drafting for a paper you will eventually write in English, have you ever used that language?  
*Possible responses may include:*
  - Yes, I read sources in my native language.
  - I used to try and translate from one language into another, but I realized this takes too much time.
  - No: a teacher/tutor told me that when I'm writing in English, I have to *think* in English.

Using student responses as a jumping-off point, **acknowledge that they might have received conflicting messages about multilinguality**. They may have been warned against trying to “translate” their thoughts or papers between languages. Or they may have been encouraged to “code-switch:” to limit their language, register, dialect, and/or vocabulary to the most appropriate context. Some may have been told that there is only one “correct,” standard, academic English—or that there are a variety of Englishes, but only one is right “here.” All this can lead students to avoid using their bi- or multi-linguality in the writing process—and to imagine that the lines between languages are more rigid than they really are.

State that our goal today is to use a **translingual writing process**.

2. **Write “translingual” on the board**, noting that it implies something that is “across languages” or “across tongues.” Explain that this is an important—and complicated!—term for linguists, teachers, translators, and theorists alike. Today, we'll just be looking at *one* of its meanings: **communicating in and across multiple languages at once**.

**State that** translingualism is also known as “code-meshing” (as opposed to code-switching): rather than expecting a speaker to make a hard switch between languages, it acknowledges that communication is *always* negotiated among speakers, listeners, languages, and contexts.

- **Say:** Today, our goal is to introduce some writing strategies that help us see how bi- or multi-linguality is actually a resource for thinking and writing, even when the final goal is a paper in English. These exercises can draw on any languages students know.
  - Drawing on all of your language resources may lessen the pressure of writing and spark new ideas and connections.
  - We’ll give you time to write and revise, and to create a space where you feel comfortable trying something new.
- 3. Let students know that next, we’ll look at an example of translingual brainstorming. Pass out **Handout 1: “Translanguaging Example.”** Together, observe the diagram and read the paragraph below.
- 4. Tell students that they can begin in any language. Throughout the next hour, they should feel free to move back and forth between languages: the goal here is to generate new ideas and connections.
  - Pass out **Handout 2: “Translanguaging Strategies”** and **Handout 3, “Brainstorming Cluster.”**
  - Give students a few minutes to read through the handout and to select one strategy.
  - Discuss the strategies:
    - Choose Strategy #1 if you’re still in the brainstorming stage
    - Choose Strategy #2 at any stage in the writing process where you need someone else’s perspective
    - Choose Strategy #3 if you’re ready to get started writing a draft
    - Choose Strategy #4 or #5 if you’re working with sources (and will have access to them during this workshop)
- 5. Ask students to share which strategy they will start with.

## **Part Two: Title Translanguaging Activity (45 mins)**

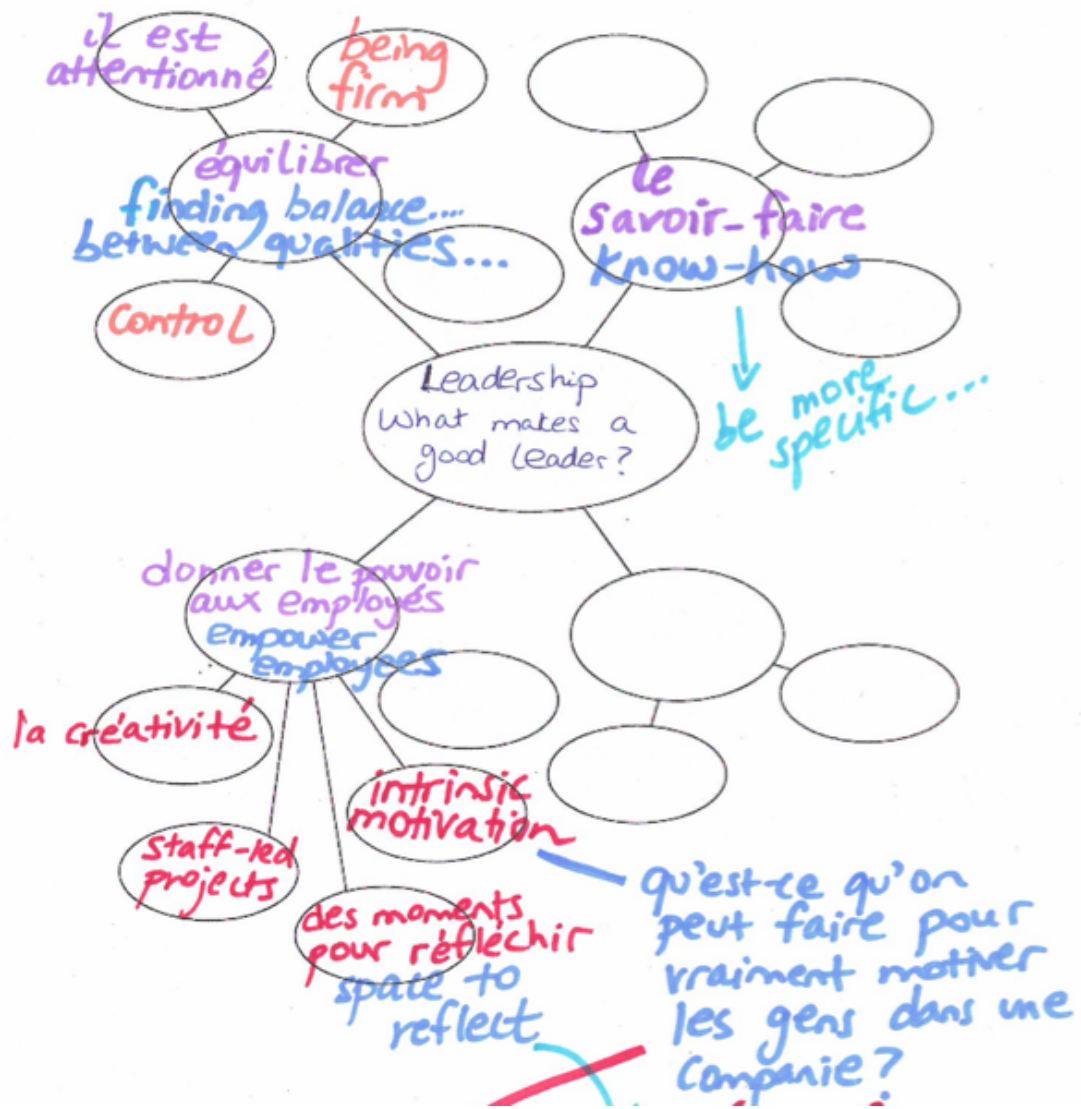
1. Give students time to employ one strategy.
  - Circulate and help students choosing Strategy #2 to pair up with a same-language partner. If there is an odd number of students, create one group of three. Be available for questions as they arise, and feel free to try out a brainstorming strategy of your own.
2. **With 20 minutes remaining, have students look at the parts of their brainstorming where they wrote in their native language.**
  - Have them highlight 2-3 key ideas, words, or phrases that they would like to be able to express in English.

- Next, have students share out examples, and select 1-2 to translate as a group. (Note that the group need not speak the same languages to do this work. For example, a student may share out a term in Mandarin, and the facilitator and other students can ask questions to help them find a phrase in English that closely reflects the idea.)

### **Part Three: Reflecting on Translingualism (5 min)**

1. **Have students reflect on the work they did and what next steps they will take to continue writing their essays.**
2. Emphasize that students can use these strategies—brainstorming, researching, annotating, and talking through their ideas in a variety of languages—even when the essay they are drafting eventually needs to be monolingual. They don't need to limit themselves to English in the pre-writing process.
3. **Solicit questions.** Wrap Up.

TRANSLANGUAGING EXAMPLE: FRENCH AND ENGLISH



**The writer, on her translanguaging process:**

*As I brainstorm, I write down my thoughts as they come to me. I write down my first idea in English and then move toward a second related idea that comes to me in French. This helps me to think of the topic of leadership in new ways. Sometimes I feel I can better express an idea in my native language. For example, the word “savoir-faire” is hard to translate into English (it roughly means “know-how”). Somehow, it feels more complete in French.*

## TRANSLANGUAGING STRATEGIES

### 1. Getting started with an assignment

Start by identifying the topic or assignment you're working on. Write down some initial ideas that come to mind in any language. You'll notice that there may be words or concepts that you can *only* think of in your first language. Allow yourself to jot down these ideas (don't worry about translating for now). By the end, you can imagine your sheet of paper being a mix of words, phrases, and/or questions in one or more languages. You may want to use the attached "Brainstorming Cluster."

### 2. Working with a same-language partner

Invite someone who speaks your native language to work with you. Take turns discussing each other's assignment or topic in that language (though you may find yourselves using English from time to time as well).

As you work with your partner, choose one of the following ways to record your ideas:

- Take your own notes as you discuss your ideas.
- Have your partner take notes and read them back to you after.

### 3. Drafting—when you are not sure how to express an idea in English

- A. Come back to it later. If you get stuck while writing in English, put down your idea in your native language and keep writing. Postpone finding the English phrase until later. Just focus on getting your meaning on the page, no matter what language it is in.
- B. Annotate your draft in your native language. As you draft in English, write your key ideas and claims in your native language too. Your marginal notes will help you to remember the meaning you originally had, even when you come back to your draft later. This way, you can avoid feeling stuck.
- C. Translate the "big idea" back into your first language. If you get too fixated on correct English grammar and syntax in individual sentences, you lose sight of the big picture. Choose one paragraph to re-read, and as you do, translate the key ideas from that paragraph back into your first language. Ask yourself: is my overall idea interesting/compelling? What ideas do I want to add or develop further? What can I eliminate? As you ask these questions, jot down next writing or revision steps.
- D. Go "around" the idea. If you can't find the exact word or phrase you're looking for in English, use any vocabulary you *do* know to say the same thing. It may not be as precise as you had hoped, and you may have to use more words, but there is always more than one way to say the same thing.

#### 4. Researching

- A. Understand background or context in your native language. Start by learning a little more about your topic by looking at new articles or other readings in your native language. You may not use these sources in your actual assignment, but doing this preliminary search will help you understand the academic sources you read in English later.
- B. Choose a topic that is somewhat familiar to you. If your assignment allows, choose a research topic or question that connects to your own linguistic, cultural, or national background.

#### 5. Reading a difficult text

- A. Annotate the reading in your native language. Even though you are reading in English, you can use other languages to help you process and understand a text.
  - Formulate questions you have about the reading in your first language
  - Briefly note your feelings, thoughts, and/or responses to the reading in your first language
  - Identify key words or phrases from the text and translate them into your first language, noting the differences in meaning that may emerge
  - Look up a reading in your first language about the same topic to help build your understanding
- B. Read without stopping to look up every word. For a challenging reading, you may be tempted to look up *every single* English word you don't understand. This will slow you down, and it might make reading feel frustrating. The first time you read, try stopping less; skip phrases, sentences, or even paragraphs that you don't understand. You'll come back to them when you read again. Instead, focus more on understanding the main ideas. Once you have a strong sense of the text's focus, it will be easier to identify unfamiliar vocabulary by context.

