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# Translanguaging strategies in multilingual newly arrived students' writing

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## ABSTRACT

Despite burgeoning research on translanguaging in education, research on translanguaging approaches to literacy education has lagged behind that of research on oral translanguaging in education. Hence, this article investigates what translanguaging strategies six multilingual newly arrived students used in the production of an academic text, and what prior experiences they had with learning and developing translanguaging strategies. These questions were investigated through a 60-minute writing session, in which six multilingual newly arrived students (age 16-19) wrote an academic text in Norwegian on a designated topic. The participants had lived in Norway between six months and 3.5 years. Next, the researcher conducted student interviews, exploring the students' translanguaging strategies and their previous experiences related to learning and developing them. The analysis shows that all the students applied translanguaging strategies before and during writing. The students reported that they had developed the strategies on their own, without their teachers' encouragement and support.

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## Introduction

Translanguaging has attracted widespread attention from researchers across contexts over the past 15 years. Starting out as a description of a deliberate and purposeful alternation between English and Welsh in Welsh language classes, translanguaging soon attracted the interest of linguists and educationalists alike (Singleton & Flynn, 2022). Currently, translanguaging is used to describe naturally occurring language use in multilingual contexts (Otheguy et al., 2019), as a theory of language (Wei, 2018), and as a pedagogical approach to the education of multilingual learners (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021). Pedagogical translanguaging has been conceptualised as “the right of learners to bring themselves with their linguistic repertoire fully into the classroom so as to grow and thrive academically” (García & Kleifgen, 2020, p. 559). As such, pedagogical translanguaging has also attracted the interest of Scandinavian educational researchers (Juvonen & Källkvist, 2021; Knudsen et al., 2021; Krulatz & Iversen, 2020; Paulsrud et al., 2017). In the article at hand, we follow Cenoz and Gorter (2021) in their simple definition of pedagogical translanguaging as “activating multilingual speakers' resources so as to expand language and content learning” (p. 1). In the case of multilingual students' writing in school, translanguaging entails the deployment of their full linguistic repertoire

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in the preparation for writing, during the writing process, and in the revising stages (García & Kleifgen, 2020). In this article, we explore multilingual newly arrived students' spontaneous use of translanguaging in their writing of an academic text in Norwegian.

Despite the burgeoning research on translanguaging in education (Singleton & Flynn, 2022), research on translanguaging approaches to literacy education has lagged behind that of research on oral translanguaging in education (García & Kleifgen, 2020). In addition, most researchers have studied translanguaging literacy within the context of researcher-initiated translanguaging teaching designs (Canagarajah, 2011; de los Ríos & Seltzer, 2017; Ebe, 2016; García & Kano, 2014; Seltzer & Collins, 2016). The aim of the current study is therefore to gain a more detailed and nuanced understanding of how multilingual newly arrived students use translanguaging strategies spontaneously in the process of writing seemingly monolingual texts, without being exposed to a research-initiated translanguaging teaching design. Hence, we investigate the following twofold research question: what translanguaging strategies do six multilingual newly arrived students use in the production of an academic text, and what prior experiences did they have with learning and developing translanguaging strategies?

## Translingual literacy education

García and Kleifgen (2020, p. 561) have pointed out that “the literature on translanguaging in literacy classrooms with bilingual students, where the goal is engagement with written texts, has lagged behind that of oral translanguaging as a way to make meaning of school content”. Among the most influential researchers within the field of translingual literacy is Suresh Canagarajah, who describes translanguaging as a naturally occurring phenomenon and, thereby, is not dependent on the teacher's initiative. Conversely, translanguaging cannot be held back, even when the teacher attempts to enforce a monolingual norm in the classroom (Canagarajah, 2011, p. 402). At the same time, Canagarajah discourages a romanticised understanding of translanguaging, whereby students' translanguaging is understood as fully developed, and teachers are simply expected to facilitate students' translanguaging. Canagarajah (2011) argues that it is necessary to teach multilingual students how to use translanguaging as an effective tool in their writing, as well as to develop a critical awareness of their rhetorical choices. At the time of writing, Canagarajah lamented that there had yet to be developed appropriate teaching methods to improve multilingual students' translanguaging (Canagarajah, 2011). However, researchers have since worked effortlessly to investigate how multilingual students actually use translanguaging as a strategy in their writing, and how schools can support and further develop such practices.

Summarising trends in research on translanguaging and literacy, García and Kleifgen (2020) argue that the research has so far demonstrated that translanguaging can function both as a scaffold, but also as an opportunity for students to generate text that “take into account their different ways of knowing, and language/literacy practices” (p. 561). For example, through two ethnographic studies of English arts classes in high schools in the United States with a predominantly Latinx student population, de los Ríos and Seltzer (2017) found that teachers' commitment to enact translanguaging teaching designs supported multilingual students, as it gave them an opportunity to leverage their linguistic repertoire for the purpose of academic writing. Moreover, Seltzer and Collins (2016) report from a school in New York City with a predominantly Spanish-speaking Latinx student population, where the majority of the students had lived in the United States for less than three years. After studying a translanguaging teaching design involving reading and discussing poetry, as well as poetry writing, Seltzer and Collins (2016, p. 158) conclude that “translanguaging is *more* than simply a scaffold (...) It is a tool they can use to bring their whole selves into the classroom”. Reporting from a linguistically diverse 8th grade English language arts class in New York City, Ebe (2016) describe how a teacher's translanguaging teaching design, where the students were invited to use translanguaging in their writing of a poem, contributed to students' engagement with the task and enhanced learning.

From the Norwegian context, Beiler (2020) conducted an ethnographic study in an English class in an introductory programme for newly arrived students. Beiler found that when the teacher simply encouraged his students to “use their mother tongue” when writing a text in English, the students would discuss the English writing assignment with peers sharing the same language(s), translate different online texts into other languages they knew, research information in different languages, and use translation software to develop phrases and identify words in English. The participants in Beiler’s (2020) study explained that the English texts they found online were good model texts, while researching information in other languages provided them with a better understanding of the content. Furthermore, Beiler and Dewilde (2020) show how the same students leverage their multilingual resources through sophisticated use of translation software, including changing input or output languages and reversing the direction of translations.

Research on translanguaging in literacy education has identified different translanguaging strategies among students. Velasco and García (2014) analysed five students text solicited from primary school students enrolled in Spanish-English and Korean-English dual-language bilingual education. They identified several problem-solving strategies and ways of making meaning. For example, they describe how multilingual students *rehearsed*, meaning that the students would test out different words in their vocabulary to find the best fit. Multilingual writers also *postponed*, meaning that the writer would temporarily include a word in the “other” language before returning to the translation in the final stages of their writing. Velasco and García (2014) illustrated how translanguaging can be applied as a strategy to solve problems arising on the word-, sentence-, and text levels. They concluded that multilingual writers use translanguaging to do things in writing that they otherwise would have been unable to do. Thus, translanguaging can function as a scaffold in the planning, drafting, and final stages of the writing process. Nonetheless, in Velasco and García’s (2014) study, only eight out of 24 participants appeared to use any translanguaging strategies in their writing. The researchers speculated that this limited use of translanguaging might be caused by society’s norms of language separation. However, they still called for more studies investigating why multilingual writers choose *not* to use translanguaging.

García and Kano (2014) took a different approach to the topic and investigated how Japanese writers at different stages of their English language acquisition used translanguaging strategies in their writing. Based on videorecording of lessons and stimulated recall interviews with 10 secondary school students, this study suggested that students’ use of translanguaging strategies in their writing developed as their English language competence advances. For example, García and Kano (2014) illustrated how students who were at an early stage of language acquisition depended on translanguaging strategies, while more advanced writers used translanguaging more independently. García and Kano (2014) distinguished between *knowledge input* and *language input*, where students would find information (*knowledge input*) on a topic in Japanese and focus on writing the text in English (*language input*). Moreover, one of the participants explained that when she was searching for English synonyms, she would first try to remember the words in Japanese. The participant said that she would then remember the English equivalent (García & Kano, 2014). Advanced writers used translanguaging to expand their understanding, speed up learning, and save cognitive space and time (García & Kano, 2014). Regardless of the students’ proficiency, García and Kano (2014) found that the translanguaging approach to literacy education produced better texts in English.

As presented above, multiple studies have illustrated how translanguaging teaching designs can create a space for multilingual students to leverage their complete linguistic repertoire for the purpose of writing. However, more knowledge is needed about how multilingual students who are expected to produce monolingual texts spontaneously draw on translanguaging strategies in the writing process – even when the written assignment is not part of a coherent translanguaging teaching design.

### **Translingual literacy and language ideologies**

In his discussion of literacy, Canagarajah (2013) explains that “language resources always come into contact in actual use and shape each other” (p. 1). Hence, Canagarajah (2013) argues that all acts of

literacy should be understood as acts of situated meaning construction, where the writer draws on diverse linguistic resources to negotiate meaning. Canagarajah (2013) does not consider literacy competence as the sum of an individual's competence in different languages. Instead, an individual's literacy competence should be considered an integrated communicative repertoire that the writer can strategically draw on according to the demands of a particular situation. What Canagarajah calls "translingual literacy" is not a new kind of literacy; instead, "it is about understanding the practices and processes that already characterise communicative activity in diverse communities to both affirm them and develop them further through an informed pedagogy" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 3). In other words, a translingual perspective on literacy affords us a better understanding of multilinguals' literacy and the opportunity to support translingual literacy practices in the classroom.

Canagarajah (2013) has pointed out that people bring with them certain dispositions towards translingual literacy. By dispositions, he means "assumptions about language, attitudes towards social diversity, and tacit skills of communication and learning" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 5). Thus, many students will naturally capitalise on a wide spectrum of their linguistic repertoires to create texts. For most students, this approach to literacy will not be new. Nevertheless, "product-oriented, monolingual, and norm-based teaching can often stifle these complex dispositions and strategies students bring from outside the classroom" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 7). In Europe, most education systems continue to enforce monolingual ideologies in their classrooms, as a consequence of the nation building of the nineteenth century (García & Wei, 2014; Gogolin, 2021). For example, in Norway, languages other than Norwegian were banned as languages of instruction for a long time, with detrimental consequences for the Indigenous Sámi population and other linguistic minorities (Niemi, 2017). Even today, many teachers in Norway are hesitant about involving languages beyond Norwegian for academic purposes in their teaching (Iversen, 2021; Olaussen & Kjelaas, 2020). Such dispositions towards multilingualism can be considered an expression of a long-held monolingual language ideology within Norwegian education.

Irvine (1989) defines a language ideology as "the cultural (or subcultural) system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests" (p. 255). Thus, when the Norwegian education system banned other languages from the classroom, this policy was based on the idea that a country needed a single language, and the education system was considered an effective tool to achieve linguistic homogenisation. However, the current widespread exclusion of multilingual students' languages beyond Norwegian also limits linguistically minoritised students' opportunities to learn and develop (e.g., Iversen, 2021; Olaussen & Kjelaas, 2020). Students may limit their translingual practices when faced with the requirements of teachers to work in a particular (and often monolingual) way as they create their texts. For example, if teachers instruct students to only use sources written in the target language when searching for information for an essay, the teachers consequently limit the students' opportunities to capitalise on their complete linguistic repertoire in the writing process. In addition, students' own monolingual language ideologies can also come into play and prevent them from engaging with translanguaging in their writing (e.g., Canagarajah, 2013; Velasco & García, 2014). Thus, even if teachers encourage translanguaging, students might feel more comfortable with monolingual writing strategies. When investigating multilingual newly arrived students' translanguaging strategies, it is also necessary to inquire how different language ideologies might have influenced their dispositions to engage with translanguaging.

## Methods and materials

The aim of the current study is to gain a more detailed and nuanced understanding of how multilingual newly arrived students use translanguaging strategies spontaneously in the process of writing a monolingual text, without being exposed to a research-initiated translanguaging teaching design. Hence, we strategically recruited six students (age 16-19) who had lived in Norway for between six months and 3.5 years. This was expected to facilitate an analysis of how translanguaging

strategies can develop in different ways over time, as students gradually acquire the language of instruction in the new school contexts. Given the qualitative nature of the research design and the limited number of participants, we do not attempt to describe general patterns in how translanguaging strategies develop. Although this can be considered a limitation, our findings can instead provide researchers and teachers with detailed and nuanced insight into how translanguaging strategies can be used and developed for the purpose of academic writing in school.

To investigate multilingual newly arrived students' translanguaging, the first author recruited participants for the study through a teacher working in an introductory class. In Norway, newly arrived students are entitled to an introductory course in Norwegian language before they transition into ordinary education, where Norwegian is the medium of instruction (Dewilde & Kulbrandstad, 2016). The teacher invited six of his current and previous students who he considered to have the necessary English and/or Norwegian language skills to participate in the study without the support of an interpreter. The specific educational programme the students attended at the time of the study also indicated their level of Norwegian language skills. Two students were attending an introductory class, two had transferred to mainstream secondary education within the last year, and two had attended mainstream secondary education for more than a year. The teacher reported that the two students attending the introductory programme had only acquired basic Norwegian language skills at the time of the study, while the four other students had been assessed to have Norwegian language skills sufficient to be able to follow mainstream secondary education through the medium of Norwegian. All six students were assessed as having an academic level similar to what one would expect from their peers enrolled in Norwegian schools at the time of their arrival in Norway and were proficient writers in several languages at the point at which they arrived. We therefore describe the participants as multilingual.

All six students were presented with an information letter and consent form before data collection began. The researcher only met with the students after the students had consented to participate in the study. In the table below, we present the participants in the study (Table 1):

All data collection was conducted individually with each student and the first author. We used method triangulation, where we combined screen recordings (Beiler et al., 2021), observations, fieldnotes and semi-structured interviews (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The screen recordings were carried out with the software *TechSmith SnagIt*, which has also been used in previous studies on students' writing in school (Beiler et al., 2021). All participants were invited to write an academic text about a predefined topic in Norwegian, followed by an interview. The students had the opportunity to choose between two writing assignments:

- 1) More and more people choose a meat-free diet. Write an argumentative text, in which you use facts to discuss arguments for and against a meat-free diet.
- 2) What is human-caused climate change, and what can we do to stop it? Write a factual text in which you answer the question.

These assignments were originally written in Norwegian, and the first authors provided clarifications in either Norwegian or English upon the participants' request. The participants were given one hour to complete the text and were told that they could use any resources or software available

**Table 1.** Participants.

Pseudonym	Reported first language	Prior language(s) of schooling	Other reported language(s)	Time in Norway	Age
Victor	Romanian	Italian, Romanian	English, (Russian)	6 months	16
Nicholas	Albanian	Greek, Albanian	English	1 year	17
Olivia	Greek	Greek	Albanian, English	1.5 years	17
Andrej	Serbian	Serbian	English, Russian	1.5 years	16
Athena	Greek	Greek	English, (Spanish)	2.5 years	18
Summit	Nepali	English	-	3.5 years	19



on the computer to support them in the research and writing of the text. The participants were explicitly told that they could use any language they preferred in the writing process. During the writing, the first author was present in the room and followed the participants' writing via a shared screen. She took field notes describing what happened beyond the screen, such as the participants' notetaking on paper, and her immediate reflections related to the participants' strategies. Following the writing session, the first author conducted individual semi-structured interviews with the participants, inquiring about the strategies they used to complete the task and their previous experiences related to learning and developing their translanguaging strategies. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian or English, depending on the participants' preferences. In the following, all excerpts from the interviews are provided in English. The translations from Norwegian into English were completed by the second author.

Based on the collected data, the research process elicited five types of data material: screen recordings, transcriptions of screen recordings, the participants' texts, the first author's fieldnotes from the writing session, audio recordings from the interviews, and transcriptions from the interviews. Below is a summary of our data material (Table 2):

**Table 2.** Empirical data.

Data material:	Quantity:
Student texts	6 texts (2,748 words)
Screen recordings	6 recordings (5 h and 21 min)
Screen recording transcripts	1359 words
Fieldnotes	1349 words
Interview recordings	6 recordings (2 h and 47 min)
Transcriptions	6 transcriptions (16,721 words)

The guiding question for our analysis was the determination of which translanguaging strategies the six multilingual newly arrived students used in the production of an academic text, and what prior experiences they had with learning and developing translanguaging strategies. The translanguaging strategies described in the fieldnotes, the screen recordings, and transcriptions were coded according to previous studies on translanguaging in writing (e.g., García & Kano, 2014; Velasco & García, 2014). The codes were subsequently categorised into pre-writing, translation, problem solving, and information research. Furthermore, the students' experiences related to learning and developing their translanguaging strategies that they reported in the individual interviews were coded and categorised through an inductive process of thematic analysis (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Consequently, it was possible to describe the participants' translanguaging strategies, as well as their own descriptions of how these strategies had been developed and received by teachers and peers in their previous education.

The Norwegian Centre for Research Data reviewed and approved the study based on its compliance with ethical standards. These include that the participants provide their consent to participate and that they are informed of their right to withdraw. All participants' names are presented here as pseudonyms.

## Findings

The analysis of the screen recordings and field notes revealed four types of translanguaging strategies used by the students throughout the writing session. These were pre-writing strategies, translation strategies, problem-solving strategies, and information research strategies. In addition, the analysis of the subsequent interviews highlighted how the students reported having learned and further developed these strategies. Furthermore, the students identified obstacles to learning and developing translanguaging strategies. In the following, we will first describe the translanguaging strategies that the students used before we describe how the students reported that these strategies had first been acquired and then further developed.

## Translanguaging strategies

As outlined above, through the writing session, the participants demonstrated four types of translanguaging strategies. However, there were clear differences in how the students employed these strategies, depending on their level of proficiency in Norwegian. In García and Kano's (2014) terminology, we can distinguish between two forms of translanguaging strategies: dependent and independent translanguaging patterns. Below, we provide a few examples of these strategies.

### Pre-writing

Only Andrej and Olivia demonstrated any visible pre-writing strategies during the writing session. In the screen recordings, we observed how Olivia started out by writing key sentences in Norwegian. In the subsequent interview, she explained that if she had had more time, she would also have written a more thorough outline of her essay in Norwegian. She did not consider writing anything in Albanian, English, or Greek, as she claimed that it would be "a waste of time". Andrej, on the other hand, started on an outline in Norwegian, but soon transferred into Serbian because he thought that was easier. He also revealed that he was trying to use as much Norwegian as possible while filling in with Serbian when he could not remember the Norwegian vocabulary. This strategy corresponds with what Velasco and García (2014) describe as *postponement*. Andrej's outline included the following bullet points:

- CO2
- Klimaendring
- Ozonski omotac
- Rezultat klimatskoh promena
- Vrlo komplikovan problem
- Siromasni vise doprinose promeni
- Sto pre to bolje
- Politicka aktivnost
- Investiranje u nove tehnologije

As one can see from Andrej's outline, most of his preliminary subheadings are written in Serbian (except for the second bullet point, "klimaendring" [climate change]). In addition to this list of subheadings, Andrej included a screenshot from an English-language YouTube video about climate change. This strategic use of Serbian in combination with Norwegian and English indicates a pattern of independent translanguaging, where Andrej uses Serbian and English to support the pre-writing phase.

The rest of the participants started writing directly in Norwegian. Hence, most of the participants did not demonstrate any obvious translanguaging strategies in the pre-writing phase. Summit reported that he usually did not use any pre-writing strategies, while Nicolas explained that if he had time, he would have written the whole text in Albanian first and then translated it into Norwegian. However, he said that it did not make sense to him just to write an outline in Albanian before writing the essay in Norwegian:

**Nicolas:** No, because if you write in Albanian, everything you think about is in Albanian, so you will continue to think in Albanian. Then, you cannot translate afterwards.

Nicolas's reported dependency on Albanian indicates a dependent translanguaging pattern, where translanguaging could potentially function as a scaffold for what García and Kano (2014) describe as *knowledge input*, while reserving the Norwegian writing for *language input*. However, due to time constraints, Nicolas had to consider both the content and the linguistic side of the essay simultaneously during the writing session. Similarly, Athena reported that she preferred to first write the essay in English and then translate it into Norwegian. Athena found that it was easier if she



could focus on the knowledge input in an English draft, and then later focus on the language input of the essay in the Norwegian translation. She reported this as follows:

**Athena:** If I write in English first, it's like a boost to start and then I write in Norwegian.

Although Athena's strategy resembles Nicolas's strategy of writing the whole essay in Albanian, her approach suggests a much more independent pattern of translanguaging. According to Athena, the strategic use of English (not her previous language of schooling, which was Greek) to "boost" her writing is useful before she translates the essay into Norwegian.

Although Victor did not demonstrate any translanguaging strategies during the pre-writing phase, he claimed that he would have started out with an outline if he had had more time. Victor explained how he would usually work in the pre-writing phase:

**Victor:** I would use English. That would be the main language. Then I would have Romanian in case I don't know some terms. And Italian.

**Researcher:** Yeah. So, you make an outline – do you know what that is? *Outline*.

**Victor:** Oh. Yeah. Outline of the essay. Yeah.

**Researcher:** And then you use different languages -

**Victor:** Yeah. Exactly. To translate more sentences, and to have like the most accurate things.

In this excerpt, Victor explains how he would rely on both English, Romanian, and Italian to write an outline. This strategy suggests a more independent translanguaging strategy, where he is able to draw on his competence in English, Romanian, and Italian in a strategic manner to identify the most precise terminology for his essay. This strategy aligns with what Velasco and García (2014) described as *rehearsing*.

### **Translation**

From the screen recordings, we found that all participants used translation software in the writing process. However, there was a clear difference in how students with a more limited proficiency in Norwegian used translations in their writing compared to those who had already acquired advanced Norwegian language skills (Table 3).

As can be seen from the table above, Victor translated 27 words or phrases, ranging from simple vocabulary, such as "money" and "afraid", to more advanced terminology, such as "fossil fuel". Summit, who had a more advanced level of Norwegian language skills, translated only five words. Most of these words were specific terms related to science in some way: "avalanche", "landslide", "flood", "field", and "food chain". What Victor and Summit had in common is that they both used all of their translations in their respective essays. While on a surface level, this might suggest that they share the same strategy, the amount of translations suggests otherwise. Victor's frequent translations and uncritical use of all of them point to a dependent translanguaging pattern, while Summit's strategic translations and subsequent assessment of their adequacy indicate a more independent translanguaging pattern.

From the screen recordings, one can observe that Andrej, Athena, and Nicolas all used translation software rather frequently, although not as often as Victor. They all reported translating from different languages to assess the quality of the translation (e.g., Beiler & Dewilde, 2020), and the strategies they described all point in the direction of an independent translanguaging patterns in their use of translation in their writing. Based on the screen recordings, Olivia was the participant who used translations the least. In the individual interview, she explained that she tried to use her Norwegian vocabulary to the fullest. Thus, when she could not remember a word in Norwegian, she would first try to rephrase it before she used any translation software. Consequently, Olivia only translated four words and used only one throughout the entire writing process.

**Table 3.** Overview of students' translations.

Participant	Amount of words translated	Amount of words used	Words translated and used
Victor	27	27	Fossilt brensel [fossil fuel], bensin [petrol], planeten [planet], slipper ut [release], industrielle revolusjon [industrial revolution], sparyer [sprays], ozonlag [ozone layer], metan, lystgass [nitous oxide], ble utgitt før [was released before], løsninger [solutions], bekymret [worried], at de ikke kan ta slutt [that they cannot end], planetens varme energi [planet's warm energy], bruke [use], solcellepanel [solar panel], vindturbiner [wind turbines], vanddammer [water ponds/dams], termiske kraftverk [thermal power plants], effektiv [efficient], fremtidige generasjoner [future generations], redd [scared], raskt [fast], penger [money], pengeindustri [money industry], vulkaner [volcanoes], lide [suffer].
Nicolas	14	9	Samarbeide [cooperate], giftig [poisonous], atmosfære [atmosphere], farlig [dangerous], dødelig [deadly], drivhuseffekt [greenhouse effect], forskere [scientists], la oss beholde den [let us keep it], fredelig [peaceful].
Andrej	12	8	Forårsaket av [caused by], fanger [catch], havnivåstigning [sea level rise], klokken tikker [the clock is ticking], solcellepaneler [solar panels], kaste bort [waste], individuelle bidrag [individual contributions], ett sekunds utslipp fra den globale energisektoren [one second of emissions from the global energy sector].
Olivia	4	1	Trøst [comfort].
Athena	13	9	Tidene endre [time change], foretrekker å [prefer to], oppskrift [recipe], bolognese, et argument [one argument], omfavne denne måten å tenke på [embrace this way of thinking], hundetenner [dog teeth], vi står overfor [we face], blodtrykk [blood pressure], slag [stroke], bevist [proven].
Summit	5	5	Jordskrev [avalanche], skred [landslide], oversvømmelse [flood], åker [field], næringskjeden [food chain].

### Problem solving

Because of the participants' frequent use of translation software, one of the main problems the students encountered in the writing process was determining the trustworthiness of the translations provided by the translation software. In the interview following the writing session, Victor confirmed what the data presented above suggest:

**Victor:** To be honest I just use the word I find. Uhm ... I consider myself kind of lazy when it comes to these kinds of activities.

As noted above, the frequent translations and their uncritical use point to a dependent translanguaging pattern. Nevertheless, he reported that when he translated whole sentences, he would back-translate the sentence to validate it. This was a strategy also observed in screen recordings from Andrej, Athena, Nicolas, and Summit's use of translation software, as well as reported in previous research (e.g., Beiler & Dewilde, 2020). Below is an example from Andrej's translation process of the English phrase "to team up" (Table 4). Andrej was looking for an appropriate way to complete the sentence "Det vi kan gjøre er å" [What we can do is to]:

**Table 4.** Example of rehearsing.

English →	Norwegian
To team up	Å slå seg sammen
Norwegian →	English
Å slå seg sammen	To merge
Serbian →	Norwegian
Da se udružimo	La oss slå oss sammen
Norwegian →	Serbian
La oss slå oss sammen	Udružimo se

After *rehearsing* (e.g., Velasco & García, 2014) different translations, Andrej decided to use the phrase “slå oss sammen” [come together] and wrote the grammatically correct sentence: “Det vi kan gjøre er å slå oss sammen” [What we can do is to come together]. This process suggests an independent translanguaging pattern in Andrej’s writing.

Another strategy, frequently used by Athena and Summit, was to search for Google Images. In the screen recordings, one could observe how Summit translated the English word “avalanche” into Norwegian. He subsequently validated the translation through a search for the Norwegian translation via Google Images. The combination of “turning” the translations and subsequently searching for Google Images suggests an independent translanguaging pattern. A different strategy reported by Andrej, Nicolas, and Summit was that they would write their essay in Norwegian, and when there was a word they could not remember, they would simply insert the word in Albanian, English, or Romanian, and then return to that word later in the writing process. This strategy is another example of so-called *postponing* (García & Kano, 2014, p. 269).

### Information research

As part of the instructions for the writing session, the participants were told that they could use any source of support available when writing the essay. Based on the screen recordings, it was evident that Nicolas and Victor did not research any information for their essay. However, the rest of the participants did so, although the extent and manner varied significantly, as can be observed from Table 5.

**Table 5.** Overview of students’ online searches.

Participant	Number of searches	Website	Search words
Victor	0		
Nicholas	0		
Andrej	3	YouTube.com Google.com	«kurzgesagt» (English videos) «klimaendringer» [climate change] (Norwegian) «Owid climate watch» (English)
Olivia	2	Google.com	«Hvordan avslutter man en tekst» [How to end a text] (Norwegian) «Avslutningsfraser» [Concluding phrases] (Norwegian)
Athena	9	Google.com	«Why to not become a vegetarian» (English) «What does the body need to survive» (English) «What does the body need to survive to be healthy» (English) «Hvorfor er det dyrt å være vegetar?» [Why is it expensive to be vegetarian] (Norwegian) «Why is it hard to be a vegetarian?» (English) «Why is it expensive to become a vegetarian?» (English) «How many percentage of the population that are vegetarian» (English) «Reasons to become a vegetarian» (English) «How much water is needed to produce beef» (English)
Summit	1	Google.com	«Global warming temperature» (English)

Andrej, Nicolas, Summit and Victor explained that they generally preferred to find information in English because there are more sources available in that language. Olivia also admitted to using English when researching information. Nonetheless, she claimed that she preferred to research information in the language in which she would eventually write the essay:

**Researcher:** Which language do you use if you are researching information?

**Olivia:** I use the language I’m writing in.

**Researcher:** Yes.

**Olivia:** Or, if it’s a topic I can’t find much information about, I’ll search up information in English, because that’s the language most people use, and then it gets many resources you can find information from.

Thus, both of her Google searches during the writing session were conducted in Norwegian. Athena displayed a similar sentiment in the individual interviews. She reported that she usually used

English in the brainstorming phase of her writing, but that she soon transferred into researching in the language in which she would later be writing. On the screen recordings, we saw how she predominantly researched information in English. Eventually, Google offered to translate the website from English into Norwegian, and she accepted. She subsequently copied several sentences directly from the translated website into her own essay. Outside of this example, she seemed to read from the website in English and translate key vocabulary from English into Norwegian before writing full sentences in Norwegian in her own essay. Based on the screen recordings, Andrej, Athena, Nicolas, and Summit mainly researched information in English. This can be understood as a way of using translanguaging to expand their knowledge of the topic, thus exercising an independent translanguaging form.

Based on what we have described so far, all the participants engaged in different forms of translanguaging in their writing. Victor, and to some degree Nicolas, were the participants who demonstrated the most dependent translanguaging, while Andrej, Athena, and Summit demonstrated the most independent translanguaging. Olivia displayed the fewest examples of translanguaging strategies altogether.

### ***Learning and developing strategies***

In the interviews, the participants described how their strategies had been learned and developed through the education they had received before they arrived in Norway, through the initial introductory programmes to Norwegian education, and eventually (for the students who already had transitioned) in ordinary Norwegian education. Below, we present how the students' reported having learned and developed the translanguaging strategies described above, and the students' perspectives on the obstacles to their learning and development in this area.

#### ***Learning and developing translanguaging strategies***

Andrej, Athena and Olivia had been educated through the same language that they spoke at home until they moved to Norway, but they had all learned English in school. Nicolas, Summit and Victor had been educated in a different language from what they usually spoke at home and had developed literacy skills in several languages simultaneously. Nicolas explained how he learned to read and write in Greek and English at school, while his grandfather taught him how to read and write in Albanian:

**Nicolas:** Mostly from my grandfather. He taught me Albanian. To write. I had him next to me all the time. And he says, you have to be like this, with rules and like this. I have learned from that. So, I don't know how other people learn. I learned it like that.

All the participants had a solid educational background at the point of arrival in Norway and had all learned much about academic writing from their previous education. Still, none of the participants had experienced a teacher explicitly instructing them on any translanguaging strategies or encouraging them to use these strategies in their writing. Rather, the participants claimed that they had developed the strategies they displayed during the writing session on their own. This claim corresponds with Canagarajah's (2011) argument that translanguaging is not dependent on the teacher's initiative. During his interview, Summit explained that he had had to "figure it out" by himself, and that this had led the languages he knew to "speak together". He elaborated on this as follows:

**Summit:** Sometimes, I think the Nepali language says, "You have to write this", and then comes English and says, "No, that doesn't make sense". Then comes Norwegian: "Maybe it's not that important in the text".

Andrej said that he had been experimenting with different strategies, and that this experimentation had led him to develop his own approach. The students' experience of having to develop the translanguaging strategies on their own suggests that there is a need for more guidance from teachers on how to develop their spontaneous translanguaging into even more effective and purposeful strategies (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011, 2013).

### ***Obstacles to learning and developing translanguaging strategies***

In the individual interviews, Athena, Nicolas and Olivia expressed frustration over their peers' and teachers' use of English with them after they had moved to Norway. They were all convinced that greater exposure to Norwegian would support their acquisition of Norwegian. Just as Nicolas was negative about using Albanian in the pre-writing phase, he was also negative about the exaggerated use of English when he first started his schooling in Norway. Athena shared this sentiment:

**Athena:** I told everyone, "Speak to me in Norwegian, and then if I don't understand, I'll let you know". But no, they just spoke in English (...) I was just like, "In Norwegian! I'm coming here for you to help me get used to the environment and people, and what Norwegian is really like".

Athena also expressed an experience of feeling left out when peers and teachers spoke to her in English instead of Norwegian. Nevertheless, Andrej, Summit and Victor experienced that English was very helpful in their acquisition of Norwegian. Andrej pointed out that his knowledge of English was valuable in this respect, and Summit explained that it was an advantage that he could ask his teachers questions in English when he would have been unable to ask them in Norwegian. In Summit's experience, the main obstacle had not been the teachers' use of English, but some teachers' insistence on speaking Norwegian at all times:

**Summit:** Some teachers were, like, that it had to be Norwegian only. There was no choice.

In the interview, Summit said that the first encounter with teachers who truly valued his multilingualism were two teachers of Sámi origin at his current school. He explained that they would talk about nature together and about the commonalities between Sámi and Nepali languages.

All of the participants agreed that their current multilingualism was not an advantage to them, although it could potentially become one in the future. Specifically, Athena stated that she did not think her multilingualism was an advantage to her, considering her limited proficiency in Norwegian. She argued the following:

**Athena:** For example, when I've lived here for eight years, maybe it will be good to speak more languages. But now, because I'm at a level where I still mix languages, it can be bad in a way.

Thus, Athena articulated an understanding of multilingualism in line with monolingual understandings of language competence, where only the production of language resembling some sort of idealised "native speaker" is valuable (e.g., García & Wei, 2014). The same sentiment was shared by Victor:

**Victor:** Well, if I knew the language perfectly, like a native speaker, then the association of the terms in other languages would be easier, and maybe then I would consider it an advantage. But at the state that I am at now, I don't really see it as a huge advantage. Maybe there are some terms that I can associate, but they're not, like, totally accurate, you know? And sometimes, I make mistakes over it.

Students' ideologies or assumptions about language have been found to have a significant influence on how they approach writing in school (Canagarajah, 2013). Nevertheless, both Athena and Victor engaged actively with translanguaging strategies in their writing, suggesting that the ideologies articulated above did not influence their dispositions towards translanguaging to the degree where they would not capitalise on their multilingual repertoire.

### **Concluding remarks**

In the present article, we have analysed the translanguaging strategies six multilingual newly arrived students used in the production of an academic text in Norwegian, and what prior experiences they had with learning and developing translanguaging strategies. In line with previous research (Canagarajah, 2011; de los Ríos & Seltzer, 2017; Ebe, 2016; García & Kano, 2014; Seltzer & Collins, 2016; Velasco & García, 2014), translanguaging gave the students an opportunity to leverage their multilingual repertoire for the purpose of academic writing. The analysis shows that all of the students

applied different translanguaging strategies throughout the writing process, including translanguaging pre-writing, translations, translanguaging problem solving strategies, and translanguaging information searches. Problem-solving strategies included *rehearsing* different vocabulary through the translation software, like how students in Beiler and Dewilde's (2020) study capitalised on translation software in their writing. Other problem-solving strategies included *postponing*, where the students temporarily included words in a language other than Norwegian in their texts (e.g., García & Kano, 2014; Velasco & García, 2014).

The analysis suggests that the farther the participating students had come in their Norwegian language acquisition, the more independently they also used translanguaging. For more advanced learners, translanguaging becomes a strategy for enhancement and expansion in their writing (e.g., García & Kano, 2014). The analysis showed that the two students with the lowest proficiency in Norwegian, Nicolas and Victor, demonstrated the most examples of dependent translanguaging. This was particularly salient in the case of Victor, who actively and uncritically used translations in his writing. The screen recordings illustrated how the translation software functioned as a support for Victor's writing. In contrast, the two students with the highest proficiency in Norwegian, Athena and Summit, both demonstrated a sophisticated and independent use of translanguaging strategies. This was exemplified by the way they used postponements to save cognitive space and speed up the writing process (e.g., García & Kano, 2014), as well as how Athena strategically alternated between knowledge and language input through the writing process.

The students in the midrange, Andrej and Olivia, also demonstrated examples of independent translanguaging. However, Olivia seems to have been restricted by a monolingual ideology (e.g., Canagarajah, 2013; García & Wei, 2014), which prevented her from capitalising on a wider range of her linguistic repertoire. Olivia's outline of her text was written solely in Norwegian, and all of her information research was conducted in Norwegian, too. In addition, she was reluctant to use translation software. Her writing strategy was based on maximising the potential of her Norwegian language resources. This suggests that teachers could expect some students to be hesitant to adopt writing strategies that are unfamiliar to them, such as translanguaging, within a school context. Hence, teachers might need to actively convince students about the potential of translanguaging for their academic writing (Canagarajah, 2013).

Canagarajah (2013, p. 3) wrote that translanguaging literacy "is about understanding the practices and processes that already characterise communicative activity in diverse communities to both affirm them and develop them further through an informed pedagogy" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 3). Our findings demonstrate that translanguaging strategies can support multilingual students with different proficiency levels in their writing of texts in the target language. In line with Canagarajah's (2013) proposal, our findings suggest that the translanguaging strategies we have analysed would benefit from being further developed through pedagogical translanguaging (e.g., de los Ríos & Seltzer, 2017; Ebe, 2016; García & Kano, 2014; Seltzer & Collins, 2016; Velasco & García, 2014). Thus, teachers should not only encourage students to capitalise on their multilingual repertoire, but even target the development of translanguaging strategies as part of literacy education. Similar to Beiler (2020), our study confirms that students are capitalising on a wide spectrum of languages beyond their "mother tongues". Consequently, teachers should not limit their understanding of students' linguistic repertoires to their knowledge of a predefined "mother tongue", but instead consider the potential of students' full linguistic repertoire.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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