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Author
Linares, Emily

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The Challenges and Promise of Classroom Translation for Multilingual Minority Students in Monolingual Settings

EMILY LINARES

Harvard University
Email: emilyzlinares@gmail.com

Largely banished from language instruction following the adoption of communicative approaches, some researchers now encourage the use of translation as a valuable resource for the language classroom. While increasingly embraced in theory, there remains a need to better understand, through empirical research, the implementation of translation-based activities in language instruction (Carreres, 2014; Källkvist, 2013), as well as their impact. As this contribution argues, the implementation of translation presents unique challenges and opportunities for multilingual minority students who "operate between languages" (MLA, 2007, p. 237) in their daily lives but who are typically expected to behave monolingually in the classroom. This article contributes to empirical research on the implementation of a translation activity in one such setting. The data are drawn from a larger ethnographic project carried out in elementary and middle school classrooms in Perpignan, France. The focal classes were exclusively attended by Roma learners who self-identify as "Gitan" and as L1 speakers of Gitan, their local variety of Catalan. For the purposes of the present study, the analysis focuses on an activity that required Gitan learners in a middle school French language class to translate a Catalan comic into French. The case study was selected for its insights into some of the challenges and potential benefits of classroom translation for minority learners within but also beyond K-12 settings.

INTRODUCTION

Although it was once a mainstream practice in foreign language classrooms, translation became regarded as an outdated method in some parts of the world by the 1970s, with its use increasingly restricted to the study of classical languages. As language teaching turned its back on the pedagogic tradition of translation, references to "grammar-translation" came to "describe and denigrate all forms of teaching and learning that taught grammar or brought other languages into the classroom" (Pennycook, 2008, p. 35). As attested to by this special issue, some researchers have begun to envision a brighter future for translation in language education. They contend that, once "relegated to the dungeons of language teaching history" (Pennycook, 2008, p. 35), translation represents an overlooked resource for language development that should be repurposed rather than discarded altogether (Katz et al., 2020; McLaughlin, 2012).

Despite renewed enthusiasm for the incorporation of translation-based activities in the language classroom (see, among others, Cook, 2010; Laviosa, 2014a, 2014b; Leonardi, 2010; McLaughlin, 2012; Katz et al., 2020; Kramsch & Huffmaster, 2008, 2015; Tsagari & Floros, 2013; Witte et al., 2009), there remains a need for empirical studies focused on the process of implementation (Carreres, 2014; Källkvist, 2013). In considering the act of translation and its implications, it is imperative to remember that languages "do not operate in a sociocultural vacuum" (Cummins, 1981, p. 32). As this article illustrates, we must consider translation as a form of language contact in which different individuals, with their unique subjectivities, perceive meaning in one language and render it in new linguistic forms. Just as language contact researchers have had to remind themselves that contact is a metaphor—"language 'systems' do not genuinely touch or even influence one another"

(Matras, 2009, p. 3), so too should researchers account for *translators*, not only the translations that they produce. As Martinet notes in his introduction to Weinreich's (1953) *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*, our linguistic allegiances make two languages more than the sum of their material differences (p. vii). The results of translation, like the outcome of other processes of language contact, are unpredictable, because of the unpredictability of translators.

The present study highlights some linguistic and cultural complexities posed by translation for minority language students in monolingual settings. Specifically, the data are drawn from a larger investigation into the language-learning experiences of young Roma students in Perpignan, France who self-identify as "Gitan" and speak a Catalan variety, which they call Gitan, as their L1. The analysis centers on an activity in a middle school French language class that asked Gitan learners to translate a Catalan comic into French. The activity in question presented students with a text that was written in a standardized variety of their L1. Having received no formal literacy training in Catalan, Gitan learners were forced to sound their way into comprehension by reading the text aloud, while also navigating unfamiliar vocabulary and cultural references. The activity's implementation and reception revealed the potential of classroom translation to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural difference among students and their instructors. At the same time, however, the data prompt us to problematize the use of translation, questioning whether all learners wish for their language—or its institutionalized counterpart—to be formally involved in classroom instruction. Discussions between students and instructors draw attention to some of the risks of calling upon minority students to translate texts, namely of further marginalizing them as outsiders to both the source language of the original (in this case, Catalan) as well as the language of the intended translation (here, French).

The documented experiences of the student translators also reveal points of articulation in the challenges and possibilities of translation between K-12 and higher education settings. Drawing on the data, the analysis emphasizes important considerations when calling upon minority students at any educational level to translate. I additionally argue that the full potential of translation in *higher education* depends upon the future of translation in K-12 classrooms. The early and sustained introduction of translation has the potential to inform more than classroom pedagogies; more significantly, it can contribute to redefining the place of minority multilingual students in language instruction, and education more broadly. If translation is conceived of as a tool for cultivating critical language awareness rather than insisting on prescriptivism, multilingual speakers come to constitute a model for linguistic competence rather than deficiency. Through its careful, systemic integration into the K-12 language curriculum, translation could prove instrumental in helping to revise ideologies about ideal language users within the classroom: the multilingual who embodies linguistic diversity and models multilingual competence may eventually supplant the monolingual native speaker as the ideal learner.

BACKGROUND

Standard Language Ideologies at School

Language ideologies, "beliefs, or feelings, about languages as used in their social worlds" (Kroskrity, 2004, p. 498), are not really about language at all (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Instead, they signal whom we are trying to control (Kelly-Holmes, 2019), or, at the very least, characterize; comments about language serve as a proxy for perceived non-linguistic differences, for instance, in race or social class. The construct of "standard" language varieties is mobilized as a measuring stick for normativity against which "non-standard" speakers fall short. That "such varieties do not actually exist" empirically (Leeman, 2012, p. 49; also see Flores & Rosa, 2015; Milroy & Milroy, 1999; Milroy, 2007) does not diminish their symbolic power. A standard language ideology advances "a bias toward an abstracted,

idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions" (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 68). As Kroskrity (2004) observes, "the proclaimed superiority of [the standard] rests not on its structural properties or its communicative efficiency but rather on its association with the political-economic influence of affluent social classes who benefit from a social stratification which consolidates and continues their privileged position" (pp. 502-503).

Formal schooling has long promoted the belief in "standard language," marginalizing learners who are perceived as nonconformist speakers and writers. As Leeman (2012) asserts,

> [W]ith their emphasis on inflexible grammar 'rules' and 'correct' usage, schools explicitly inculcate the notion that there is a single acceptable way to speak, and they mete out punishment to those who do not conform to the idealized norm. Students are routinely taught that nonstandard language is indicative of illogical or unintelligent thinking. (p. 49)

The field of raciolinguistics recognizes that acceptance is not a question of *conforming*—or not—to norms, which will always be illusory; it is rather a question of being heard or read as more or less normative. Consequently, the onus of unseating standard language ideologies lies not with marginalized speakers but with "[listening subjects who] continually perceive deficiency" (Rosa & Flores, 2015, p. 79). As Rosa and Flores (2015) suggest, that some language is perceived as more prestigious, appropriate, or standard "reflects a form of linguistic normativity anchored in raciolinguistic ideologies which serves as a coded way of describing racialized populations that are unrelated to empirical linguistic practices" (p. 160). Consequently, marginalized learners may be perceived "as illegitimate" by their teachers (p. 161), irrespective of the extent to which their production approximates articulated classroom norms.[1] In additional to advocating for greater reflexivity on the part of instructors, Flores and Rosa encourage students to critically interrogate the discourses that frame them as defective speakers. Although once (and still, in some contexts) employed in ways that upheld prescriptivism, translation is garnering attention as a resource that can encourage critical reflection on language and identity, along with the recognition of multiple linguistic norms within the classroom (see, for example, Kramsch, 2006; Kramsch & Huffmaster, 2008, 2015; Pennycook, 2008).

Repurposing Translation

A reconceptualization of translation renders it essential to the communicative classroom that once banished it: we can understand all forms of meaning making as a process of translation, whereby meaning is carried over from one language and cultural context to another (Pennycook, 2008; Spivak, 1993, p. 179). This understanding of language use resituates "translation as not the peripheral area it has been to much of applied linguistics, but rather the key to understanding communication" (Pennycook, 2008, p. 40). While students are regularly expected to "operate between languages" (MLA, 2007, p. 237), language instructors have often required them to perform monolingualism in the classroom: "The exclusive use of monolingual/national points of reference deprives the learners of the transnational, translingual and transcultural competencies they will need to use in today's multilingual environments" (Kramsch & Huffmaster, 2015, p. 114). Breaking with mainstream communicative pedagogies, Kramsch (2006) calls for language instruction that involves translation-related activities and understands competence as working across languages and their contexts of use.

As Pratt (2009) contends in her reflection on the paradoxes of cultural translation, "Because it sustains difference, a translation paradigm is too blunt an instrument to grasp the heterodox subjectivities and interfaces that come out of entanglements sustained over time" (p. 95). It is possible moreover to argue that multilinguals do not *need* translation:

> …multilingualism is translation's mother but also its definitive other: the multilingual person is not someone who translates constantly from one language (or cultural system) into another, though this is something multilinguals are sometimes able to do. But to be multilingual is, above all, to be one for whom translation is unnecessary because one lives in more than one language (Pratt, 2009, p. 96; also see Pratt, 2002).

Multilinguals may not necessitate translation, nor practice it regularly, yet we should not overlook the insights that they (and their instructors) may gain from conscious reflection on meaning and its rendering across multiple languages. Firstly, discussions arising from the process of translation can elucidate the linguistic and cultural perspectives held by students and instructors alike. Translation tasks need not be solitary endeavors but instead "may have particularly good potential to foster interaction" in language learning (Källkvist, 2013, p. 115; also see Allford, 1999; Cook, 2007, 2010; Cunico, 2004; Klapper, 2006; Witte et al., 2009). Engagement in translation as a collective, dialogic process of reflection and negotiation can enable instructors to perceive dimensions of their students' linguistic and cultural experience that may otherwise remain undisclosed (McLaughlin, 2012). Instructors may become aware of erroneous assumptions that they previously held about their students' linguistic and cultural identity when language instruction was confined to the target language. Additionally, by sharing in a process of reflexive translation, instructors can draw students' attention to their expressive possibilities in different languages along with the effects produced by their linguistic choices (McLaughlin, 2012; also see Kramsch & Huffmaster, 2008). Instructional approaches that aim to "[increase] the possible meanings available to those we teach" have been characterized as a form of translingual activism (Pennycook, 2008, p. 44). Translation as a form of communicative pedagogy can serve as a resource for translingual activism by challenging the standard language ideology and the monolingual classroom norm.

Kramsch and Huffmaster (2015) argue that translation holds "the political promise of diversity" for foreign language learners (Kramsch & Huffmaster, 2008). Through empirical research, this contribution identifies this same promise in the practice of translation by multilingual minority learners in officially monolingual settings. Although classroom translation in such contexts is not without pedagogical challenges, it presents opportunities to subject "standard language" texts to metalinguistic reflections and revision (i.e., through the authorship of translations in other linguistic varieties) by students whose voices are all too often dismissed as non-normative. By claiming authorship—reading or rendering a text in their own words and own language varieties—multilingual students can take up Flores and Rosa's (2015) call to counter the discourses that frame them as linguistically defective. In order for their linguistic competence—and normativity—to be fully realized, however, instructors will need to recognize their students as experts in their linguistic varieties, which may be completely foreign to the former. This move requires significant vulnerability on the part of instructors, vulnerability that is all too familiar to the multilingual students who enter their traditionally monolingual classrooms.

CASE STUDY: GITAN STUDENTS IN PERPIGNAN, FRANCE

The data analyzed in this article is drawn from a larger ethnographic project (Linares, 2020), carried out over eleven months, in summer 2016 and during the 2017-2018 academic year. Through 307 hours of in-class observation across four grade levels (three at a focal elementary school and one at a focal middle school), the study investigated the process whereby Gitan students were socialized to and challenged classroom language practices and ideologies. The larger investigation was guided by an interest in how

students and their instructors understood language and its relationship to identity and in how instructors sought to instill linguistic and cultural norms through language lessons. When first entering the focal classrooms, the questions that I asked were informed by my training in language and identity, multilingualism, and language ideologies. With time, the questions that I explored were refined through sustained documentation of language ideologies in the classroom. The focus of the present article was inspired by the singularity of a classroom activity involving translation that differed significantly from all other observed coursework, which had been heavily dependent on structured worksheets.

The translation activity described in this contribution was carried out in a "GES" ("Groupe d'enseignement spécifique") [specific education group] French language course at the middle school focal site, the Collège Jean Moulin. The GES program, unique to this middle school, is designed for students performing below grade level. The program sequence (Classes 1-4, with 4 being most advanced) does not correspond to the mainstream middle school grade-level sequence, and it is entirely possible for a student to remain in the same level for the entirety of their time at the middle school. With only a handful of exceptions, all students in the GES program self-identify as Gitans, the city's Iberian-origin Roma population.[2] Although once nomadic, the Gitans have resided in Perpignan for centuries. Even so, they continue to be regarded as unintegrated in the cultural landscape, characterized within the non-Gitan French population as sedentary travelers ("les gens du voyage sédentaires"). The existence of a de facto "Gitan" program within the middle school (some Gitan students refer to their coursework as "les classes gitanes" [Gitan classes]) is symptomatic of an existence at the margins, an ironic reality in light of the Gitan community's physical presence in the historic city center. When I described the GES program to French researchers from outside of Perpignan, it was deemed anti-republican (against the principle of "égalité" [equality]), seemingly running contrary to values promoted by the national education system. Within the school, there was apparent resignation that no other configurations for Gitan students' schooling had proven effective; Gitan absenteeism remained rampant and was predicted to only become more extreme should the program be eliminated. Since the local elementary school in the heart of the Gitan community exclusively serves Gitan students, the middle school represents the first instance of co-schooling with non-Gitan French students, referred to as "Payos" within the community.[3] The existence of a separate "Gitan" program was regarded by school administrators as a means to convince some Gitan families to allow their children to continue their studies at the middle school—and to convince Payo parents not to enroll their children elsewhere.

The translation-based activity examined in this article was implemented, beginning in February 2018, in a French language course exclusively attended by Gitan students in the GES Class 4 cohort. Just prior to its implementation, the two co-instructors informed me that they had designed an experimental translation activity, a departure from the curriculum's habitual emphasis on worksheets for French grammar and vocabulary development. They would ask students to produce a French translation of a comic book, *El Viatge d'en Llobató* [*Llobato's Trip*], a text that was set in their geographical region, Languedoc-Roussillon, and written in the regional variety of Catalan, Roussillon Catalan, distinct from Gitan. The article draws on this data to examine the following questions:

(1) What challenges and pedagogical opportunities did this activity pose to multilingual minority students and their instructors?
(2) How can the complexities raised by the translation activity inform our approach to translation-based pedagogy in K-12 and higher education settings?

CHALLENGES OF CLASSROOM TRANSLATION

As with all classroom exercises, the implementation of translation-based activities is shaped by complexities specific to the language-learning context. The analysis will focus on two salient challenges that became apparent in the Perpignan classroom when students were presented the *Llobató* text and called on to produce a French translation: students' complex relationship to the language of the source text and instructors' role as classroom gatekeepers to students' L1 and related linguistic varieties. These are nonnegligible considerations for the introduction of translation in all classrooms of minority learners. While the analysis is rooted in a middle school educational context, the examples are discussed for their relevance within and beyond the K-12 setting.

Linguistic Cousins in French Class: Students' Complicated Relationship to "Catalan"

As students first leafed through their copy of *Llobató*, they speculated about the identity of the language contained within its pages. Instructors had not explicitly informed them that the text was written in Roussillon Catalan, and hypotheses swirled before they could do so. It was precisely because the Gitan students found familiarity within the language, a certain "Gitanness," that they likely rejected its identity as "Catalan," a label that the majority of them did not claim. At the same time, the written medium added a layer of alterity to the text, making it difficult to consider it fully "Gitan"; apart from text messaging and communication on social media, students' L1 variety has been found to be oral. While "Gitan" constitutes a Catalan variety from a strictly formal linguistic perspective, a strong association between language practices and identity within the community habitually prevents "Gitan" and "Catalan" from being understood synonymously in this context (for a more detailed discussion, see Linares, 2020, chapter 3). The interrelation between language and identity was foregrounded in one student's comment that the language of the comic was not her: "ça c'est catalan, c'est pas moi" [that there is Catalan, it's not me]. The initial reception of the text provoked acknowledgement of familiarity and simultaneous dissociation from "Catalan," as illustrated in Excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1. "Qu'est-ce que c'est cette langue?" [What is this language here?][4]

Speaker	Line	French	English
*Sabine:[5]		Et là la bande dessinée (2.0)	And the comic strip there (2.0)
Éva:		Ça parle espagnol non ?	It speaks Spanish right?
Student:		Catalan.	Catalan.
*Sabine:		**Alors. Justement.** ((une discussion sans rapport s'ensuit: les étudiants sont priés d'enlever leur manteau et de préparer leur matériel))	**Yes. Exactly.** ((unrelated discussion ensues: the students are asked to take off their coats and prepare their supplies for class))
*Sabine:	5	Alors tu disais Dorothy: Qu'est-ce que c'est ce document ? Je disais c'est une ?	So Dorothy you were saying: What is this document? I was saying it's a ?
Samantha:		Nous on est gitanes.	We are Gitans (f.).
*Sabine:		BD (.) **Bande dessinée.** D'accord. Et qui est-ce qui a dit ? C'est écrit (.) en espagnol.	Comic (.) **Comic strip.** OK. And who was it that said? It's written (.) in Spanish.
Éva:	10	Moi j'ai dit.	Me I said that.

*Sabine:		C'est toi Éva eh ? (2.0) C'est pas tout à fait de l'espagnol (2.0) Qu'est-ce que c'est cette langue ?	It's you Éva yeah? (2.0) It's not exactly Spanish (2.0) What is this language here?
Tony:		[Du mexicain.	[Mexican.
Student:	15	[De l'Italie.	[From Italy.
*Sabine:		Du mexicain. Non.	No. Not Mexican.
*Coralie:		((en riant)) De l'Italie.	((laughing)) From Italy.
*Sabine:		De l'italien. Non. (2.0) Une langue [qu'on parle ici	Italian. No. (2.0) It's a language [that's spoken here
Dorothy:	20	[gitan	[Gitan
*Coralie:		[Ah:::::	[Ah:::::
Amatsia:		catalan	Catalan
*Sabine:		Le catalan. Très bien Amatsia.	Catalan. Very good Amatsia.
Dorothy:		Mais on ne parle pas catalan.	But we don't speak Catalan.
		((de la conversation indistincte parmi les élèves))	((indistinct conversation among students))
*Sabine:	25	Est-ce qu'il y en a dans la classe qui parle catalan ?	Are there students in the class who speak Catalan?
Student:		[Eh non.	[Uh no.
Student:		[Moi non.	[Not me.
Student:		[Beh non.	[Uhm no.
		(2.0)	(2.0)
Éva:	30	((très doucement, à mi-voix)) Eh tous.	((very quietly, under breath)) Well everyone.
*Sabine:		**Tous ?**	**Everyone?**
Samantha:		((en pointant le doigt sur la BD)) **Ça parle pas catalan ça.** (2.0) C'est pas catalan ça.=	((pointing to the comic)) **This thing doesn't speak Catalan.** (2.0) This thing isn't Catalan.=
*Sabine:		=Si=	=Yes it is=
Samantha:	35	=Non	=No
Dorothy:		C'est **gitan.**	It's **Gitan.**
Samantha:		Nous on parle gitan. Mais ça c'est pas catalan.	We speak Gitan. But that's not Catalan.
*Sabine:		Ça ?	That?
Samantha:		((apparemment indignée)) Oui.	((seemingly indignant)) Oui.

Excerpt 1, and the longitudinal documentation of which it is a part, lends strong support to Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) contention that "[i]dentity is the social positioning of self and other" (p. 586). Here, the Catalan other against which students articulate their identity is represented by the text. Opposition between Catalan and Gitan emerges early on in the discussion when Samantha responds to a classmate's assertion and instructor's affirmation that the text in question is written in Catalan (l. 7). Although it is the language of the comic that is under consideration, Samantha approaches the debate by asserting the students' shared identity: "Nous on est gitanes" [We are Gitans (f.)]. The on-going deliberation about the language of the text that ensues foregrounds *identities* and *origins*, this time on a national scale (e.g., du mexicain, de l'Italie). The instructor's attribution of a local origin to the language of the text seemingly prompts Dorothy to propose Gitan (ll. 19-20). That the student who concedes a collective Catalan identity does so under her breath signals an effort to minimize dissent from her peers (ll. 30-31). As much as Éva's classmates reject the label "Catalan," they find familiarity in the

xeroxed comic vignettes on their desks. Their ability to understand the text leads them to deny that it could be written in Catalan (l. 7. l. 37)—a language that they are decidedly not. This tension between being and speaking represents an intersection central to the field of raciolinguistics, which explores how ideologies of language raise larger questions of belonging (Rosa, 2016). The emotionally charged negotiations around identity of self and other produced by the introduction of the text make the prospect of translation appear doomed from the start. How can the students translate a text whose very reception is fraught with debate even before its content is considered?

This question is of relevance not only in K-12 schools but in higher education settings, in both L2 and heritage language courses. In L2 contexts, students may experience emotionally charged reactions to texts and their translation. Some research involving university L2 world language learners has found a negative relationship between L2 reading comprehension and reading anxiety (Sellers, 2000; Young, 2000). Students' pre-conceptions about the difficulty of an author's work could lead them to consider the task of translation, or comprehension alone, beyond their ability. Before even examining an excerpt of a given text, the mention of Victor Hugo, Jean-Paul Sartre, or François René de Chateaubriand could trigger an affective filter, the elicitation of a negative response to the prospect of translation. In the case of heritage language courses, students could perceive differing affective and linguistic relatability to the source author, which could in turn influence the accessibility that they find as translators of the original.

In navigating other languages and varieties with which they do not identify, students may participate in more or less covert collaboration with their peers, as was the case for Gitan students in the larger study of which this data is part (Linares, 2020). Throughout the day, students were not infrequently overheard translating instructions into Gitan for their peers, explaining to their classmates why their work required modifications, and supplying one another with answers. Previous research has recognized how collaborative interaction in students' L1 can offer scaffolded support, through comprehension checks and comparisons of production (Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Cook, 2001). Zhang's (2018) research on collaborative writing in EFL settings suggests that "L1 interaction may enable learners to produce texts of higher complexity" and "may also have the potential to lead to higher linguistic accuracy in the co-constructed essays" (p. 9). Perhaps more importantly, however, beyond linguistic support, translation as a collaborative endeavor can bolster solidarity among minority students as readers and translators equipped with the multilingual resources to make sense of a source text, if only in spite of themselves.

The strong reaction to the Catalan text in the present case study complicates the notion that target language proficiency (in this case, French) can be facilitated by the involvement of students' linguistic background in the classroom. Research has shown that students' literacy skills in the language of schooling "are strongly related to the extent of development of L1 literacy skills" (Cummins, 1981, p. 44). Translation exercises such as this, particularly when introduced systematically and beginning at an early age, hold the potential to support students' linguistic development globally. However, when learners do not recognize texts as representative of their L1, as was the case here, we observe how identity can complicate implementation. The reception of the *Llobató* comic observed in the Perpignan GES class serves as a reminder that L1-L2 relationships exist in the sociocultural contexts of those who employ them (Cummins, 1981, p. 32). Doran (2007) describes how French young people from the banlieues mobilize "alterative French" to index "alternative identities." She observes that language offers marginalized youth a means to challenge the "ethnic cleansing" of dominant culture (p. 503). Gitan students' insistence on their unique sociolinguistic identity constitutes such a challenge, albeit in a different French context. The students persist in emphasizing difference between Gitan and Catalan even as it becomes evident that they are able to comprehend the comic. In a seeming effort to lead students to concede comprehension, the instructors shift the discussion away from the text at hand to inquire about their experience communicating with Catalan speakers outside of France. When students

eventually acknowledge that they do understand "Catalan," they position it in relation to Gitan. This move is significant as Gitan is situated as the norm against which another linguistic variety is defined. Catalan is deemed Gitan's cousin, a metaphor that highlights familiarity but maintains distinctiveness.

Excerpt 2. "C'est le cousin du gitan" [It's Gitan's cousin]

Speaker	Line	French	English
*Coralie:		Quand tu vas- si tu vas à Figueres (.) ou si tu vas de l'autre côté de la frontière=	When you (s.) go- if you go to Figueres[6] (.) or if you go to the other side of the border=
Samantha:	5	=Mais je comprends pas ce qu'ils disent.	=But I don't understand what they say.
Dorothy:		Non. À Figueres ils parlent espagnol.	No. In Figueres they speak Spanish.
*Coralie:		Y en a qui parlent espagnol. Mais si on te parle en catalan **tu comprends pas?!**	There are people who speak Spanish. But if someone speaks to you in Catalan **you don't understand?!**
Samantha:	10	Non.	No.
Dorothy:		Ils parlent pas (.) **Je sais pas comment dire.**	They don't speak (.) **I don't know how to explain.**
Samantha:		**OUI. C'est vrai on comprend**	**YES. It's true we understand**
*Coralie:		**Ah.**	**Ah.**
Samantha:	15	**Mais c'est pas la même langue.**	**But it's not the same language.**
*Coralie:		On est [d'accord	We [agree on that
*Sabine:		[**Oh mais on n'a pas dit que c'était la même langue. C'est une langue différente.**	[**Oh but we didn't say that it was the same language. It's a different language.**
*Coralie:	20	Ouais. Ouais. (.) Ouais.	Yeah. Yeah. (.) Yeah.
*Sabine:		Mais **par contre vous pouvez comprendre.**	But **on the other hand you can understand.**
Samantha:		C'est le cousin du gitan=	It's Gitan's cousin=
*Coralie:		=**Voilà.**	=**That's it.**
Students:	25	((riant))	((laughing))
*Sabine:		C'est le cousin germain (.) Cousin germain ouais voilà. Cousin germain.	It's the first cousin (.) First cousin yeah that's it. First cousin.
*Coralie:		((à Samantha)) Mais l'autre va te comprendre.	((to Samantha)) But the other person will understand you.

As evidenced by Excerpt 2, students' admission that they can in fact understand Catalan is voiced with an emphatic and significant caveat—it is not them. The negotiation of Gitan *versus* Catalan or Gitan *as* a form of Catalan between students and instructors illustrates Weedon's (1987) assertion that "[a]s individuals we are not the mere objects of language but the sites of discursive struggle" (p. 106). While we would expect linguistic proximity between students' L1 and the closely related variety of Catalan to facilitate comprehension—the central premise of the intercomprehension paradigm has been that linguistic similarities between languages and linguistic varieties aid understanding (Escudé & Janin, 2010, p. 9)—we may also wonder whether varieties are, in some contexts, too close for comfort. Students' claims to an identity defined in opposition to the comic highlight the need to account for a desire (or lack thereof) for intercomprehension and associated perceptions of what I term *linguistic relatability* (Linares, 2020). Relatability captures the extent to which individuals identify (or not) with a

given linguistic variety. Without addressing the familiarity (or foreignness) that students perceive in a text, instructors may mistakenly take comprehension—and a desire for comprehension—for granted.

Tensions surrounding linguistic relatability are not unique to language lessons in K-12 classes attended by minority learners. The presumed goal of "heritage language learning is to build academic language proficiency in one's 'native language.' These programs seek to value the skills students bring to the classroom while expanding their 'academic' language repertoires in their 'native' language" (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 159). Heritage language courses offered in institutions of higher education suggest that intercomprehension and the recognition of alternative linguistic forms as legitimate may constitute a conscious choice rather than a reality to be taken for granted. Researchers in raciolinguistics have recognized how questions of belonging are at stake in the heritage language classroom and how discourses on perceived "nonstandardized practices can in fact racialize populations by framing them as incapable of producing any legitimate language" (Rosa, 2016, p. 163). Rather than focus on linguistic forms and their comprehensibility, perceived appropriateness, or legitimacy, Flores and Rosa (2015) encourage attention to the positionality of students and instructors:

> By approaching heritage language learning with the understanding that the social positions of different language users, rather than simply their linguistic repertoires, impact how their linguistic practices are heard, we can move beyond the idea that establishing the legitimacy of all linguistic practices will somehow lead to the eradication of linguistic stigmatization. This involves shifting the focus of both research and practice in language education from analyzing linguistic forms to analyzing positions of enunciation and reception […] We should seek to understand the perspectives from which such forms of purity and impurity are constructed and perceived rather than focusing on the forms themselves. (p. 162)

The present case study as well as contexts of heritage language instruction reinforce the centrality of identity in the evaluations of linguistic forms—and translators—as more or less legitimate.

Introducing Not-so-Kissing Cousins in the Language Classroom

The pedagogical decision to introduce Catalan at moments in the curriculum was framed as an effort to present students with "another language" in quotes (Linares, 2020, p. 91), a classroom-sanctioned variety of their L1. Students and instructors could agree that Catalan and Gitan were "très proche" [very close], however sustained observation raised another question: Were they too close for comfort? That is, was it precisely the high degree of linguistic similarities that complicated the translation activity, provoking students' emotionally charged assertions of difference?

Based on observed classroom interactions and recurrent tension surrounding the identity of Gitan students' L1 and its relationship to Catalan, we may also question whether all learners wish for their language—or its institutionalized cousin—to be used in the classroom. Drawing on his critical ethnography of black French-speaking immigrant and refugee continental African youth in Canada, Ibrahim (1999) argues that *only* an ESL pedagogy that draws on students' linguistic identity is likely to succeed (pp. 252-253). However, while he sees the potential benefit of recognition and incorporation of youth language, one could argue that such efforts by those with institutional authority over learners may be equally, if not more, likely to fail. For example, Doran (2007) observes how "le français des jeunes de banlieue" is mobilized to index (or, indeed, construct) identities "in ways that challenge traditional republican conceptions of what it means to speak, and to be, French" (p. 498). In most cases, it is questionable that French youth from the banlieue would view their instructor as a legitimate speaker or learner of their own variety of French (or other languages in their repertoire), as an

individual with the authority to use *le français de banlieue* within an institutional space or claim to understand it. Such a move would entail institutionalizing their language and identity, which is constructed in opposition to the standard of the classroom, predicated upon distance, and enacted at the margins.

In Perpignan, specifically, Baptiste et al. (2003) documented how efforts by instructors to bring Gitan students' language into the classroom had previously been met with resistance. They recount that, in 1988, a group of school instructors decided to write down the words of a song originating from a Gitan family and provide students with copies of it. The reception was not nearly as positive as the well-intentioned instructors had hoped:

> Après en avoir distribué le texte aux élèves, une mère gitane déclara que la langue en question était du catalan et non du gitan. Un texte écrit par des Payos ne pouvait pas être qualifié de gitan! La division culturelle entre les deux sociétés n'autorisait pas cette ingérence linguistique. (p. 54)
>
> [After having distributed the text to the students, a Gitan mother declared that the language in question was Catalan and not Gitan. A text written by Payos could not be labeled as Gitan! The cultural division between the two societies did not authorize this linguistic intervention.]

Baptiste et al. suggest that the cultural distinction enacted by members of the community between Gitans and Payos would preclude the use of students' language in the classroom, unless, perhaps, their instructor were Gitan. My own ethnographic research in the Gitan community of Perpignan reinforced this observation. Although I arrived with the intention of speaking to the children in Catalan in an effort to position myself as an ally, students often appeared not to understand me. When I inquired about this, a Gitan assistant at an afterschool program explained that, for the most part, this was not a question of comprehension or a lack thereof; instead, the children did not *want* to understand me and feigned confusion. At most, they sometimes expressed shock that I was speaking Catalan, but this was always voiced in French, possibly to enact an additional layer of distance: "Tu parles gitan?" [You speak Gitan?] or somewhat more often "Tu parles catalan, toi?" [You speak Catalan?]. Eugeni Casanova, a Catalan journalist who has studied the Catalanophone Gitan presence in France for over ten years, recognizes that Gitan constitutes a secret language within the community: "Per a ells, parlar català és parlar gitano. És la seva llengua secreta, la del clan" [For them, speaking Catalan is speaking Gitan. It is their secret language, that of the clan] (Carreras et al., 2017). While intercomprehension has been framed as an empowering resource that enables comprehension across related varieties, the French instructors' claim to understand Gitan students' L1 during the introduction of the translation activity was met with palpable resistance. The initial reception of the text highlights how an instructor's decision to formally introduce students' language—or its cousin—into classroom instruction can elicit opposition and may, at least initially, prove more alienating than empowering.

The complex relationship to language varieties and instructors' role in initiating translation as documented in the middle school case study are encountered in higher education settings. The use of translation in foreign language courses raises questions of equity: the selection of a particular text from a particular context will necessarily be more or less accessible to different members of the class, who will have differing degrees of prior knowledge on which to draw. For instance, the translation of a travel narrative centered on a region of France will privilege those who have read or visited the area in question, just as the production of a translation of Foucault's theory will favor those who are familiar with his work in translation. In contexts of heritage language courses offered at some universities, an instructor's selection of a source text written in a particular linguistic variety will be perceived as more or less relatable by students as a function of their linguistic identity. As Panzarella and Sinibaldi (2018) observe, "the

choice of texts can provide students with an opportunity for problematizing the boundaries between languages and stimulating critical reflection on issues of national identity and belonging" (p. 72). Students' reaction to the source text could complicate the process of translation: a Latinx student asked to translate a text written by an author from Spain could be repelled by more than grammatical differences, such as the pronominal use of *vosotros* (which is still used in Latin American Spanish in limited contexts to enact "communicative difference," Bertolotti, 2020, p. 292); the student could find less relatability in the cultural perspectives of the author. Even in cases where students can recognize their identity in source texts, they may resist an instructor's decision to bring these texts into the classroom, as was observed in the case study. The ethnographic data from the present project demonstrate that such obstacles are nonnegligible considerations for the language classroom.

THE PROMISE OF CLASSROOM TRANSLATION

It was in recognizing students' unique linguistic identity that translation's potential became apparent. When instructors invited students to reimagine the Catalan original in Gitan and regarded them as authorities on their linguistic variety, asking them to propose words or phrases in their L1, translation was transformed into a means for metalinguistic reflection and language awareness. Students who were most frequently positioned within the K-12 system as non-normative speakers of French and Catalan were regarded as multilinguals with a capacity to author alternative versions of a text.

Imagining Authorship in Gitan, à la Gitane

One student's declaration that the text in question *was not her* can likely be explained by two primary factors: (1) the Gitan variety spoken by the students is exclusively oral, save the exception of code-switching in text messaging, and (2) the text contained unfamiliar vocabulary and cultural references. That the text was distributed to students by their Payo instructors could constitute an additional explanation, in light of the aforementioned anecdote (Baptiste et al., 2003). Students expressed a desire for a Gitan version of the text, which raised questions about authorship (Excerpt 3).

Excerpt 3. "On a la version gitane. La version française. Et catalane." [We have the Gitan version. The French version. And Catalan one.]

Speaker	Line	French	English
Samantha:	5	… Il faut me donner une liste **gitane. Madame XX ça c'est catalan c'est pas moi.** (.) Et si c'est gitan euh on on trouve de suite. Mais là on comprend pas tout.	… I need a **Gitan** list. **Ma'am XX that there's Catalan it's not me.** (.) And if it's [in] Gitan uh we we can figure it out right away. But we don't understand anything in this text.
*Sabine:		Et c'est bien. On cherche.	And that's good. We'll look.
Samantha:		((en gémissant)) Ah ben non. C'est bien une autre langue ( )=	((whining)) Uh no way. It's really a different language ( )=
*Coralie:	10	=**Eh oui ben regarde. On n'a pas trouvé.**	=**Uh yes well look. We didn't find [one].**
*Sabine:		Tu sais que ça- on n'a pas trouvé **écrit** ?	Well you see- we didn't find a **written** one?
*Coralie:		Ça n'ex- on n'a pas trouvé-	It doesn't ex- we didn't find-
*Sabine:	15	Tu connais toi un livre écrit ? Tu connais un livre écrit en gitan ? (.) qui	Do you know of a written book? Do you know of a book written in Gitan?

		pourrait être traduit en **<u>français</u>** ? (.) Tu en connais toi ?	(.) that could be translated into **<u>French</u>**? (.) Do you know of one?
Dorothy:		((sur un ton vexé)) Tu peux l'écrire toi.	((in a huffy tone)) You can write it.
*Coralie:	20	Mais on parle pas [gitan	But we don't speak [Gitan
*Sabine:		[Et moi je ne parle pas moi	[And I don't speak it
Samantha:		**<u>Ben on écrit.</u>** Tu- on peut imprimer après.	**<u>Well we will write [one].</u>** You- we can print [it] afterwards.
Dorothy:	25	**<u>C'est ça.</u>** Nous on écrit une histoire en gitan.	**<u>Exactly.</u>** We will write a story in Gitan.
*Sabine:		Et mais. Ça là. Ce même texte. L'histoire. Tu la mets en français là.	OK but. What's written. This same text. The story. You'll turn it into French.
Dorothy:		Oui.	Yes.
*Sabine:	30	Tu peux très bien. **<u>Toi.</u>** le faire- on peut le copier (.) en gitan (.) On peut faire. On a la version gitane. La version française. Et catalane.	You're very capable. **<u>You.</u>** (s.) of doing it- we can copy it (.) in Gitan (.) We can make. We'll have the Gitan version. The French version. And the Catalan one.
Samantha:		Ah mais je peux pas faire la version en gitane.	Oh but I can't do the Gitan version.
*Sabine:	35	Mais si. Parce que tu comprends le français. Tu sais très bien le dire en gitan.	Sure you can. Since you understand French. You know perfectly well how to say it in Gitan.

When Samantha asserts that students cannot understand *everything* written in the comic (suggesting that they can, in fact, understand some or many aspects of it), an instructor frames partial comprehension positively: "Et c'est bien. On cherche" (l. 6). That both instructors hedge when responding to students' request for Gitan texts (ll. 11-13) and inquire about possible recommendations signals an effort to avoid denying the existence of written works in students' L1. The instructor contradicts Samantha's claim that she is incapable of producing a Gitan version by observing that the student knows very well how to *say* the text in Gitan. This comment suggests the instructor's awareness of the conventional orality of textual production in the Gitan community.

The clearest articulation of the oral quality of literacy in Gitan from my fieldwork came from an observation at the focal elementary school. A third-grade student described her bedtime routine to me, which involved story time with her father:

> Mon père invente des histoires. Il nous- et ( ) les lire (.) Par exemple Le Petit Chaperon Rouge. Le Petit Capuchon il le lit. Non ? Mais en gitan. Mais il ne fait pas son li::vre. Il le lit avec son esprit ((elle bouge sa main droite dans un grand mouvement comme si elle traçait son œsophage jusqu'à sa bouche))
>
> [We invent. My dad invents stories. He- ( ) and reads them to us (.) For example Little Red Riding Hood. He reads Little Red Riding Hood. You know? But in Gitan. But he doesn't make his boo::k. He reads it with his spirit ((she moves her right hand upwards in a sweeping motion, as if tracing her esophagus up to her mouth))]

That these middle school instructors invited students to orally re-write *El Llobató* indicates a more flexible stance towards literacy than observed in other classrooms. For instance, an art instructor frequently referred to Gitan students as "malheureux" [poor souls], citing their (from her perspective) depravation from literacy. Remarking that all children love to be read stories to fall asleep, the art instructor in question presented herself as a literacy savoir: "[C]omme vous avez raté les petites histoires (.) Je me dis que c'est bien d'en raconter" [Since you missed out on short stories (.) I figure it's good to tell (you) some].[7]

In contrast, Coralie and Sabine positioned the students as capable authors and prompted them to orally reproduce *El Llobató* in Gitan (Excerpt 4). They encouraged the students to undertake a multimodal translation into their L1 by asking them how they would *say* the text in Gitan.

Excerpt 4. "Ce que vous avez là écrit en français comment vous diriez en gitan? " [How would you say in Gitan what you (pl.) have written there in French?]

Speaker	Line	Original	Translation
*Coralie:		**<u>Et ben vous l'avez écrit en français.</u>** (.) Ce que vous avez là écrit en français comment vous diriez en gitan ?	**<u>OK well you have it written in French.</u>** (.) How would you say in Gitan what you (pl.) have written there in French?
*Sabine:	5	Amatsia. Amatsia. Dis-moi toi. Les quatre amis sont contents.	Amatsia. Amatsia. You tell me. The four friends are happy.
Amatsia:		*Els quatre companyes són contents.*	*The four friends are happy.*
Tony:		C'est quoi ?[8]	What's that?
*Coralie:		Ouais.	Yeah.
*Sabine:	10	D'accord:: Le loup chante devant sa grotte.	OK:: The wolf sings in front of his cave.
Dorothy et Amatsia:		*El lloup canta davant seua grotte.*	*The wolf sings in front of his cave.*
Dorothy:		*Davant seua casa.*	*In front of his house.*
Amatsia:		*No. Seua grotte.*	*No. His cave.*
*Sabine:	15	D'accord. Et devant ? C'est maison ça casa.	OK and in front of? *Casa* means house.
*Coralie:		Ouais. Ouais mais ouais ils [les élèves] auraient pas dit grotte.[9]	Yeah. Yeah but yeah they [the students] wouldn't have come up with the word for cave.
*Sabine:	20	Et et comment vous dites euh::: le loup (.) le renard (.) et le lièvre- et le lapin en gros. Le loup le renard et le lapin euh dansent ?	And and how do you (pl.) say uh::: the wolf (.) the fox (.) and the hare- or the rabbit generally speaking. The wolf the fox and the rabbit uh dance?
All students except Tony:		*El lloup el renard i el llapín ballen.*	*The wolf the fox and the rabbit dance.*

As illustrated by Excerpt 4, despite their initial resistance, students revealed an ability to seamlessly move from a written to an oral medium, from one language to another. They evinced a linguistic agility that they regularly practice in their daily lives, but which is negatively received during most classroom instruction. The proposals of vocabulary in lines 11-12 highlight how the negotiation of choices (not limited to vocabulary – how to render cultural references, proper names, style, etc.) is central to the process of translation. The Gitan students, experts in their L1 variety, are reflecting on the appropriate

terminology with which to render the original. From a research perspective, this interaction additionally illustrates how understandings of translation can involve different modes of communication (e.g., gesture, art, music, spoken language, etc.) in combination (Adami, 2016; Boria et al., 2020; Dicerto, 2018).

The prospect of a Gitan translation was abandoned after this initial class session, with subsequent sessions occasionally involving the production of a French translation.[10] If only realized in a piecemeal way, however, the notion of a Gitan version revealed a potential of translation to support minority students' multilingual authorship. The Gitan students who undertook this exercise did not view themselves as multilingual authors—let alone multilinguals.[11] Activities such as this could, however, be mobilized to allow students to think more critically about their multilingual repertoire—considering not only how to render a particular word or turn of phrase but reflecting on a culturally appropriate medium for additional translations. As Kern (2015) has argued, the medium of communication is not insignificant but shapes discourse and the impressions that it conveys (also see Kern & Linares, 2018). While his observations are informed in part by online multimodal interactions involving foreign language learners, they are no less relevant to the process of translation. Students quickly abandoned the prospect of a Gitan translation precisely because the medium necessitated by a Gitan translation was not sanctioned within the classroom. This observation carries significance for heritage language instruction in higher education: students who may not have developed written literacy practices in the language in question can be encouraged to produce translations in oral or multimodal mediums. In contrast, restricted by her instructors' expectation for a written translation, the seemingly frustrated Gitan student scratched out her written attempt at a Gitan version, declaring: "On sait écrire mais dans un téléphone" [We know how to write but on a (cell)phone]. Text messaging offers a medium in which students can draw on the entirety of their resources as multilinguals to compose messages that may defy classroom norms but fully enable communication. If, as students indicate, it is only possible (i.e., culturally appropriate) to write in Gitan on a cellphone, they could be permitted to use one to compose the full text, or selected vignettes. Alternatively, the comic could be authored orally, and possibly performed as a Gitan rendition of the source text.[12] Translation can afford multilingual students opportunities to author texts with an eye to linguistic and cultural authenticity. Minority students in particular may take on the role of linguistic experts and authors for the very first time at school and come to understand their L1—and their unique multilingual identities and linguistic agility—as valuable (and valued) within the classroom. In the process, students and their instructors can become more aware of variation across languages, working to displace the notion of a single norm.

Increasing Awareness of Difference

The mere inclusion of translation in language pedagogy transforms the classroom into a less monolingual instructional space in which contact between languages becomes the agenda rather than the diversion. Translation encourages attention to difference by compelling multilingual students to reflect on their movement between languages and the cultures in which they are embedded. Unsurprisingly, it has been found to bolster reading comprehension "because it requires students to understand more details in the paragraphs they are translating and to simultaneously apply their mother tongue" (Lee, 2013, p. 16; also see Gnutzmann, 2009; Waddington, 2020). The additional production of a translation in their L1 variety requires students to attend more closely to the original text. Students can be called upon to explain differences that they notice in multiple versions of a single text and to justify their choices as translators. Although such metalinguistic reflection was not extensively realized in the classroom activity described in this article, students' engagement with the

activity revealed how translation can be mobilized to foster language awareness beginning in lower grade levels.

Through their reading and translation of *El Viatge d'en Llobató*, the Gitan students were confronted with other words and other worlds (Kern, 2000)—language and cultural references drawn from a context that was unfamiliar to them. Consequent moments of incomprehension were framed as expected and unremarkable by the course instructors. One of the focal instructors, herself a Catalan heritage speaker, provided learners with glosses when they encountered new vocabulary, as seen in Excerpt 5.

Excerpt 5. "Pugeu ? (3.0) Pugeu. Montez" [Pugeu? (3.0) Pugeu. Climb up]

*Coralie:		((lisant)) *Aquí és el camí de Sant Jaume.*	((reading)) *Here is the Saint James Path.*
Éva:		Ici c'est le chemin de Saint Jaume.	Here is the Saint James Path.
*Coralie:		Voilà. ((lisant)) *Pugeu a Cerdanya amb el Tren Groc.*	That's it. ((reading)) *Climb up to Cerdanya on the Yellow Train.*
Éva:	5	Euh	Uh
*Coralie:		*Pugeu ?* (3.0) *Pugeu.* Montez.	*Pugeu?* (3.0) *Pugeu*. Climb up.
Éva:		(2.0) Ah::: D'accord.	(2.0) Ah::: OK.
*Coralie:		*Pugeu*. (3.0) Montez en Espagne avec le petit train (2.0) jaune. D'accord ?	*Pugeu*. (3.0) Climb up to Spain with the little (2.0) yellow train. OK?
	10	Eh ? Il dit montez.	Yeah? He says climb up.
Éva:		(4.0) C'est compliqué.	(4.0) It's complicated.

In Excerpt 5, the instructor interprets the student's hesitation as unfamiliarity with the verb form *pugeu* in Catalan. Éva's response ("Ah::: D'accord.") communicates that the verb had previously impeded her understanding of the line in question. Another extended pause (l. 8) prompts the instructor to translate the remainder of the sentence for the student, who observes the difficulty posed by the text. The instructor proceeds to elucidate the unfamiliar cultural reference to the little yellow train (the *Lignes de Cerdagne*), which cuts across the Languedoc-Roussillon region of Northern Catalonia.

Students were not only presented with linguistic and cultural difference through this translation exercise; they were also invited to contribute variation. For example, students' language was framed as different but valid in its own right when instructors prompted them to offer synonyms to unfamiliar words. This is seen in Excerpt 6 when Éva struggles to understand the meaning of *riu* [river].

Excerpt 6. "Comment tu dirais toi ?" [How would you (s.) say?]

Éva:		((lisant)) *Sí. Seguiu* [text reads *segueix*] *el riu que se diu la Roma.*	((reading)) *Yes. Follow* [text reads *segueix*, the second-person singular, not plural, form] *the river that is called the Roma.*
*Coralie:		Voilà. Oui. Alors. S*egueix el riu que se diu la Roma.*	That's it. Yes. So. *Follow the river that is called the Roma.*
Éva:	5	(2.0) *Seguiu.*	(2.0) *Seguiu.*
*Coralie:		Alors qu'est-ce que c'est qu'un *riu* ?	So what is a *riu*?
Éva:		(2.0) C'est un mot hein ? Sérieux ?	(2.0) It's a word yeah? Serious?
*Coralie:		Non. *Un riu* (.)	No. *A river* (.)
Éva:		Un chemin ?	A path?

*Coralie:	10	Voi- euh non. Un ruisseau.	Righ- uh no. A stream.
Éva:		Ah:: ruisseau.	Ah:: stream.
*Coralie:		M:.	M:.
Éva:		D'accord.	OK.
*Coralie:		Comment tu dirais toi (.) ruisseau ?	How would *you* (s.) say (.) stream? (.)
	15	(.) ou rivière ou euh ?	or river or uh?
Éva:		(2.0) Je sais pas. Point d'interrogation.	(2.0) I don't know. Question mark.
*Coralie:		D'accord. On sait pas. Voilà.	All right. We don't know. OK.

In contrast to alternative assessment tools (e.g., multiple choice or short answer questions) that "may tell us *whether* a reader has understood, translation may show us *how* a reader has understood" (Pellatt, 2009, p. 343). By having students produce translations, instructors gain "rich evidence of cognitive processes, from orthographical miscues at the lowest level to syntactic and pragmatic miscues and misapplication of schemata at the highest levels of reading" (Pellatt, 2002, p. 244). Through the close reading required for translation, the instructor identifies that Éva has not understood the word *riu*. Although she has recognized the general grammatical function of *riu* as a substantive or adjective ("C'est un mot hein ?"), as opposed to a verb (*riu* being the third-person singular present form of the verb *riure*, to laugh), she mistakes it for the Catalan *seriu* [serious]. Importantly, instead of framing Éva's language through a discourse of deficiency, the instructor responds by acknowledging the existence of differences across varieties and inviting the student to contribute to variation (ll. 14-15). The form of questioning modeled by Coralie situates Gitan as a variety in its own right and the student as a legitimate speaker of the said variety. Moreover, it encourages students to actively incorporate multiple languages in their learning, drawing on the primary language of the classroom (i.e., French in this case), bringing their L1 variety into classroom discussions, and engaging with a linguistic cousin. This dialogic approach to comprehension and translation is adaptable to other educational settings. In heritage language courses, we can imagine how the type of questioning modeled by Coralie could be employed to invite reflections on intralinguistic variation. Students could, for example, be encouraged to examine dialogues in the texts that they analyze, discussing phrasings that are unfamiliar to them and translating the exchange into more relatable language. They could then be guided to reflect on how the different expressive possibilities contained in the translations authored by their peers change their impressions of the characters.

Although Coralie's claim to understanding was initially met with resistance, her background as a native to the region and Catalan heritage speaker undoubtedly facilitated the activity. Her co-instructor commented that she would have never attempted the activity without the support of a Catalanophone colleague: "Mais je me serais jamais lancée dans l'activité sans quelqu'un qui comprend ce qui se passe" [But I would have never thrown myself into the activity without someone who understands what's going on] (Interview, April 2018). Students, for their part, were able to both learn from and instruct their teachers through discussions stemming from observations on the form and content of the original and its translation. While the production of a French version of the text was aided by Coralie's familiarity with Catalan, an instructor's linguistic background need not be seen as a prerequisite for translation. Research has shown that context enables school children to substantially expand their vocabulary through incidental learning (Nagy et al., 1985). Should they be unable to glean the meaning of particular words or references from context, they can be encouraged to search for them using online or physical references to arrive at a translation that they deem appropriate. Moreover, in an initiative to draw linguistic comparisons ("Comparons nos langues" [Let's compare our languages]) in the classroom, Nathalie Auger and her colleagues have demonstrated how students

and instructors of diverse linguistic backgrounds can collectively build an understanding of variation through the discussion of similarities and differences across their languages.[13] With this approach, they advocate for a shift from vertical to horizontal methodologies that encourage instructors to situate themselves as co-constructors rather than disseminators of knowledge. This represents a radical move in a context in which students' L1s have traditionally been perceived as threatening to French linguistic—and national—unity. Auger (2010) regards instructors as charged with promoting the recognition of diversity within the classroom: "Une question reste posée. Est-ce que la société et l'École sont prêtes à reconnaître l'hétérogénéité des personnes et des parcours ? … Qui d'autre que l'enseignant peut aussi bien montrer la voie ?" [One question remains unanswered. Are society and School ready to recognize the heterogeneity of individuals and their experiences? … Who other than the instructor can illuminate the path forward so clearly?] (p. 140). In France, there is some promise that translation could contribute to a recognition of heterogeneity owing to its status as an accepted instructional methodology within the educational system. As translation comes to be understood as communicative, there is potential for its reincorporation in language pedagogy in the U.S. as well. The present article has signaled some ways in which translation activities could be implemented in contexts of L2 and heritage language education, which should be taken up by future classroom-based research. The repurposing of translation and its adoption as a pedagogical practice in K-12 and higher education classrooms will require a certain degree of vulnerability on the part of instructors, who can no longer consider themselves linguistic experts in all classroom languages. Moreover, beyond questions of linguistic competence, language instructors who are accustomed to interacting with their students monolingually may not consider themselves well-versed in the practice of translation.

CONCLUSION

The present case study was intended to serve as an illustration of some of the challenges as well as opportunities of in-class translation, particularly for multilingual minority students in monolingual educational settings (Research Question 1). Considering the complexities involved in implementation, the article also outlined recommendations of how to approach translation-based pedagogy at any educational level (Research Question 2).

Implementation of translation exercises in formally monolingual, unofficially multilingual—owing to the rich linguistic repertoire of their students—classrooms may seem doomed from the outset. Students may initially resist the prospect of translation, as was observed here, when the source language is too close for comfort and/or when they do not fully identify with the target language. Based on the classroom data, it is moreover important to consider whether learners always wish for their instructors to involve their language—or its institutionalized "cousin" in formal instruction. The use of multiple languages in traditionally monolingual instruction and the exercise of translation will require vulnerability on the part of instructors, who are accustomed to conducting class in the target language.

Despite the obstacles detailed in the analysis, the case study revealed the promise of translation for multilingual minority students in monolingual settings. The activity described in this article, carried out in a piecemeal way during one semester in a single language class, already highlights nascent opportunities offered by translation to recognize students as multilingual authors and to support their abilities to work across languages and varieties with heightened attention to variation. As some researchers have noted, we should consider language learners as natural translators (Carreres, 2014; Carreres at al., 2017), with the understanding that "[l]earning to translate is not a special purpose or an add-on to general learning, but should be an integral part of a major aim of language learning—to operate bilingually as well as monolingually" (Cook, 2010, p. 55).

The systemic use of translation, if employed as a means to open up the classroom to variation as opposed to insist on prescriptivism, can also contribute to undoing standard language ideologies and promoting more inclusive educational spaces. As Flores and Rosa (2015) assert, the onus for change in language ideologies lies with instructors: "Altering one's speech might do very little to change the ideological perspectives of listening subjects […] [A]dvocates of appropriateness-based models of language education overlook the ways that particular people's linguistic practices can be stigmatized regardless of the extent to which they approximate or correspond to standard forms" (p. 152).[14] By allowing students to translate a text into a linguistic variety (in the language of schooling or their L1) with which they identify, and in a culturally relevant medium, the classroom can become a site of recognition for alternative norms. When the instructors invited students to reimagine the Roussillon Catalan original in Gitan, they were recognizing students as experts in their own language. This translation was abandoned due to the insistence upon the use of the written medium, which can be seen as ill-suited once we understand literacy as a series of culturally sanctioned normative practices (Baquedano-López, 1997, p. 29; also see Bernstein, 1970; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Future empirical studies could examine the process whereby students translate from a linguistically proximal yet less relatable language variety into their L1 variety, in a relatable medium (possibly a multimodal translation), and again into the primary classroom language, a language that is at once familiar (as the language in which students have been socialized to academic literacy practices) and less relatable (as the dominant language within the monolingual educational setting).

In preparing translation activities, instructors should endeavor to select source texts that are culturally relevant and linguistically meaningful to students, with the understanding that languages "do not operate in a sociocultural vacuum" (Cummins, 1981, p. 32). It is impossible to predict students' comprehension of the source language, understanding of its cultural references, and emotional reaction to the text's incorporation into a traditionally monolingual educational space—reactions to which instructors should remain sensitive. In the absence of a text written in Gitan, instructors could have endeavored to bring in a Gitan narrative through non-traditional means (e.g., by playing a recording of a story, or by producing a written version of an oral narrative). However, such efforts may very well have been met by resistance, as was the case in the anecdote recounted by Baptiste et al. (2003). According to this account, instructors' very identification of a text as Gitan and incorporation of the said text into the classroom would suffice to render it non-Gitan. We can conclude that the focal instructors were doing their best, and innovating pedagogically, with the resources at their disposition. The Roussillon Catalan of the comic and students' L1 variety appeared to be too close for comfort, but this should not necessarily cause instructors to avoid pedagogically driven linguistic contact in the classroom. To the contrary, the surprising linguistic familiarity of the text rendered it accessible, students' comprehension of the original highlighted their multilingual competence, and their insistence upon unrelatability gave them much to comment on.

We may surmise that the greatest potential for translation would come from its systemic use in the classroom, beginning at the elementary level. Translation-based activities have hereto been employed to a limited extent with younger learners owing to the perceived complexity of translation and the fact that it is easily avoided (Bratož & Kocbek, 2013, pp. 146-147). However, Cameron (2001) argues that children enjoy comparing languages (e.g., identifying similar and different words). Young children's unrestrained spontaneity can naturally promote reflections on language and culture: "[T]he very fact that they are unrestrained in their spontaneity allows them to be open and frank about what they learn, which can be effectively used in making the most of the discussions about differences between languages and cultures involved" (p. 147). If sociolinguistic comparisons are encouraged in the classroom from early grade levels, students, as well as their instructors, could become aware of differences and similarities between their L1, L2, and additional languages introduced into the classroom (Bratož & Kocbek, 2013, p. 147). Being seen from a young age not as deficient but as agile

multilinguals can benefit minority students (and their monolingual peers, who gain insights into alternative language forms and perspectives) in officially monolingual settings, both in their linguistic development and in their academic trajectory more broadly. From a linguistic perspective, students can cultivate critical language awareness by attending to differences and similarities across multiple languages. The recognition of multilinguals as the skilled and resourceful students of language that they are can also promote their educational success. Disparities in education begin long before individuals enter higher education programs, making pedagogical projects such as this paramount in fostering equity from early years of schooling. Diversity in higher education is crucial for equitable representation and the introduction of a multitude of perspectives within instruction and research. Translation offers one small but important pedagogical resource for dislodging deep-seated monolingual norms and opening up the academy.

NOTES

[1] The "white listening subject" that Flores and Rosa evoke in their examination of raciolinguistic ideologies does not constitute a specific individual but instead represents "an ideological position and mode of perception that shapes our racialized society" (p. 151). This argument is developed in Rosa's (2019) monograph, *Looking Like a Language, Sounding Like a Race: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and the Learning of Latinidad*.

[2] While it is beyond the scope of the present article to offer a detailed overview of the historical origins of the Gitans, the interested reader should consult Casanova (2016); also see Linares (2020).

[3] Payos or *paios* in Catalan is a term used within the Gitan community to refer to those who are "from the country" [du pays] (France, in this case), that is, the French or non-Gitans.

[4] For transcription conventions, see the Appendix.

[5] Pseudonyms are used throughout.

[6] Figueres is a town in Spanish Catalonia, located roughly 35 miles south of Perpignan.

[7] This comment recalls Heath's (1983) observation that "[i]n both popular and scholarly literature, the 'bedtime story' is widely accepted as a given – a natural way for parents to interact with their child at bedtime" (p. 51).

[8] Although Tony, a Gitan L1 Spanish speaker, requests clarification here, instructors appear unaware of the linguistic heterogeneity (i.e., gitan catalan *and* gitan espagnol) among students in the class and focus their attention on the translation into "Gitan," exclusively understood as a Catalan variety in this space.

[9] The student uses French word 'grotte,' an illustration of a common practice among Gitan students of drawing on their full linguistic repertoire, as opposed to heeding boundaries between discrete, institutionally recognized languages. Coralie's response suggests a commonly held perception among teachers at the school of Gitan students' more limited vocabulary in their L1. Moreover, teachers frequently and explicitly characterized the linguistic limitation that they perceived among students as symptomatic of a larger cognitive deficit (i.e., their vocabulary is limited, ergo they are limited). We are reminded, through repeated exposure to exchanges such as this, that language ideologies mobilize representations of more than language, communicating a belief about speakers themselves (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Leeman, 2018).

[10] This article, which takes an interest in the process of implementation of a translation exercise, centers (apart from Excerpts 5 and 6, taken from a class session in April 2018) on the introduction of this activity, a class session that was fully dedicated to the reception of the comic and initial attempts at translation. After the first session in early February 2018, instructors continued to employ the translation of a vignette, either as a warm-up exercise or as an activity for a student to attempt if they happened to complete other classwork. Attendance, in this class as in all focal classes, could vary dramatically and tended to decline sharply as the academic year progressed, with a single student present on occasion. The unpredictable fluctuations in attendance complicated the prospect of a sequenced lesson plan involving the collaborative translation of the full comic.

[11] When one student in the class translated a line from the comic instantaneously, her peer commented, in French, "T'es bilingue donc" [So you're bilingual]. "*Forse*" [*Maybe*] was the response, voiced in Gitan. This response is ironic; articulated in students' L1, it reinforces bilingualism in form (i.e., a Gitan response to a question posed in French) while expressing doubt in its semantic content (i.e., the mere possibility of bilingualism).

[12] A director of an afterschool program at the elementary school recounted how he had previously engaged Gitan learners in multilingual creativity. Sensitive to the cultural dimensions of language, he had organized students to practice and perform plays in French. He then allowed them to translate the play into Gitan and to perform it again. With this new

rendition, he noted how more than the language of production changed; students became more expressive in their linguistic production and gestures (personal communication).
[13] For an example of how this approach can be implemented, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZlBiAoMTBo
[14] However, such endeavors should instead be critically regarded as perpetuating the notion that a more desirable elite standard exists, and that students' repertoires are inferior without their attainment of it (Leeman, 2012 p. 53; Flores & Rosa, 2015). A focus on appropriateness masks underlying "negative ideologies surrounding nonstandard varieties and the people who speak them, who are often represented as unintelligent or 'backward'" (Leeman, 2018, p. 351). It is important to question who is defining and evaluating appropriateness and who benefits from—and who is disadvantaged by—the promotion of a standard language ideology.

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APPENDIX

Transcription Conventions

*[Name]	An instructor, as opposed to a student
:	Lengthening
.	Falling contour
?	Rising contour
[	Overlap in speech
=	Latching (no interval between turns)
-	Sudden cut-off
(.)	Brief pause
(x.0)	x-second pause
(( ))	Comment by the transcriber
Bold underlined	Speaker's emphasis or increased volume
Italics	A Catalan variety, as opposed to French