Plurilingualism, intercultural sensitivity and new identities in the 21st-century (non-)internationalized undergraduate classroom

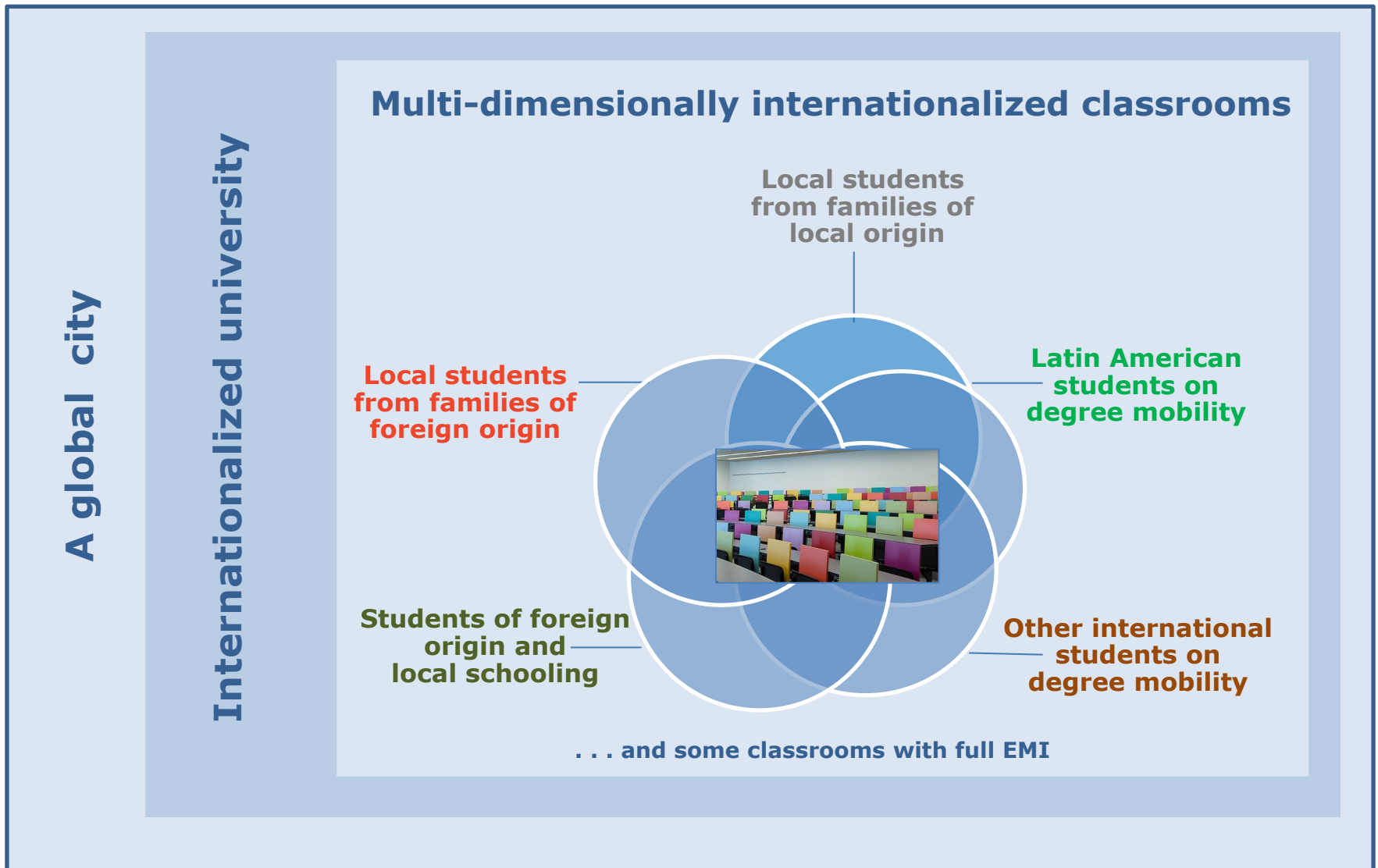Some results from the TRANSLINGUAM-UNI Project

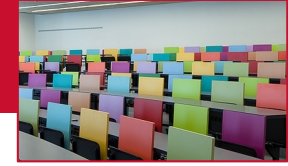## Mireia Trenchs-Parera

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translinguam-uni

https://www.upf.edu/web/translinguam-uni

ALLENCAM

Translinguam-Uni focus of interest

A global city

Internationalized university

Multi-dimensionally internationalized classrooms

Local students from families of local origin

Latin American students on degree mobility

Local students from families of foreign origin

Students of foreign origin and local schooling

Other international students on degree mobility

. . . and some classrooms with full EMI

Trenchs-Parera (2019)

Transcultural competence in multilingual and multicultural university classrooms with full EMI: Languages, attitudes, intercultural sensitivity and identity (AEI/FEDER PGC2018-098815-B-I00, 2019-2022)

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF TRANSCULTURAL COMPETENCE (TC):

1. LINGUISTIC:
  (a)   plurilingual/translingual practices (Newman, Trenchs-Parera & Corona, 2019; Wei, 2011)
  (b)   development of plurilingualism adding languages to one's/ones' own (Pérez-Vidal, 2014)

2. ATTITUDINAL:
  (a)   development of positive (language) attitudes (Barrett, 2016;Trenchs-Parera & Newman, 2009)
  (b)   development of *International Posture* (Yashima, 2009)

3. INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY: development in contexts of academic mobility and of intercultural interactions (Chen & Starosta, 2000; Pogorelova, 2016)

4. IDENTITARY: global/cosmopolitan identity (Türken & Rudmin, 2013; Trenchs-Parera et al., 2014)

Translinguam-Uni framework & interdisciplinary approach (& II)
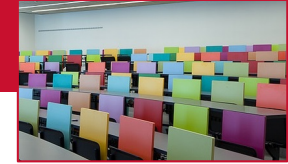
COMPLEMENTARY THEORETICAL CONCEPTS:

- Linguistic Landscape (Bruyèl & Juan-Garau, 2015, 2020)

- Intercultural Social Interaction (Kudo et al., 2017, 2019)

- Self-Concept in language learning (Mercer, 2014)

- Emotions and Anxiety (Saito, Dewaele, Abe & In'nami, 2018)

- Pragmatic Competence (Taguchi, 2019)

TEAM'S EXPERTISE:

- Educational sociolinguistics: ethnographies of practices, attitudes, social interactions and identity affiliations

- Acquisition of English: formal, *EMI* & *CLIL* contexts

- Psychology: methodological design; intercultural sensibility & adaptation

- Linguistic landscape: English in Catalan contexts

GREILI-UPF Research Group
Intercultural Spaces, Languages and Identities

ALLENCAM
Adquisició de Llengües des de la Catalunya Multilingüe

Mixed-methods methodology (I): Instruments

Qualitative research:
- Sociolinguistic and Educational Profile Questionnaire (TRANSLINGUAM-UNI)
- Classroom observations
- Semi-structured interviews
- Written narratives
- Linguistic landscape

Quantitative research:
- Sociolinguistic and Educational Profile Questionnaire (TRANSLINGUAM-UNI)
- Transcultural Competence Questionnaire (54 items):
  - International Posture Q.   (Yashima, 2009)
  - Intercultural Sensitivity Q.   (Chen & Starosta, 2000)
  - Global Identity Q.   (Türken & Rudmin, 2013)
- Social Network Generator
- Self-Concept Questionnaire
- Language tests, including pragmatic competence
- Linguistic landscape

Data analysis:
- Thematic analysis
- Descriptive and inferential statistics

Mixed-methods methodology (II)
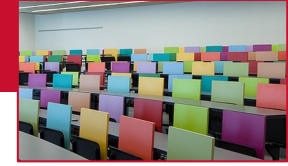
Site:
- University in Barcelona with multilingual policy and high degree of internationalization (Trenchs-Parera, 2019)

Participants in one academic year:
- **One case study group** (Rampton, 1995; Creese & Blackledge, 2010): one undergraduate classroom with full EMI & multidimensional internationalization

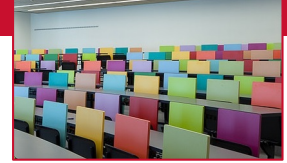- **Control group for statistics:** participants from all schools

Data collection times:
- Time 1: October, starting 1st academic year of degree
- Time 2: May/June, ending 1st year
- Time 3: mid-3rd year

Same design in different academic years:
- Time 1 + Time 2
- Case study group + control group

Exploring some TRANSLINGUAM-UNI research questions

and some results

Results: General transcultural competence

In internationalized university contexts, do undergraduates manifest transcultural competence when starting studies? Any differences between classrooms?
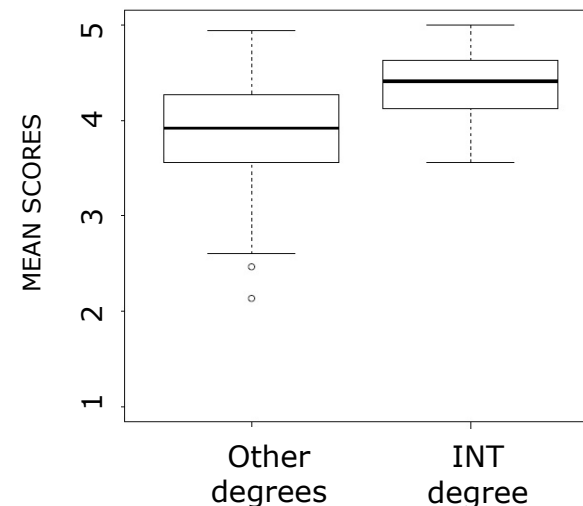
Most undergraduates across schools score high or quite high

Students in the internationalized classroom have significantly higher mean scores in transcultural competence than other students

For example,

International Posture Questionnaire

All TC questionnaires:
p-value < 0.001

Wilcoxon tests with 750 students

Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)
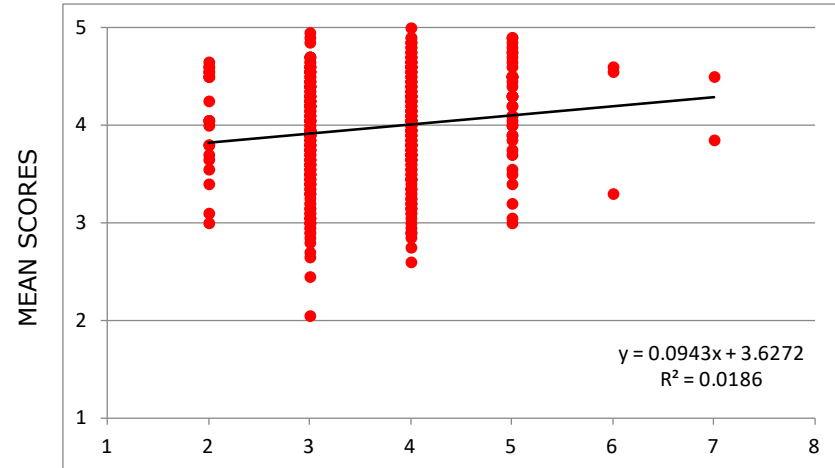
Results: Individual pluriligualism (I)

Is their transcultural competence related to their degree of plurilingualism?

The more languages students speak,

the higher mean scores in initial transcultural competence

For example,

International Posture Questionnaire

International Posture
p-value = 0.002

Intercultural Sensitivity
p-value = 0.086 (marginally)

Regression analysis
with 750 students

MEAN SCORES

$y = 0.0943x + 3.6272$
$R^2 = 0.0186$

Number of languages spoken by the students

Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)
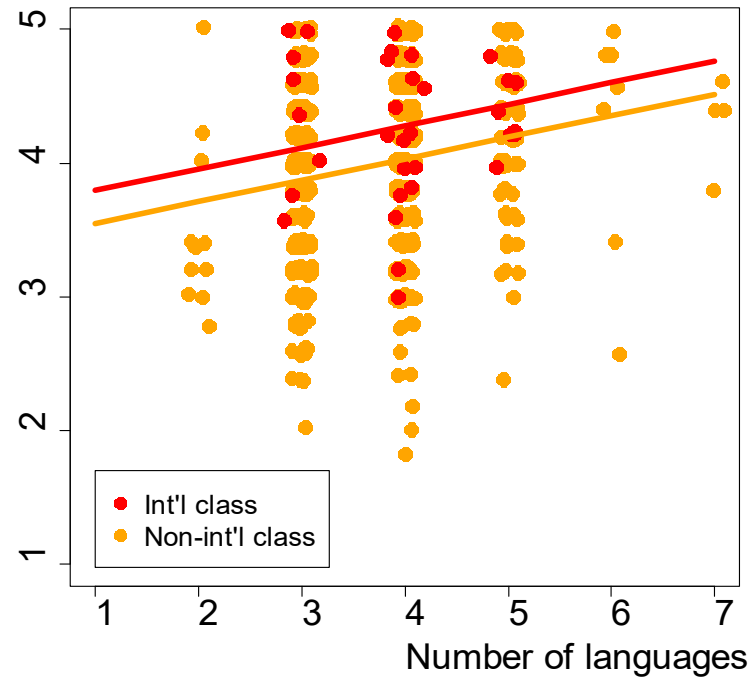
Results: Individual plurilingualism (II)

Is local undergraduates' affiliation with a global identity related to their degree of plurilingualism? **Yes, it is.**

Cultural Openness
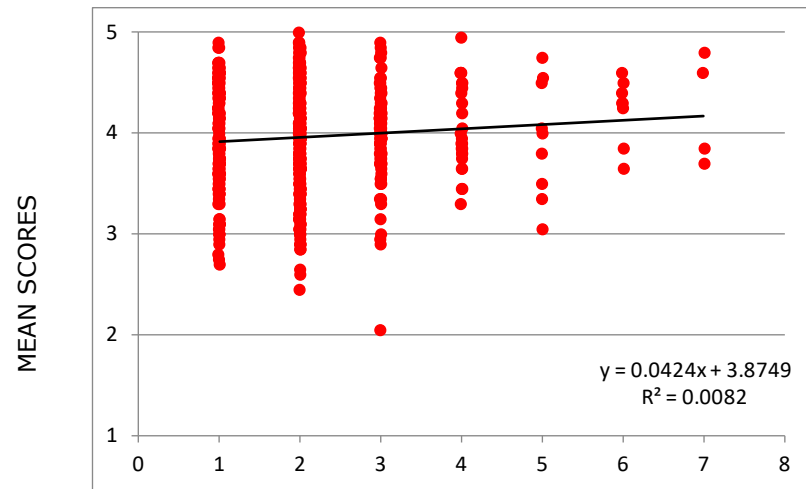
Results: Plurilingual background

The more languages are spoken in the student's family,

the higher mean scores in initial transcultural competence

For example,

International Posture Questionnaire

International Posture
p-value = 0.043

Intercultural Sensitivity
p-value = 0.009

MEAN SCORES

$y = 0.0424x + 3.8749$
$R^2 = 0.0082$

Number of languages spoken in the family

Regression analysis
with 750 students
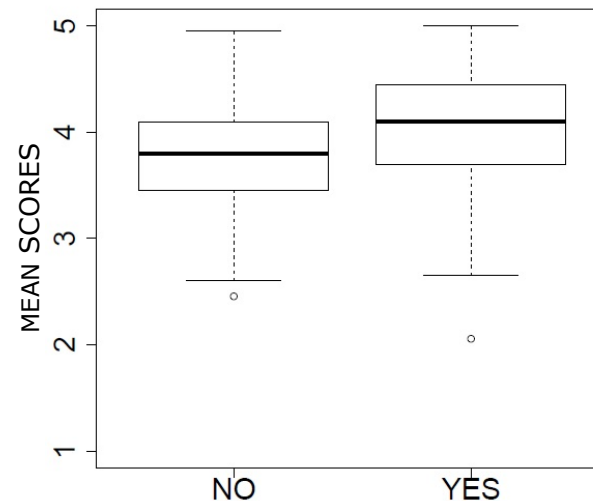
Results: Intercultural friendships

Do intercultural friendships contribute to undergraduates' transcultural competence?

Students with intercultural friendships have <u>significantly</u> higher scores in transcultural competence than students with none
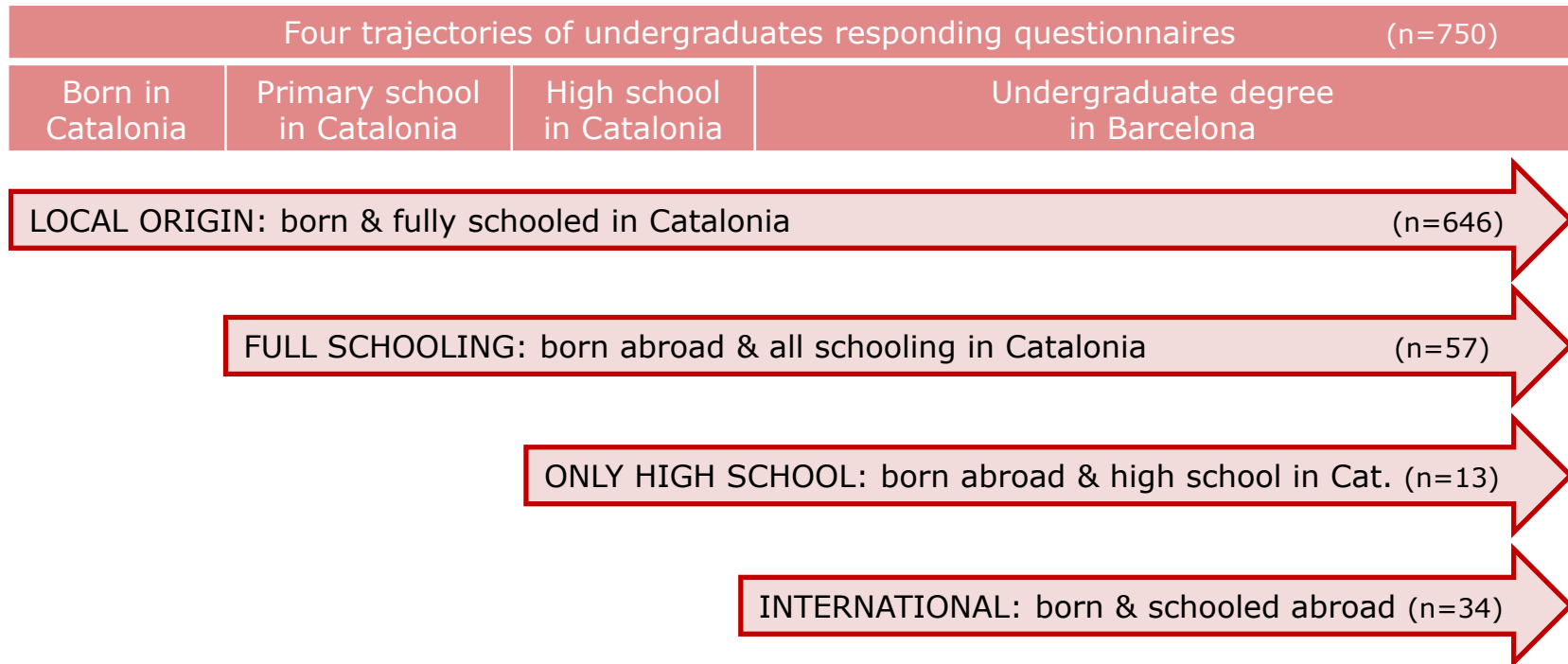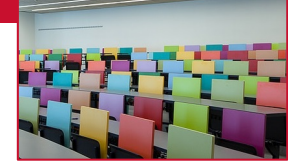
For example,

International Posture Questionnaire

All TC questionnaires:
p-value < 0.001

Wilcoxon tests

Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)

Results: Educational trajectories and identity (I)

Four trajectories of undergraduates responding questionnaires (n=750)			
Born in Catalonia	Primary school in Catalonia	High school in Catalonia	Undergraduate degree in Barcelona

LOCAL ORIGIN: born & fully schooled in Catalonia (n=646)

FULL SCHOOLING: born abroad & all schooling in Catalonia (n=57)

ONLY HIGH SCHOOL: born abroad & high school in Cat. (n=13)

INTERNATIONAL: born & schooled abroad (n=34)

Trenchs-Parera (2021)

Results: Educational trajectories and identity

What educational trajectories favour affiliation with a global identity?

Educational trajectories	Mean (1 to 5)	Std. dev.
International	4.30	0.568
Full schooling	4.27	0.519
Local origin	4.01	0.644
Only high school	3.97	0.692

Cultural Openness

Z = 2.85
p-value (adj.) = 0.0129

Z = 2.58,
p-value (adj.) = 0.0250

Local origin   Full school

Local origin   Int'l
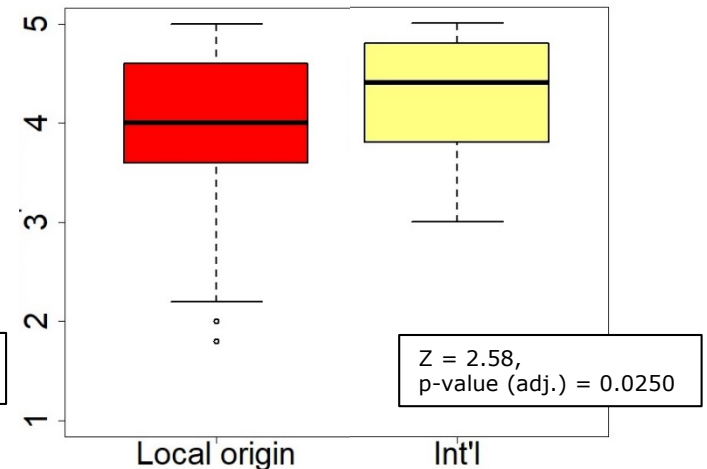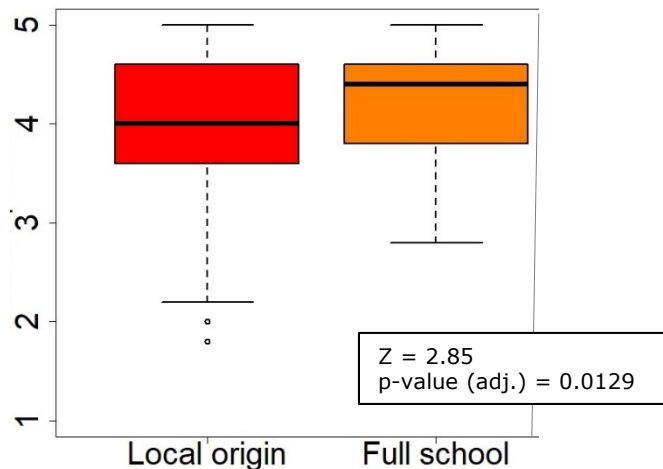
Post-hoc Dunn tests for pairwise comparison

Trenchs-Parera (2021)

Are there any differences between local undergraduates in multi-dimensionally internationalized classrooms and those in less internationalized ones? **Yes, there are.**

Local students from . . .	n	Mean	Std. dev.
Internationalized classroom	33	4.28	0.507
Non-internationalized classroom	613	3.99	0.647

Cultural Openness

W = 12684
p-value = 0.0068

Mann Whitney-U test

Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)
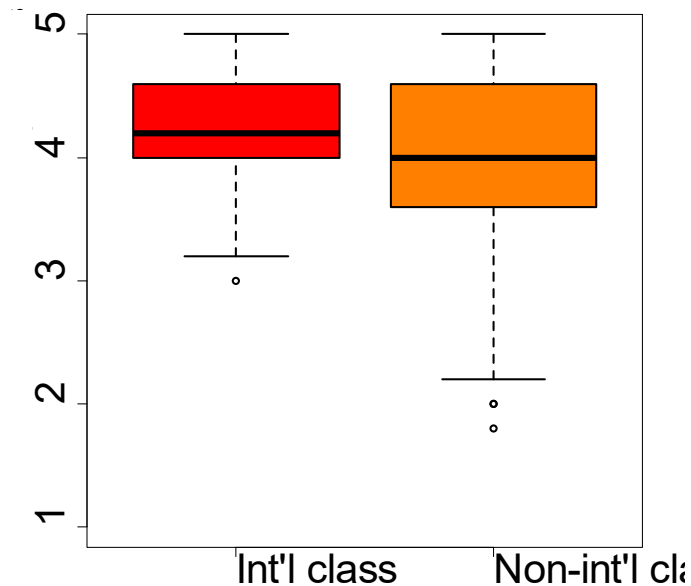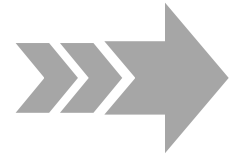
Results:
Focus on local students and identity (II)
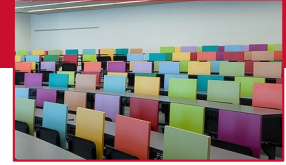
FOCUS ON ONE MULTIDIMENSIONALLY INTERNATIONALIZED CLASSROOM
Semi-structured interviews with local students, after class observation

- Do local undergraduates in a multidimensionally internationalized classroom define their identity as «global»?

- If so, what do they understand by a «global» identity in such a context?

- Is this identity related to their educational trajectory and plurilingualism?

Results: Plurilingual/translingual practices

Eva: Catalan/European family, 19 years old, 6 languages, 1 year in US

With Tarik I always spoke English to him and then I found he could speak **Spanish** because a day he started speaking Spanish and I was what? […] if there is a group of people **we usually speak in Spanish** but if I talk to him alone I speak **English**

Yanhong: Chinese family background, 19 years old, 6 languages

I'm switching quite often, so I don't think it's a problem for me switching […] and, if I have some **homework** or projects together, because for homework you need to talk in Catalan or Spanish, **we may switch between Chinese, Catalan or Spanish,** that happens
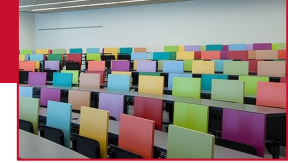
Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)

Eva

I have always felt more *[nationality]* than from Barcelona cause I thought it was really **when I said my mom is from *[country]* everyone was like "wow!", when I was little I have *[language]*, something that made me different.** […] Because I don't feel Spanish or *[nationality]*, **I just feel somewhere in between** in that sense *[pause]* No, I don't think I can define myself. **Maybe international would be a good word but it's too broad** maybe […] **from Barcelona**

Yanhong

I feel in between, **I feel physically I'm more Chinese**, that's what people get notice of when they see me, I feel quite connected because of my appearance and of my home

[…] but then outside [high school] I can make friends with Spanish people, Catalan people, it's not a barrier for me […] **and then when you come to <u>this</u> degree everyone is like different**, everyone is like *where are you from? **Oh, <u>I</u> have a different background***

Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)

Results:
Fluid identities; redefining heritage

Maria: local background, 19 years old, 4 languages

At school […] people know that I was adopted, born in *[mentions country]*, but if the subject appeared in the conversation, it was *oh you're from here, you've been your whole life here,* and that's it. And I was like *Ok, I'm Spanish and I feel Spanish* but I didn't like the way **they limited my self-identity** and **when I came <u>here</u>**, there were so many people from so many different backgrounds, and it was possible to know a person who was born here, studied there, worked in the other end of the world, it was like **they didn't limit their identity to a single country as they used to do in my school**, more like you can be from five different countries, it's OK. […] **now here I can explain that, and everyone would be cool with it too**

I've regretted not to learn *[mentions language]* before, I mean, **I wanted to but I didn't know how to bring it up to my parents** […] and I decided to wait.

Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)

Jofre: local family background, 19 years old, 4 languages

Being from here, it's like very interesting because we are European at the same time that Mediterranean, we have like I mean, **we have very charismatic identity ourselves**, so I think that **I speak two languages** from all my life, so I think that **I've really learned from very early to manage two different identities and to conjugate them and maybe to merge them into something new which in fact is me** […] but **I'm not very fan [*my Catalan identity*],** I mean, I do appreciate my cultural background and everything but I think that I might be more critical with my own culture

I think this year I realized maybe I do feel more like […] **that I belong to my own generation,** that's not necessarily even limited to Europe, every part of the world, that some young people that have mobile phone in their hand, uses internet for everything, and that looks to climate changes […] I do feel **more like belonging to this global generation** that is the first one really was born with fully interconnected world, so maybe I think **I realize that in my class, I am more different from my parents than some guy in Nigeria of my age.**

Conclusions (I)
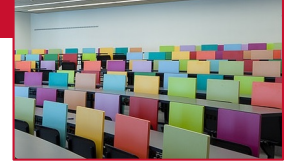
The multi-dimensionally internationalized classroom:

- Higher intercultural sensitivity

- Higher international posture

- Higher affiliation with a ~~global~~/transcultural identity

- Individual plurilinguallism correlates positively with more transcultural competence . . . but significantly more so in such internationalized classroom

- The more opportunities for intercultural friendships and the more time lived abroad, the higher degree of transcultural competence.

Trenchs-Parera (2021); Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)

Conclusions (II)
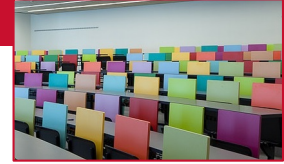
Specific affordances of the internationalized classroom:

- plurilingual translanguaging (socialized into at home, or new) - affordances for meaningful intercultural communication

- individual linguistic and cultural distinctiveness as assets

- constructing identity by adding linguistic and cultural traits

- an international posture not in conflict with particularism

- awareness of differences: different languages as assets

- awareness of similarities:
    - heritage identity traits across borders
    - belonging to a <u>new generation</u> (<u>beyond borders</u>)

In sum, **not a global identity, but emergence of a transcultural, plurilingual 21st-century youth identity.**

Trenchs-Parera (2021); Trenchs-Parera & Pastena (2021)

References & to know more about Translinguam-Uni

TRANSLINGUAM-UNI: https://www.upf.edu/web/translinguam-uni

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