

## Sridhar's prediction of translingual theory

“What we need is a more functionally oriented and culturally authentic theory [of language], one that is true to the ecology of multilingualism and views the multilingual's linguistic repertoire as a unified, complex, coherent, interconnected, interdependent, organic ecosystem, not unlike a tropical rain forest.” (Sridhar 1994 p.803)

## Can we use other languages in India?

**Yes!** ... According to NCERT. See the Indian National Council of Educational Research and Training: National Focus Group on Teaching of English Position Paper (2005, p.12):

- “[The mother tongue] can be given its due place by being used for discussion and understanding along with an engagement with English.”
- It suggests 6 ways of using other languages, and notes: “Linguistic purism, whether of English or the Indian languages, must yield to a tolerance of code-switching and code-mixing if necessary.”

But **also** check SCERT and school policy.

## Recent research on L1 use in Indian contexts

**Rahman (2013):** 65% of 25 teachers reported using Assamese ‘frequently’. Why? To explain concepts (65%); to save time (15%); to engage ss. (10%); and because ss. demand it (10%). 95% of ss. said they needed help of Assamese in English classes.

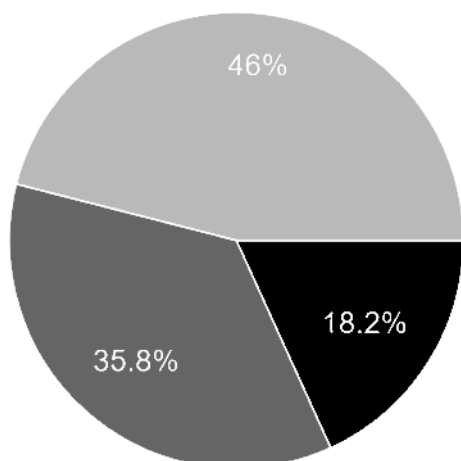
**Chimarala (2017):** 95% of 112 teachers use other languages. 71% allow students to use them. Why? To explain concepts and difficult words (69%); to reprimand or bond with ss. (11%); to check comprehension (11%).

**Durairajan (2017):** summarises esp. PhD studies (1981-2017):

‘These varied growths, mostly ‘small gains’ ... may not be statistically significant but – in terms of pedagogic implications and student growth and feeling of confidence – nearly exponential.’ (p.313)

## British Council survey (Anderson, 2017; Anderson & Lightfoot, 2018): Key findings

Are you allowed to use other languages in English lessons?



- No. I am told to teach using only English.
- There is no policy, but using other languages is discouraged.
- Yes. I'm allowed / free to use other languages in English lessons.

PDF for this talk: [www.jasonanderson.org.uk](http://www.jasonanderson.org.uk)



## British Council survey (May 2017): Key findings

**169 teachers reported on OL use and translinguaging practices in their classrooms. Categorized in 4 categories (Anderson, 2017; Anderson & Lightfoot, 2018):**

### **1. Managing learning and behaviour**

I use OLs for classroom management during English lessons. **1.07**

I use OLs to discipline my learners during English lessons. **0.69**

### **2. Using OLs for scaffolding learning**

I use OLs to explain things. **1.11**

I allow my students to speak OLs during English lessons. **1.02**

I actively encourage the use of OLs during my lessons. **0.53**

I allow my students to make notes in OLs during English lessons. **0.44**

I think about OLs when preparing and teaching my lessons. **1.06**

### **3. Crosslinguaging**

I translate for my students during English lessons. **1.06**

I get my students to do translation activities. **0.83**

I allow my students to translate using bilingual dictionaries, etc. **1.01**

I get my students to compare the way languages express things. **1.25**

I compare sounds from OLs to English to help with pronunciation. **1.20**

### **4. Meshing**

I allow my students to mix English with OLs for speaking activities. **0.75**

I allow my students to mix English with OLs for writing activities. **0.21**

I use texts and audio that include OLs during English lessons. **0.49**

## **Indian NCERT: National Focus Group on Teaching of English Position Paper (2006)**

Suggestions (pp. 12-13) include:

- At the lower primary stage, or at least in Classes I–III, English can occur in tandem with the first language(s) for learning activities designed to create awareness of the world around the child.
- Introducing parallel texts in more than one language. Such parallel texts may not be precise translations of one another but may convey the same or similar meaning, or involve similar language activity such as rhymes, sound games, etc. that sensitise the child to language-sound structures.
- Use of bilingual learning dictionaries. (Today this can include use of Google translate – now available for 12 Indian languages).
- Providing inputs in a foreign language with production in a familiar language.



## Practical ideas for translanguaging

### 1. Culture share (from Prof. Julu Sen)

- Works well with students from diverse cultures (e.g. multicultural cities, teacher training groups).
- Ss bring items of cultural importance to class.
- Students talk about and explain the importance of these items in any languages (L1, L2, English).
- Then they prepare either a text, or give a brief presentation on the item in English.

### 2. Five sentences (from Dr. Heera Rajwani)

- An appropriate topic is chosen (e.g. social media, addictions, IT).
- Working in pairs, students write five sentences on the topic in a shared language, but not English, then they read them out to other students.
- The next day the task is repeated, but this time in English. The teacher supports as necessary.
- Then on the third day, students try to remember their 5 sentences without opening their books, using as much English as possible.

### 5 translanguaging ideas from Jason

- **Be OL-inclusive:** E.g. Let your learners know that whenever they don't know a word in English, they can say it in a shared language. Let them finish, then ask: "Can anyone say that in English?"
- **Use OLs to check understanding:** E.g. After explaining the meaning of a word (you can explain it in English or OLs), elicit the OL equivalent: "How do we say this in Marathi?"
- **Encourage OL 'buzz groups':** E.g. After a grammar presentation, give students a few minutes to discuss with peers in OLs (in some classes, you can put them into OL groups). Tell them to explain what they understood and to think of 1-3 questions to ask you if needed.
- **Give regular, short translation tasks:** E.g. for homework, they translate a text from English to OL. Next lesson, get them to take out their translations and with their partner reconstruct the sentence / text in English (they can speak or write). No homework marking!
- **Keep a vocabulary box in the class:** Write new words on slips of paper, with English on one side and OL on the other. If there are many languages in the class, the students can write several translations on the back. Use the vocab. box for games and tests.

### Mr. Banglish / Hinglish / Tanglish / etc.

- Good at primary level
- Bilingual poster
- Each card is stuck on with sticky tape
- English on one side
- OL on back
- Helps to develop an understanding of equivalence between languages



## Curricula, language in education policy and teacher education: Some topics and questions for thought

- **Medium of instruction:** This term originates in monolingual communities. Why do we have to have just one? Why not ‘languages of learning’? (Anderson, 2019)
- **Multilingual textbooks:** What would a translingual or multilingual textbook look like? How could it celebrate the languages of the learners while using them to support the learning of English? See work in New York (e.g. Celic & Seltzer, 2013).
- **Translingual emergence:** At primary level especially, can curricula encourage the emergence of English *from within* OLRs (as it evolves naturally in the languaging practices of many urban Indians), rather than teaching it as a separate ‘L2’ or ‘L3’?
- **The translingual teacher:** Can we base a model of effective Indian language pedagogy on a teacher who... ?  
“is able to understand, interpret, scaffold, and challenge their learners’ choice of linguistic resources appropriately. Importantly, s/he is also able to model effective translingual and monolingual practices across the translingual continuum.” (Anderson, 2018)

More ideas for translanguaging for the EFL classroom:

[http://www.jasonanderson.org.uk/downloads/Jasons\\_ideas\\_for\\_translanguaging\\_in\\_the\\_EFL\\_ESL\\_classroom.pdf](http://www.jasonanderson.org.uk/downloads/Jasons_ideas_for_translanguaging_in_the_EFL_ESL_classroom.pdf)

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