

Help, I can't translanguage!

Exploring opportunities for
translanguaging in ELT/TESOL
classrooms in sub-optimal contexts

Jason Anderson

jason.anderson@warwick.ac.uk

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WARWICK

APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Workshop plan

- Introductions
- Definitions
- What ‘optimal conditions’ might be
- Two examples of ‘suboptimal conditions’
- Introduce the tools: Padlet, ‘translanguaging affordances’
- Groupwork activity (15 mins)
- Plenary discussion (ideas, comments, concerns, questions)
- Conclusion



Introductions

- Form groups
- Introduce yourselves – names, places, languages/repertoires
- Ask: What is ‘translanguaging’ to you?

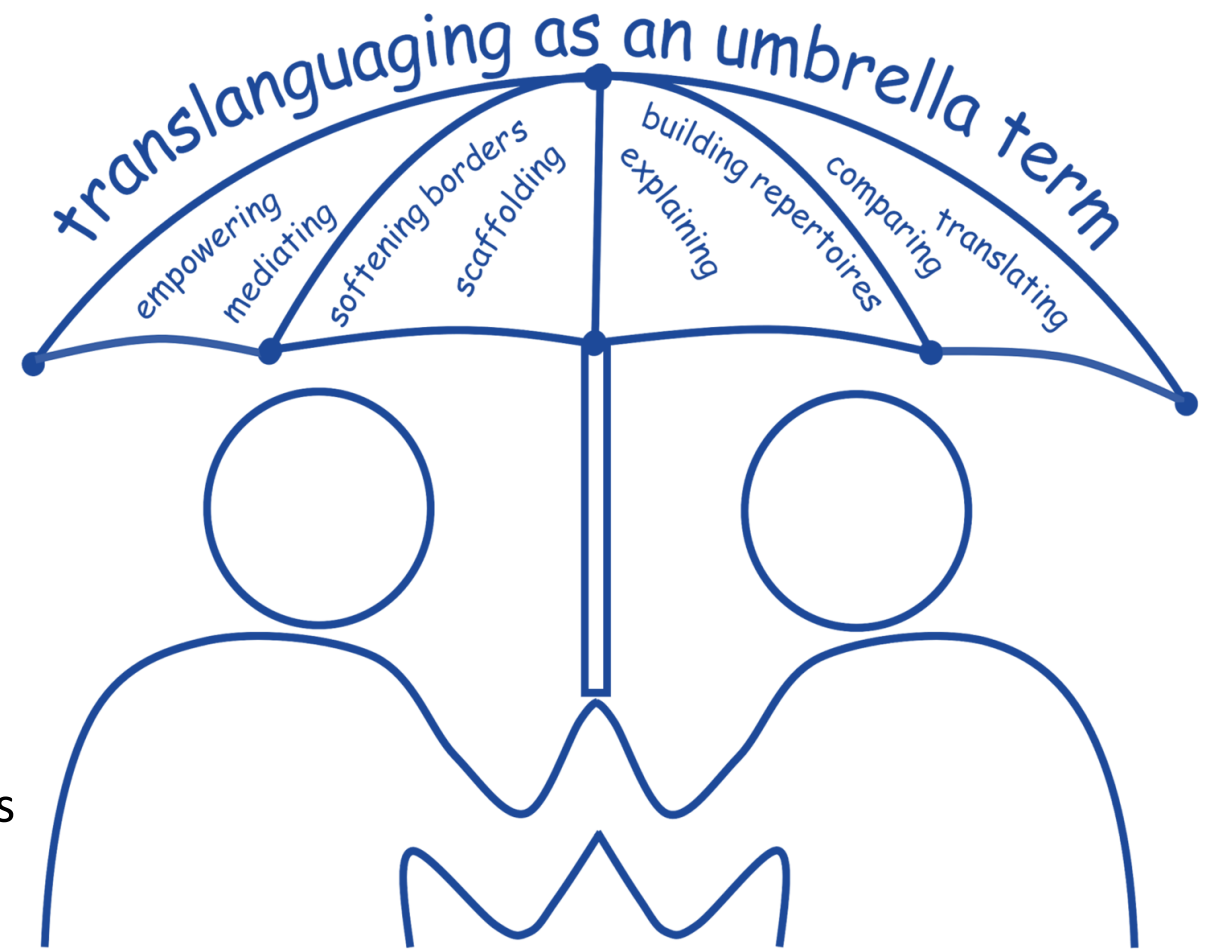
**First workshop of
the conference:
Let's meet
someone new!**

Proposed working definition_S of translinguaging

Translinguaging as...

- leveraging our full **meaning making repertoires**
- **inclusion** for multilinguals
- an **umbrella term** for multilingual practices in the classroom (both for learners and teachers)

Note: named languages (e.g. English) are recognised as powerful sociocultural artefacts – part of our ‘job description’ – but not necessarily fundamental to cognitive architecture



From Anderson & Dixit (2026)

What are 'optimal' conditions for translanguaging?

Optimal 'conditions' for translanguaging might include:

- **freedom** to translanguage (curriculum, norms, expectations)
- **opportunities** to translanguage (time, spaces, people, tools)
- **ability** to translanguage (teachers, learners, AI)
- multiple languages are **welcomed** (recognised, accepted, included)

These provide multiple affordances for learning through multilingual activities and interactions, both for teachers and learners

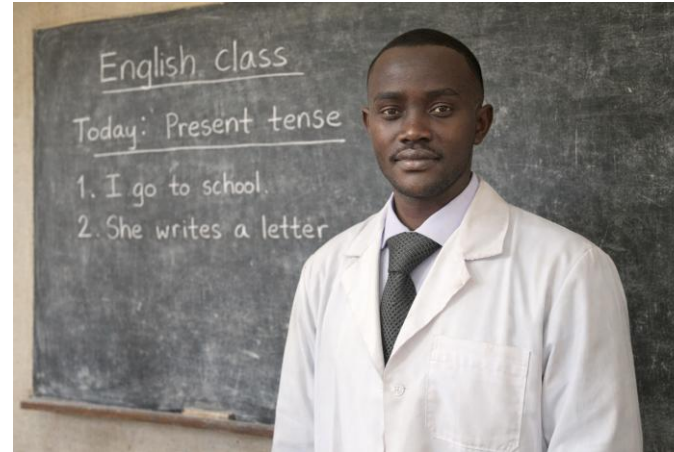
Suboptimal conditions: Two examples



Take a pic for reference later



Pranjana teaches English (and other subjects) in a primary school. Her learners speak different home languages (Telugu, Urdu, Kannada, Tamil), but there is no one shared community language in the school. She speaks 2 of these languages well and another partially.



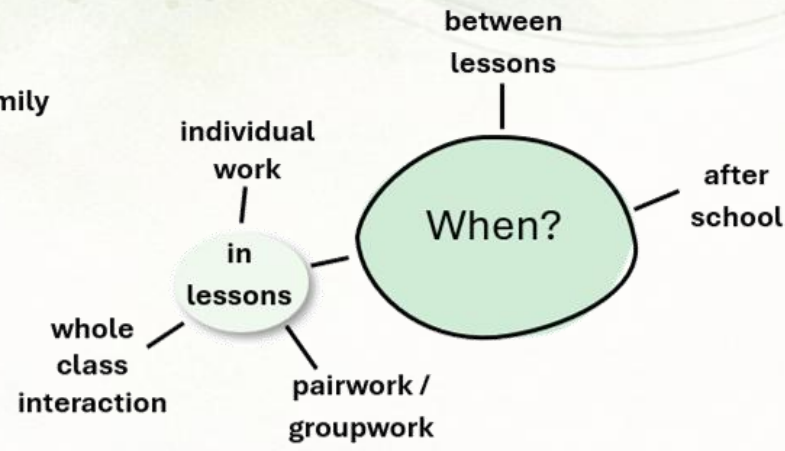
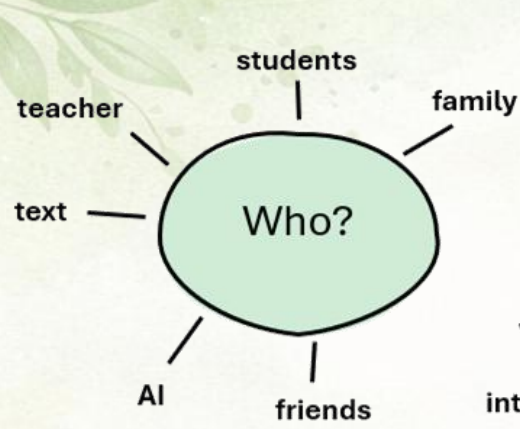
Elie teaches sciences through CLIL* to grades 7-10 in a secondary school. He is expected to teach using only English by his school (which promotes its 'English-only' approach). His learners all share a community language (Kinyarwanda).

*content and language integrated learning

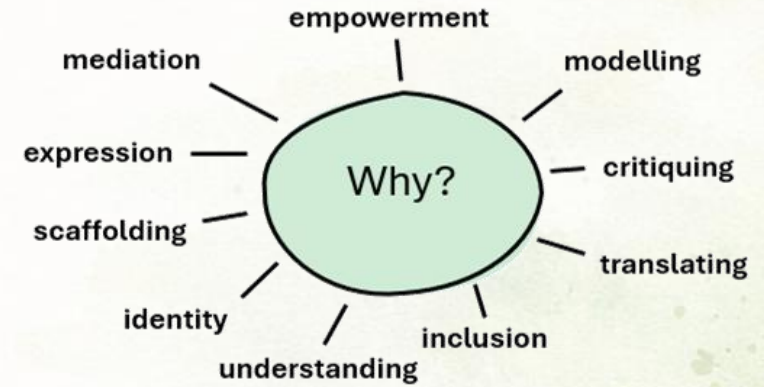
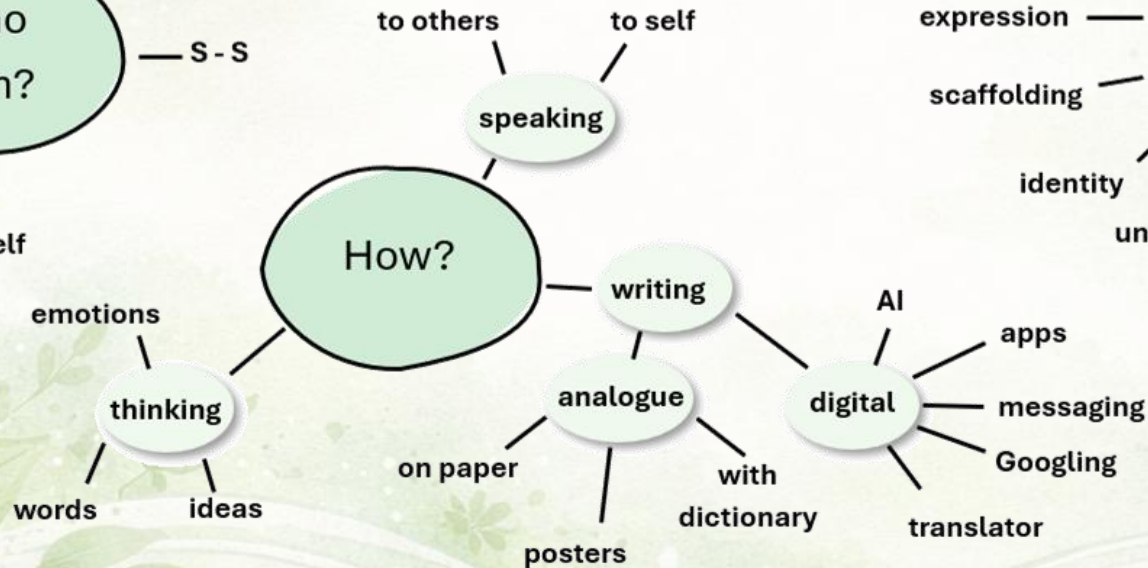
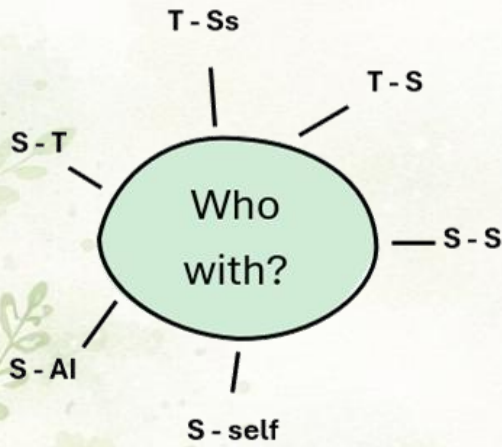
Does this mean that no translanguaging happens or can happen?

Setting up the workshop discussions

- 2 resources – questions for affordances, Padlet
- Optional choice for discussion focus – **you choose!**
- Plenary opportunity to spotlight some of the discussions, thoughts emerging and ‘shares’ (on Padlet)

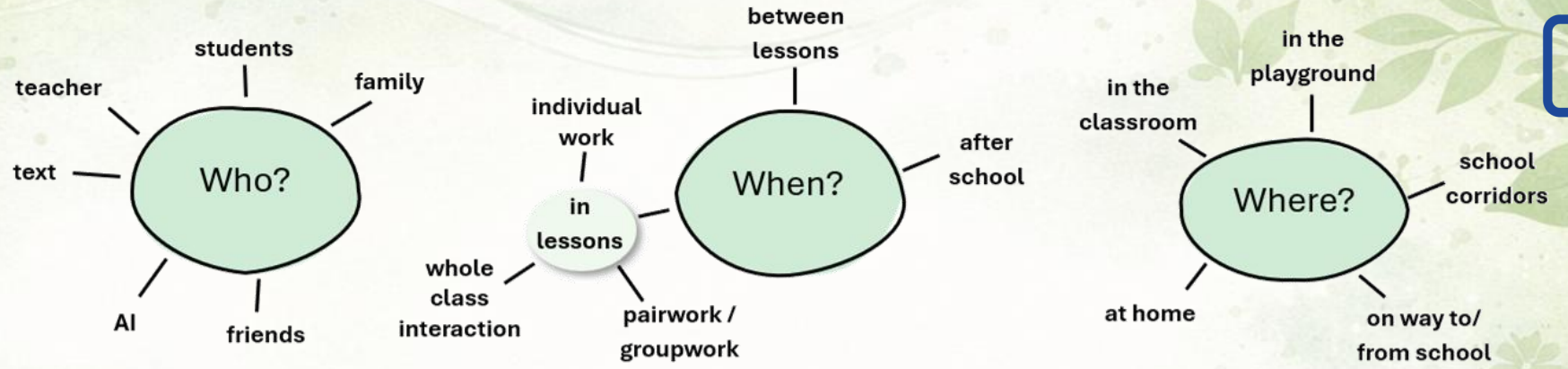


translanguaging affordances

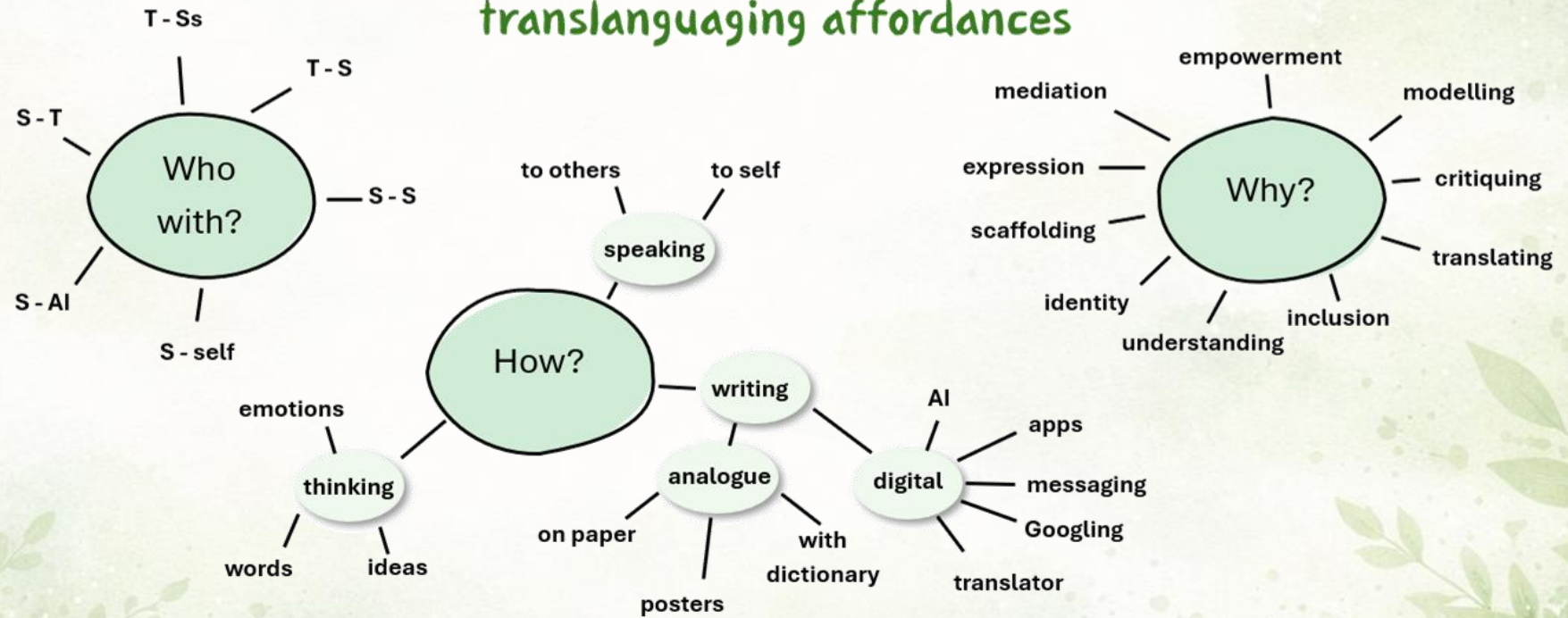




- ✓ Choose a context: preferably one of your own, alternatively Elie's or Pranjana's.
- ✓ Identify key challenges to translanguaging
- ✓ Use the questions and ideas to enable you to explore the full range of affordances (e.g., Who can translanguage? How? When? etc.).
- ✓ **One group member take notes to the shared Padlet.**
- ✓ Plenary to follow.



translanguaging affordances



← Padlet

↓
<https://padlet.com/universityofwarwick/translanguaging>



Translanguaging workshop Padlet

1. Describe the challenge(s). 2. Add notes on affordances, ideas, solutions as these are discussed.



jasonanderson12 /student/

8 minutes from now



Describe the challenge/issue/situation in the title

Add notes on what was discussed (e.g., affordances available, ideas for leveraging these, potential solutions) - as you see fit!



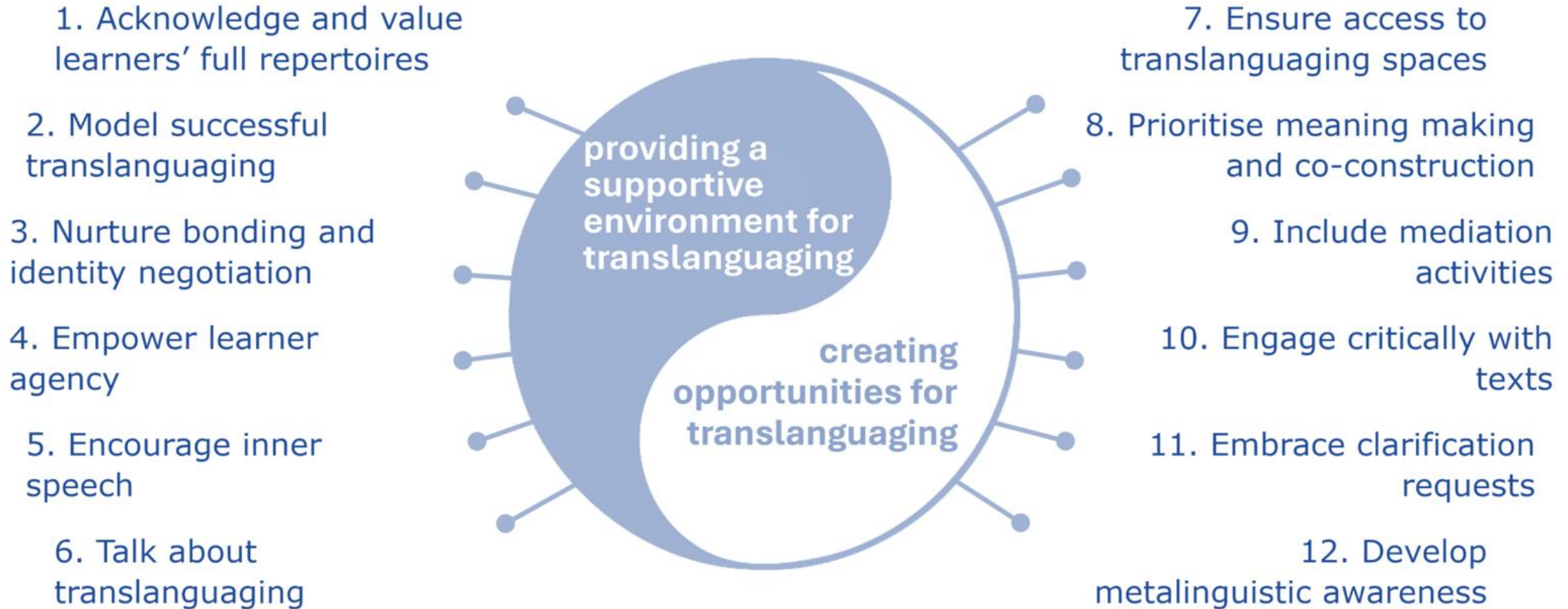
+ Add comment

+ Post

Some further ideas... for *all most* teachers



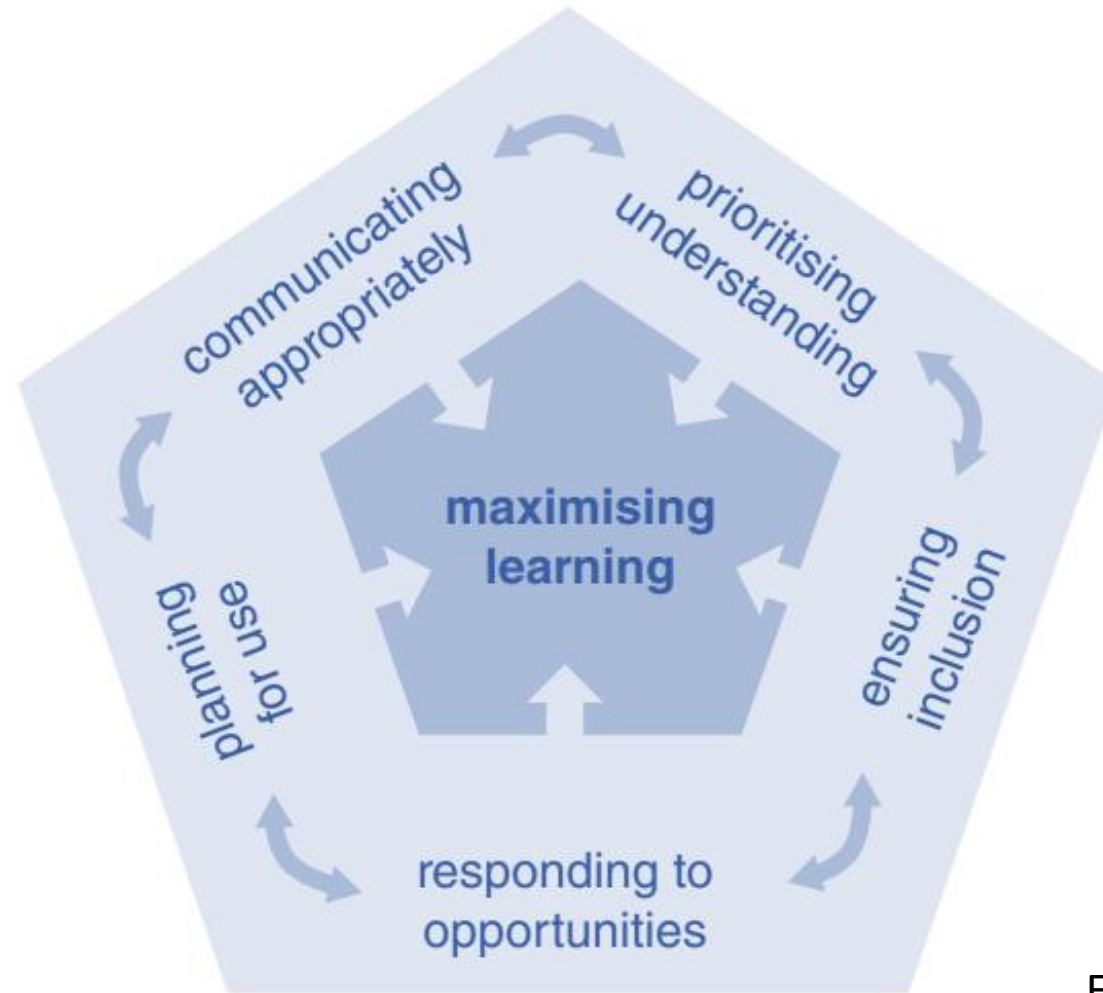
Learner translanguaging...



From Anderson & Dixit (2026)

Some further ideas... for *all most* teachers

Teacher translanguaging...



From Anderson & Dixit (2026)

Some further ideas... for *all most* teachers

Translanguaging continuum



**Principled
translanguaging**
(pre-planned and
rationalised)

**Responsive
translanguaging**
(unplanned, but with
awareness)

**Spontaneous
translanguaging**
(unplanned,
unconscious)



Figure 5.3 The principled to spontaneous translanguaging continuum.

From Anderson & Dixit (2026)

Optional ‘homework’: Deconstruct your language-in-education policy

Try to get a copy of the policy that you are expected to follow in your teaching. This may be in official government documents, curriculum or published teacher’s guide. Study the exact wording of the policy and do the following:

- 1.** Underline any sentences that refer to different *people*. It may say that ‘The teacher should use only English’, or that the students should do so. Try to identify any spaces this creates for translanguaging. For example, if it only mentions the teacher, this does not prevent your students from translanguaging.
- 2.** Underline which *verbs* it uses. If it refers to specific skills such as speaking or writing, notice if there are any skills that it doesn’t mention. These may be spaces for translanguaging. If it uses the verb ‘use’ (e.g., ‘teachers should use’), also consider what opportunities this creates for translanguaging. It may include other verbs such as ‘encourage’ or ‘expect’ (e.g., ‘you should expect students to use English’). If so, this may also create translanguaging spaces; encouraging and expecting something isn’t the same as insisting or requiring it.
- 3.** Consult a colleague who works with the same policy, if you can. Check that they agree with your interpretation of the policy.

(Anderson & Dixit, 2026, p. 38)

Thank you for coming

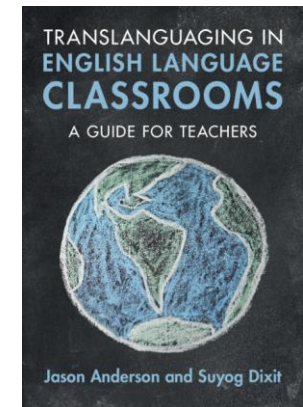
Slides, affordances handout and other stuff

Available free at: www.jasonanderson.org.uk



Reference

Anderson, J. & Dixit, S. (2026). *Translanguaging in English Language Classrooms: A Guide for Teachers*. Cambridge University Press. (published July 2026, [click here](#))



jason.anderson@warwick.ac.uk

www.jasonanderson.org.uk

<https://profiles.warwick.ac.uk/u1673509-jason-anderson>