Plurilingualism and Translanguaging Strategies for Language Teachers and Students

Unfortunately, in many classrooms, language teachers and learners often view students' first language (L1) as a potential problem, or as a stumbling block on the road to successful language learning.

In this webinar, we will:

- explore strategies to help teachers and learners make use of their current knowledge as they build their linguistic repertoires

- demonstrate how including students' L1 in the language classroom offers the potential for innovative and nuanced communication in students' both L1 and L2

- reflect on our own language learning experiences as we consider activities that can be adapted for all ages and levels

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Chris Hastings

Chris Hastings is a new Regional English Language Officer, currently working as a Regional Program Officer for East Asia and the Pacific. Chris has spent the past 20 years teaching English.

Before joining the RELO corps, Chris was an Assistant Professor of Languages and Literature at Southwest Tennessee Community College, a U.S. Department of State English Language Fellow in Russia and China, and an English Language Specialist in Iraq and Pakistan.

Chris earned a MA in TESOL and a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Memphis. In his free time, he enjoys running, playing guitar, and cooking.

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Christopher Hastings, PhD
Regional English Language Officer
U.S. Department of State

# Reflecting on Your Teaching Context

What's your school's stance on using students' first language, or a shared local language, in the EFL classroom?

Share your experiences in the chat.

Objectives

- Define two approaches that emphasize using students' first languages, or a shared local language, in the EFL classroom
    - Plurilingualism & Translanguaging
- Discuss the benefits of these approaches
- Review tips and tricks for successfully integrating these approaches in the EFL classroom
- Explore activities that encourage the use of multiple languages to facilitate learning
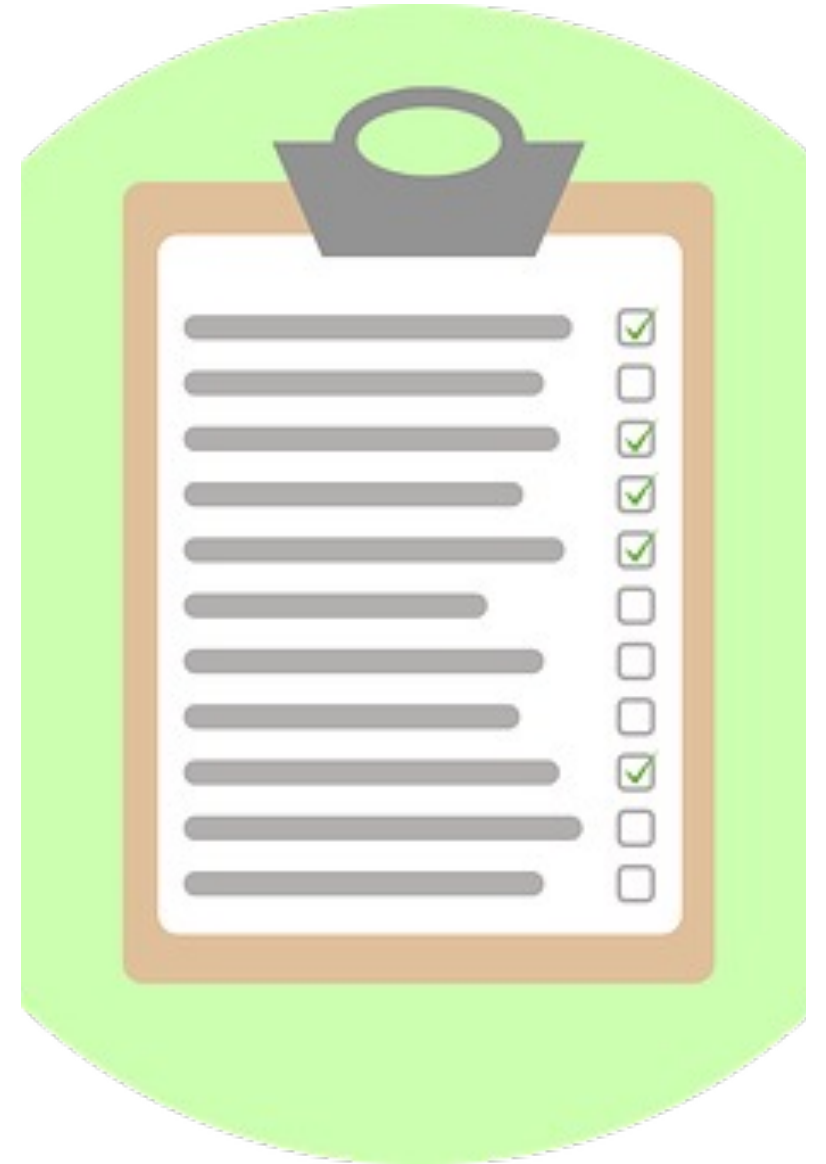
Key Information

	Plurilingualism	Translanguaging
Definition		

Bottom line: These approaches both focus on incorporating students' first—or shared local languages—in the ELT classroom to benefit learning … and to celebrate the value of all languages!

Examples

Situation	

What other benefits do you see with having students use their first language, or the shared local languages, in the EFL classroom?

Share your ideas in the chat.

Benefits

- Validates students' multilingual identities and experiences.

- Encourages students to draw on their full linguistic repertoire, enhancing their learning.

- Bridges home languages and school languages, making learning more relevant and meaningful.

- Fosters the development of metalinguistic awareness and promotes minority languages.

- Enhances students' vocabulary learning, plurilingual and pluricultural competence, cognition, criticality, and empathy.

Tips & Tricks

- Introduce the idea of using students' L1s in the classroom.

- Discuss the potential challenges.

- Highlight the importance of working with school administrations and English-only policies.

What challenges might you face with using these approaches?

Share your thoughts in the chat.

Tips & Tricks

- Start small and gradually increase the use of students' first languages.

- Use visual aids and bilingual resources to support understanding.

- Encourage peer support and collaborative learning.

Tips & Tricks

- Communicate with parents and school administrators about your approach.

- Incorporate culture and real-world contexts into your lessons.

- Regularly reflect on and adjust your teaching practices.

Activities

- Linguistic Inventory: A Starting Point

- Practical Ideas for Classroom Activities

- Adapting to Different Contexts

Activity 1: Linguistic Inventory

- A tool for self-reflection on language experiences and practices

- Helps students recognize the linguistic influences

- Encourages awareness of linguistic resources

Linguistic Inventory - Template

Identify	Identify your first language and where you learned it.
List	List other languages you speak and who taught you.
Discuss	Discuss influences on your language(s).
Reflect on	Reflect on your feelings towards your language(s) and dialect/accent.
Consider	Consider if your language(s) are positively or negatively marked, and why.
Compare	Compare your language use with your family, neighbors, and classmates.
Describe	Describe the unique features of your personal language.
Reflect	Reflect on your beliefs about different forms of language.

Linguistic Inventory Example - Chris

Item for Chris: **Reflect on**	Reflect on your feelings towards your language(s) and dialect/accent.

- English as L1; learned in Chicago and Memphis

- Mixed feelings about Southern American English

- Spanish studied in school, improved through immersion

- Arabic studied over 15 years, influenced by Modern Standard Arabic, Saudi students, and Lebanese spouse

Linguistic Inventory Example - Kate

Item for Kate: **Discuss**	Discuss the influences on your language(s).

Kate, what have been the biggest influences on your English and other languages?

Linguistic Inventory Example – Audience

Item for all:
Compare

Compare your language use with your family, neighbors, and classmates.

Share your thoughts in the chat.

Adapting and Benefiting from the Linguistic Inventory

Adaptation: Tailor inventory to suit classroom context and student levels.

Follow-up Activities: Use inventory as a starting point for further language exploration.

Benefits: Enhance students' self-awareness and respect for linguistic diversity.

Reflection on the Language Inventory

How can you use the linguistic inventory information in your teaching?

Share your ideas in the chat.

Activity 2:
Mapping One's Sociocultural Network

- **Background**: This activity helps students recognize the diversity of their linguistic resources and understand how language use varies across different social contexts.

- **Instructions**: Students create a visual representation of their social and cultural connections, including the languages spoken within these networks.

- **Benefits**: Enhances students' awareness of their own multilingualism and the role of language in their social interactions.

Sociocultural Network Map Example
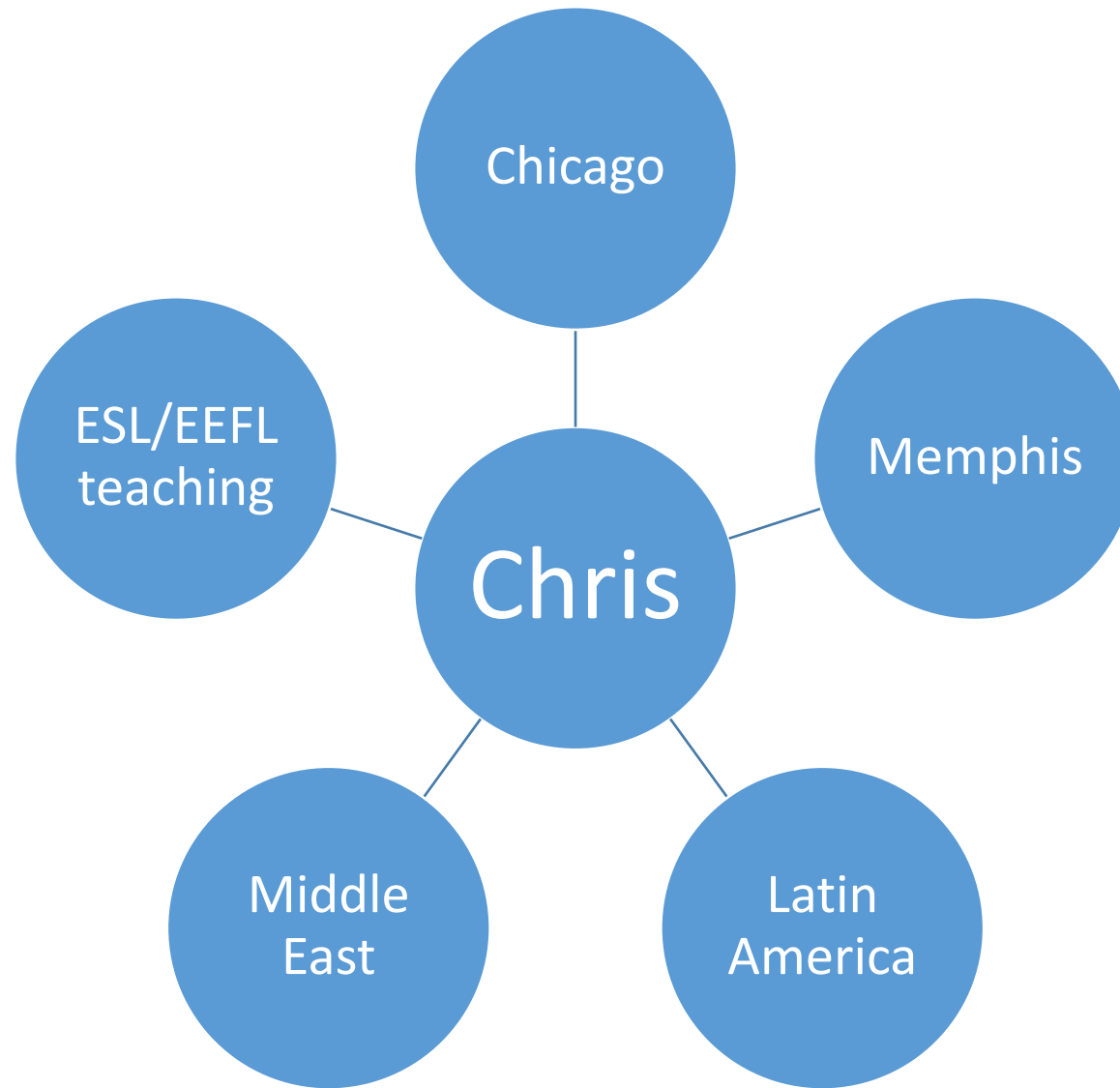
Activity 3:
Making Cross-Linguistic Comparisons

- **Background**: This activity enhances students' metalinguistic awareness, helping them understand how languages can be similar and different.

- **Instructions**: Students compare and contrast linguistic features (such as grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation) across their home languages and English.

- **Benefits**: Enhances language learning and fosters cultural understanding and appreciation.

Cross-Linguistic Comparisons: English vs. Arabic

Grammar:

- **English** - Subject-Verb-Object
- **Arabic** - Verb-Subject-Object

Vocabulary:

- **English** - Latin script, Latin & Greek roots
- **Arabic** - Arabic script, Semitic roots

Pronunciation:

- **English** – More consonant clusters (English has more and words can end with them), word stress can change meaning & lexical category of word (object v. object)
- **Arabic** – Fewer consonant clusters, word stress does not change meaning

Activity 4:
Exploring Idioms from Around the World

Background: This activity enriches students' vocabulary and fosters intercultural understanding and appreciation.

Instructions: Students research and share idioms from their home languages and English, discussing their meanings and cultural significance.

Benefits: Enriches vocabulary and fosters intercultural understanding and appreciation.

Exploring Idioms from Around the World

Instructions

- Present an idiom from your home language.
- Share the idiom, its literal translation, and its cultural significance in the chat.

Recap

- Plurilingualism and translanguaging are powerful strategies that leverage students' linguistic knowledge to enhance their language learning journey.

- These approaches validate students' multilingual identities, bridge home and school languages, and foster communication.

- They promote the idea that all languages and language varieties have value.

- Through various examples, we have explored how these strategies can be implemented in different contexts.
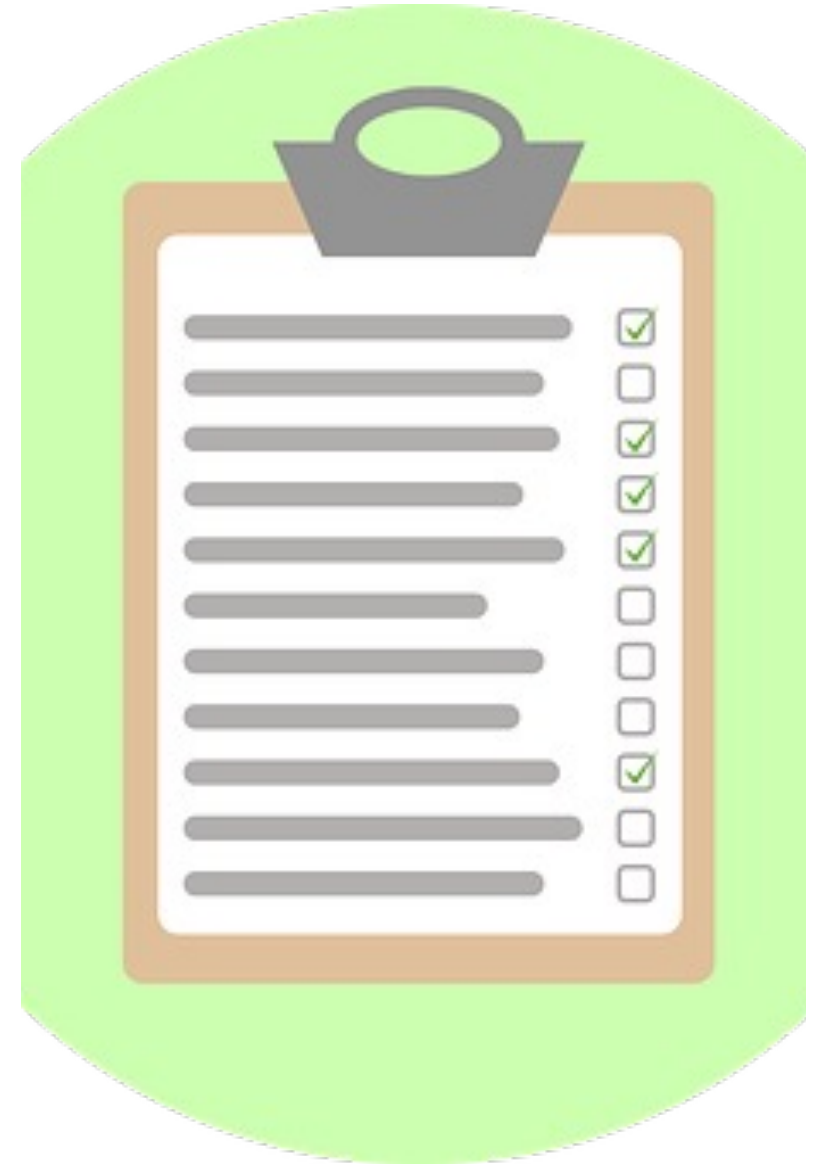
Conclusion

Call to Action

- I encourage you to incorporate plurilingual and translanguaging strategies in your teaching.

- Recognize and value the multiple languages that your students bring into the classroom. Use these languages as resources for learning, not just the target language. This approach can make learning more relevant and meaningful for your students.

- Reflect on your language learning experiences and consider how you can adapt these strategies for your students.

What activity do you want to incorporate in your classroom?

Share your reflections in the chat.

References

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Thank you!

Questions or concerns?

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Reflection Questions

1. How might you dedicate time, use routines, or create a physical space for productive L1 use in class?

2. How might completing the linguistic inventory shared in today's webinar benefit your students' or your own teaching practice?

3. Which of the other activities explored during the webinar (sociocultural network mapping, cross-linguistic comparisons, or idiom exploration) might be useful in your classroom? What adaptations might you need to make?

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