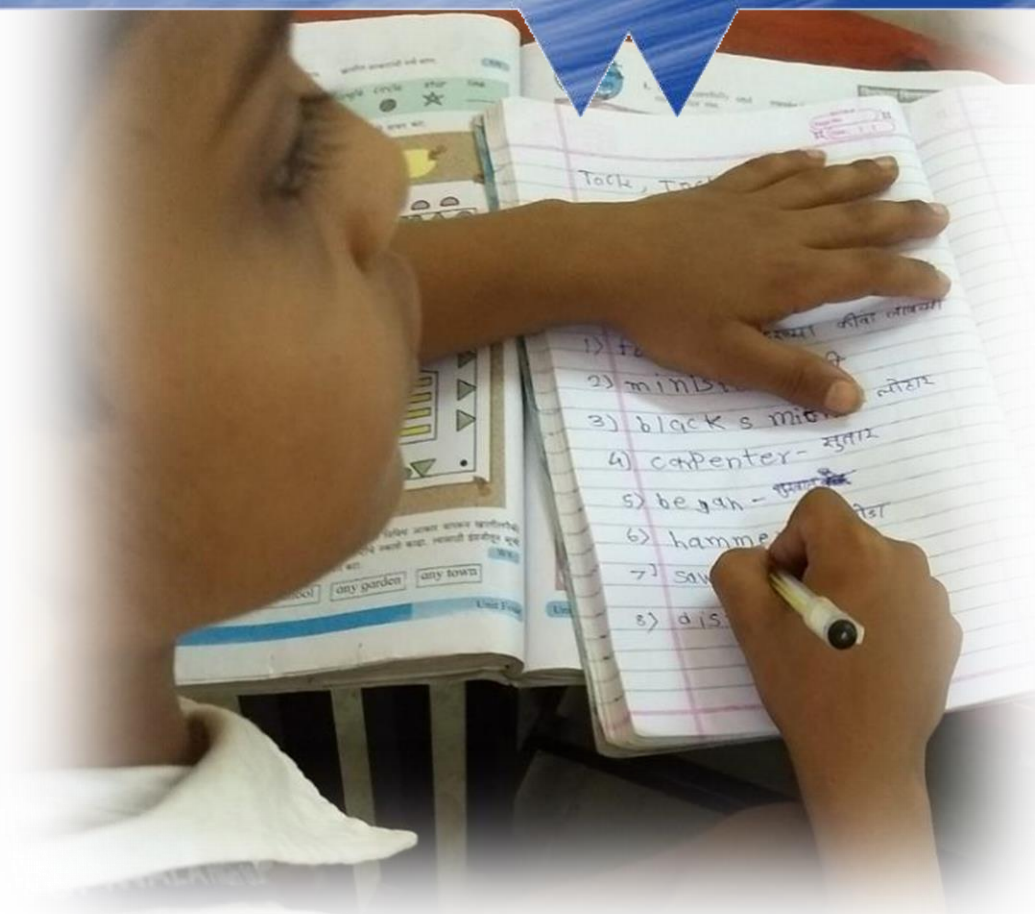


# Multilingualism and Translanguaging: Opportunities and critical concerns for ELT classrooms in the Global South

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**10<sup>th</sup> Nationwide ELT Conference: English for All**

La Paz, Bolivia, 11-13<sup>th</sup> September 2024



# Plan for the talk

1. Introductions
2. The multilingual turn in language teaching
3. Translanguaging: background, theory, examples
4. Monolingual and translingual paradigms
5. Expert teachers' translanguaging practices (if time)
6. Implications for ELT in Bolivia
7. Call for more research
8. References and questions

*Slides available  
online at end!*

# Who am I?

- Teacher, teacher educator, author, researcher (English language teaching, general education, teacher education), based in the United Kingdom (University of Warwick)
- Because of my privilege I've worked in over 30 countries worldwide
- I've spoken 9 languages (English, Bahasa Melayu, Français, हिन्दी, Italiano, Kinyarwanda, Русский, ትግርኛ, українська)
- ... and largely forgotten 5 of these 😞



# Who am I?

## My most valuable lesson learnt:

- There are expert teachers everywhere - they can teach us so much about how to teach effectively (more on this tomorrow!)
- Yet models of effective teaching are based primarily on European and North American (i.e., the West, Global North, Anglophone centre) research, pedagogy and values
- And this includes how we understand and use language in education: the *monolingual habitus* (Liddicoat, 2016 ) of Western thought



# Who are you?

1. Find someone you don't know very well.
2. Introduce yourselves briefly (feel free to use/blend, e.g., Aymara, English, Guarani, Quechua, Spanish, Tacana or any of the many languages we know).
3. Quick check – ask each other:
  - a. How much you know about 'translanguaging'? (expert, beginner, etc.)
  - b. How interested in it are you? (very, partially, not at all)

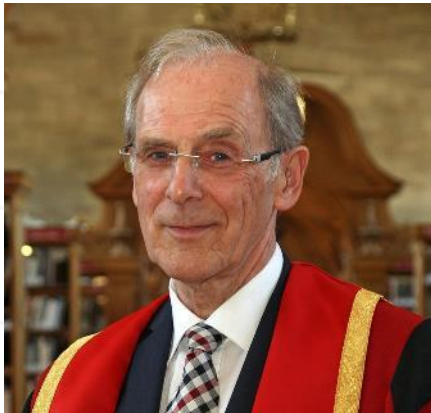
Let's get feedback ('thinking fingers'): 0-5



# The (wider) multilingual turn in language teaching



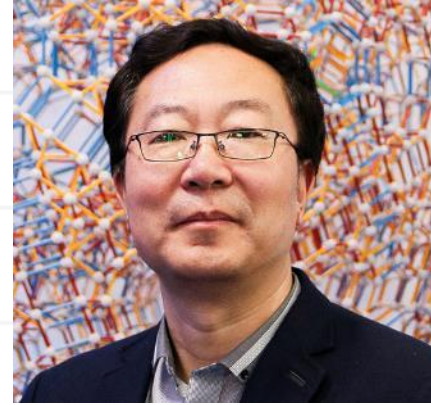
# And then... translanguaging



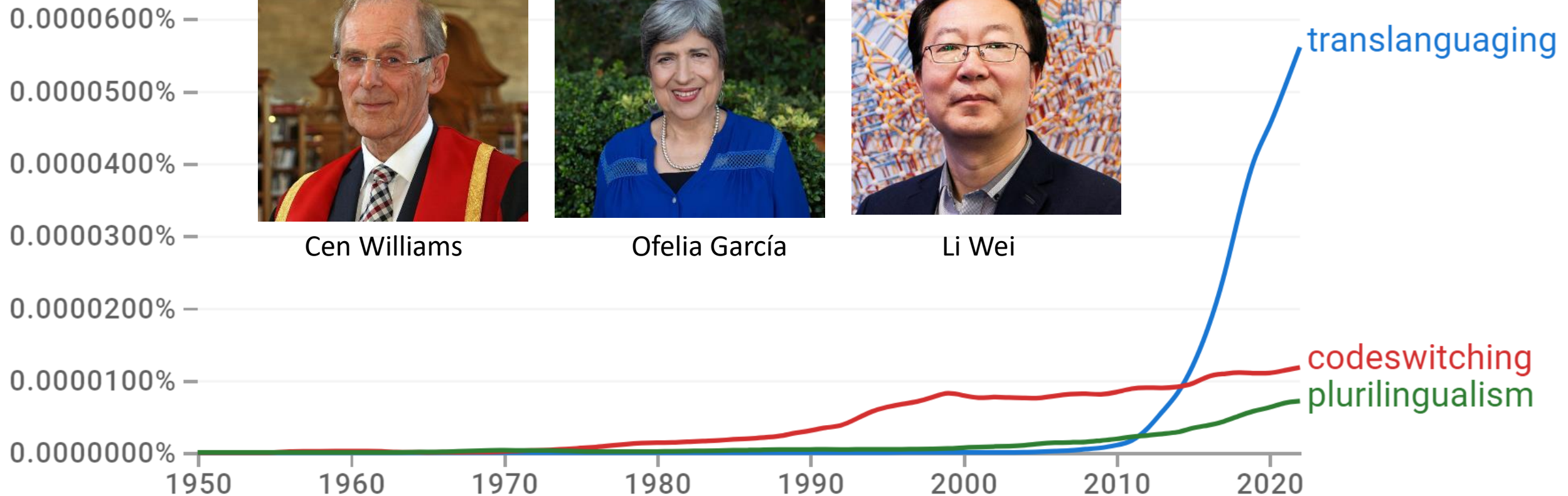
Cen Williams



Ofelia García



Li Wei



[https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=translanguaging%2Ccodeswitching%2Cplurilingualism&year\\_start=1950&year\\_end=2022&corpus=en&smoothing=3&case\\_insensitive=false](https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=translanguaging%2Ccodeswitching%2Cplurilingualism&year_start=1950&year_end=2022&corpus=en&smoothing=3&case_insensitive=false)

# What is translanguaging?

...translanguaging is an approach to the use of language, bilingualism and the education of bilinguals that considers the language practices of bilinguals not as two autonomous language systems as has been traditionally the case, but as **one linguistic repertoire** with features that have been societally constructed as belonging to two separate languages.

(Garcia & Li, 2014, p. 2)

- It places us, as multilinguals, and our multilingual communication before the ‘named languages’ that we make use of
- It acknowledges the importance of named languages as societal/political constructs, but not as psychologically or semantically appropriate means of understanding multilinguals or communication (Otheguy et al., 2015)



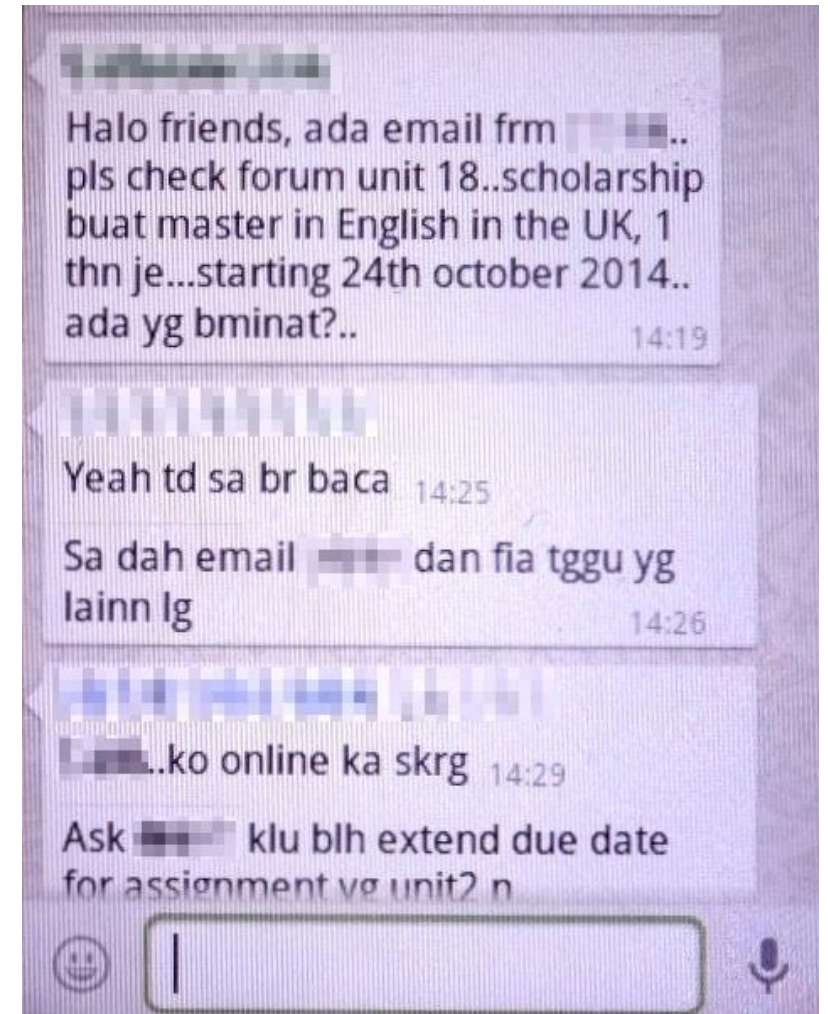
# What is translanguaging?

“Mimi nitawapa **knowledge**  
hata kama sikumurder college  
Chekini habari kila siku ni **war**  
Mazee tafakari **what you just saw**  
Hatutaki kuwasikia **man** mkibonga mkibonga  
Juu hata **last year** bado tuligongwa  
Kisa cha **Westgate** bado **a great hatred**  
waliomadwa Manderu, **post-election**, Kibera  
mimi bado ni **Mkenya**  
Mkizindi kututenda  
nitawakubusha kama **Mkenya**  
Tunapigwa na militia, kila siku tunalia...”

Frobo (2015)

Garissa we are one  
(Kenya let's unite)

English-Malay  
What's App chat  
(Anderson, 2018)



# What is translanguaging?

War and Peace (1868)  
by Толстой (Tolstoy)

У нее брат, вот что недавно женился на Lise Мейнен, адъютант Кутузова. Он будет нынче у меня.

– Ecoutez, chere Annette, – сказал князь, взяв вдруг свою собеседницу за руку и пригибая ее почему-то книзу. – Arrangez-moi cette affaire et je suis votre вернейший раб а tout jamais ran, comme mon староста m'ecrit des донесенья: покой-ер-п! Она хорошей фамилии и богата. Всё, что мне нужно.

И он с теми свободными и фамильярными, грациозными движениями, которые его отличали, взял за руку фрейлину, поцеловал ее и, поцеловав, помахал фрейлинскою рукой, развалившись на креслах и глядя в сторону.

– Attendez, – сказала Анна Павловна, соображая. – Я нынче же поговорю Lise (la femme du jeune Болконский). И, может быть, это уладится. Ce sera dans votre famille, que je ferai mon apprentissage de vieille fille.

# What is translinguaging?

У нее брат, вот что недавно женился на Lise Мейнен, адъютант Кутузова. Он будет нынче у меня.

– Ecoutez, chere Annette, – сказал князь, взяв вдруг свою собеседницу за руку и пригибая ее почему-то книзу. – Arrangez-moi cette affaire et je suis votre вернейший раб а tout jamais ran, comme mon староста m'ecrit des донесенья: покой-ер-п! Она хорошей фамилии и богата. Всё, что мне

approaches the group of women. She is asked to tell Yolanda what an *antojo* is. She puts her brown hands away in her uniform pockets.

“*U'té, que sabe,*” Altagracia says in a small voice. You're the one to know.

“Come now, Altagracia,” her mistress scolds.

The maid obeys. “In my *campo* we say a person has an *antojo* when they are taken over by *un santo* who wants something.” Altagracia backs away, and when not recalled, turns and heads back to her stool.

и фамильярными, которые его отличали, взял за руку, поцеловав, помахал рукой, сел на креслах и глядя в

а Павловна, соображая. – Я (comme du jeune Болконский). И, comme era dans votre famille, que je suis une fille.

How the García girls lost their accents (2010) by Julia Alvarez

# Adjacent text translanguaging: La Paz

**HAPPY Kids**

A large, colorful sign for 'HAPPY Kids' is mounted on a white wall. The word 'HAPPY' is in large, rounded letters: 'H' is purple, 'A' is pink, 'P' is orange, 'P' is orange, and 'Y' is blue. The word 'Kids' is in blue, green, red, and yellow. Small cartoon figures of children are integrated into the letters, such as a girl in a red dress inside the 'H', a boy in a green shirt inside the 'A', and a girl in a yellow dress inside the 'Y'. The background of the sign is white.

maternal

A blue sign with the word 'maternal' in white lowercase letters. A cartoon figure of a girl in a blue dress is attached to the right side of the sign.

parvulario

A teal sign with the word 'parvulario' in white lowercase letters. A cartoon figure of a girl in a green shirt is attached to the left side of the sign.

prekinder

A pink sign with the word 'prekinder' in white lowercase letters. A cartoon figure of a girl in a yellow shirt is attached to the right side of the sign.

kinder

A yellow sign with the word 'kinder' in orange lowercase letters. A cartoon figure of a girl in a red dress is attached to the left side of the sign.

Salón de eventos infantiles

A blue sign with the text 'Salón de eventos infantiles' in white lowercase letters. A cartoon figure of a girl in a blue dress is attached to the right side of the sign.

GARAJE  
NO ESTACIONAR

A small white sign with a red circle and a diagonal slash, indicating a no parking zone. The text 'GARAJE' and 'NO ESTACIONAR' is written above and below the symbol respectively.

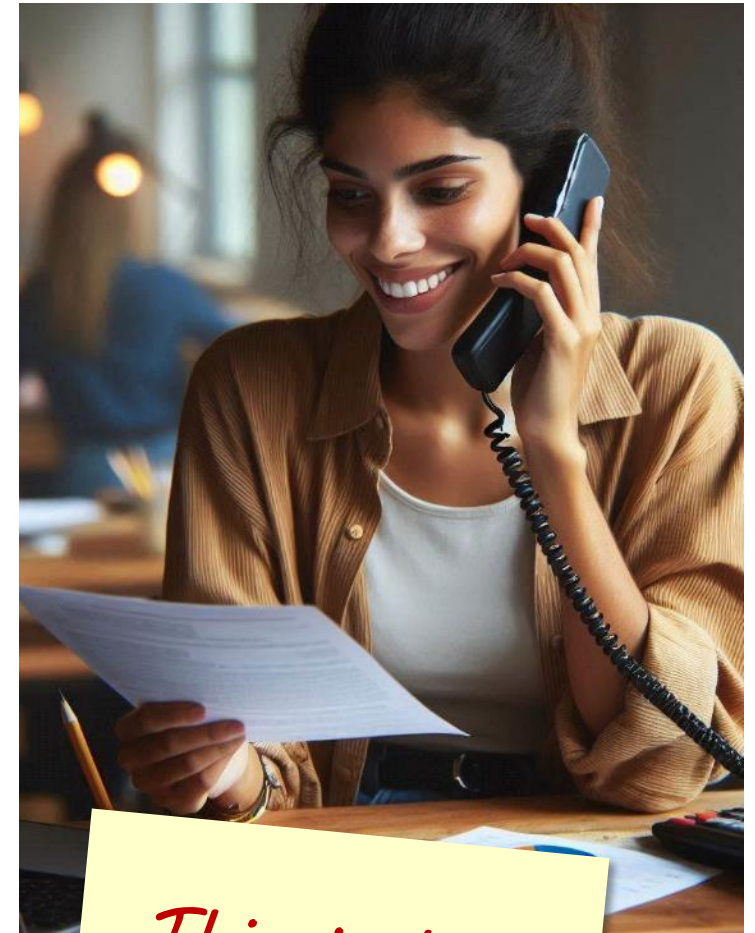
# Translanguaging at home and work

Document in English  
Discussing it in Spanish



Conversation using Aymara and Spanish  
Social media message in Spanish about an English movie.

Images: Bing Image Creator



*This is how we really language!*

# Translanguaging as pedagogy

Heugh (2021) and Cenoz & Gorter (2021) observe that, in practice ‘translanguaging’ has become an umbrella term for a range of language-inclusive practices and ideas. It has replaced previous terms like ‘codeswitching’ and ‘using the L1’.



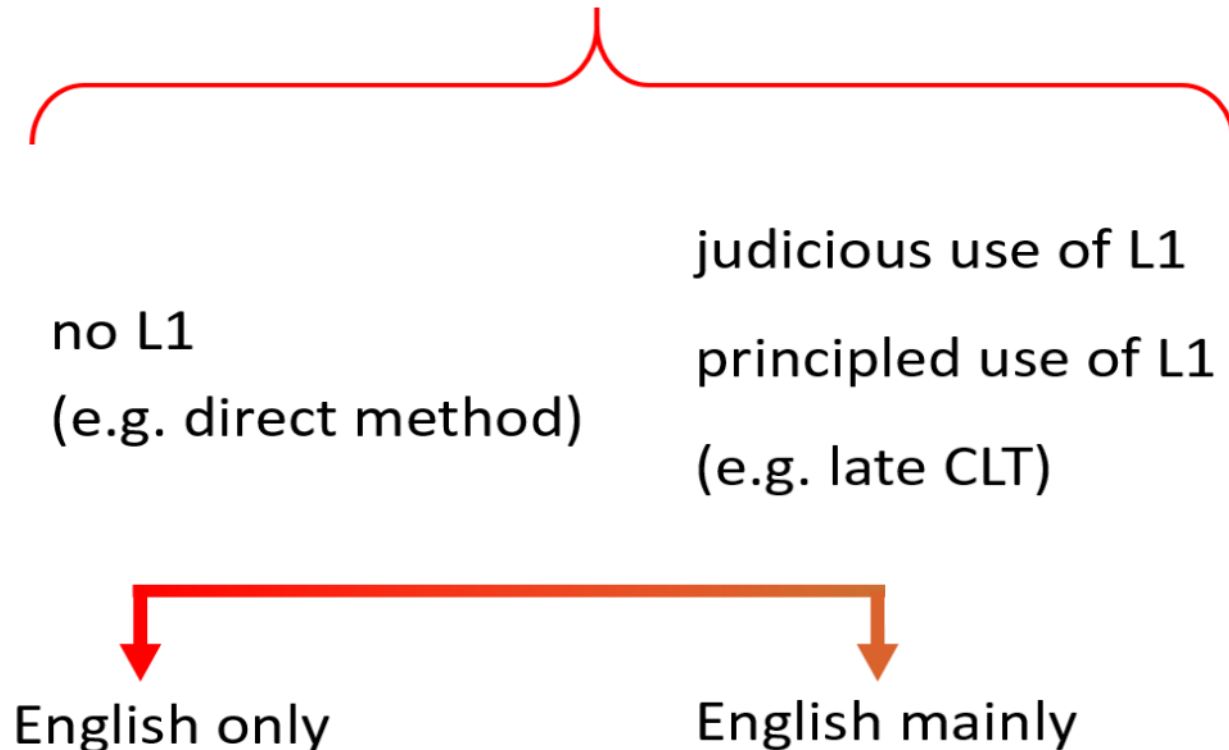
# Translanguaging as multilingual communicative competence



- Anderson's “translingual competence” (2018). We, and our learners, need to (learn to) move flexibly along this continuum, depending on context, interlocutor(s) and aims (see Figure).

# The translanguaging paradigm shift for (Western) ELT

## The monolingual paradigm





# The translanguaging paradigm shift for (Western) ELT

## The monolingual paradigm

no L1  
(e.g. direct method)

judicious use of L1  
principled use of L1  
(e.g. late CLT)

## The translanguual paradigm

effective use of all  
linguaging resources

English only

English mainly

English appropriately  
↑  
(verb)

# My research with expert Indian teachers (Anderson, 2024a)



# My research with expert Indian teachers (Anderson, 2024a)

- 8 teachers from across India
- All met multiple expertise criteria
- All believed in being inclusive of learners' full repertoire; encouraging other languages; scaffolding to more English-proficient languaging.
- A big variety of how much English in theirs and their learners' language.

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Extract 1:Raju/Obs.19 (Gr.7) /04:40 (English/Telugu)

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T: Eighteen?

S1: Absent.

T: *Entra, Shashi Vardhan regular, vachhe vaadu vastalledu?*

What, Shashi Vardhan, the one who comes regularly is not coming?

S2: Go to village.

T: Ah, he went to village? For, for what?

S2: His grandmother.

T: His grandmother?

S3: Marriage. Marriage!

T: His grandmother's marriage? (students laugh)

S2: No, no!

S3: Marriage.

T: Whose marriage?

S2: *Chuttalu.*

relatives

S4: *Sodari.*

sister

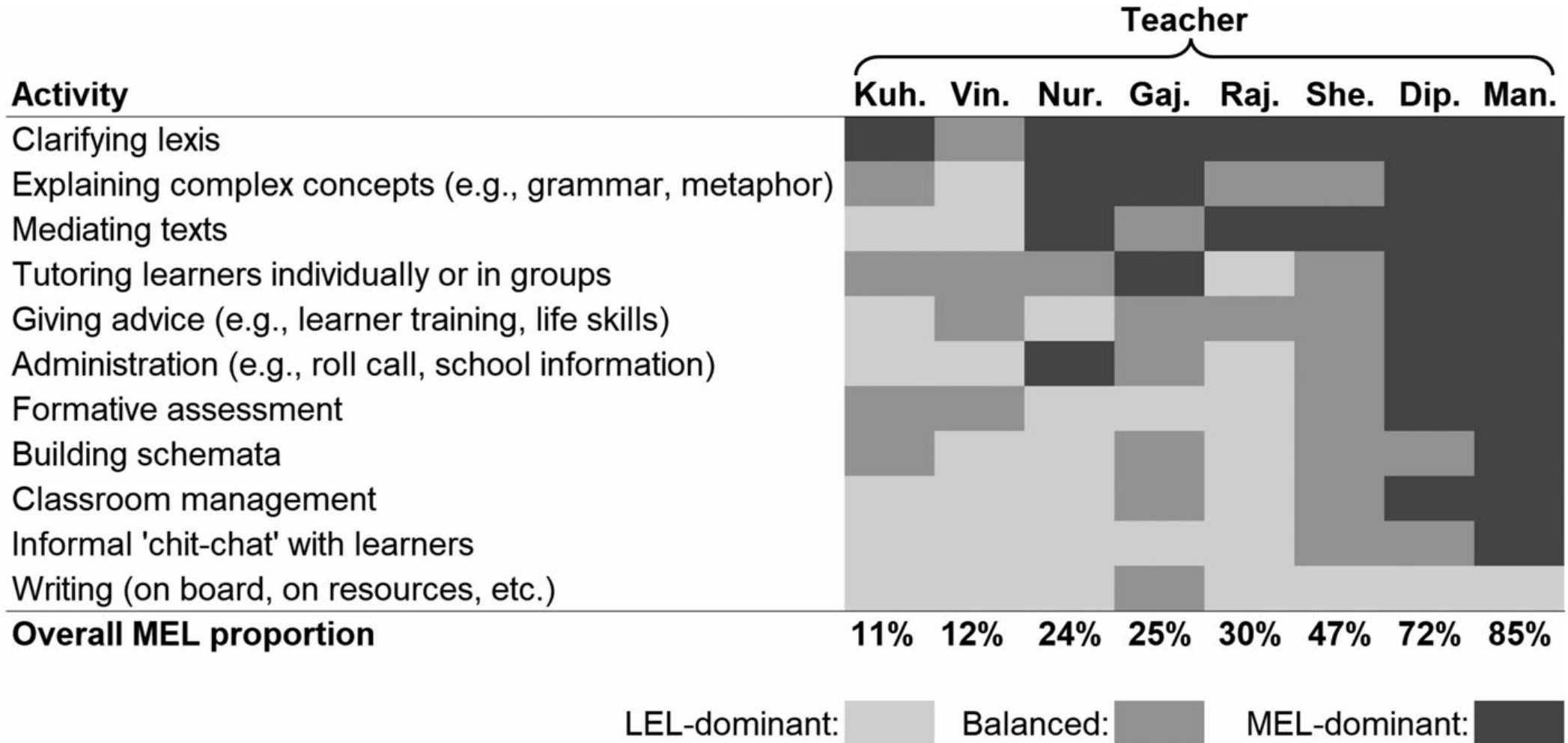
S1: *Emantaaru?*

How do we say that?

T: Ah, his sister's marriage.

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# My research on expert Indian teachers (Anderson, 2024a)



LEL – less enabled language (English); MEL – more enabled language (varied)

# How do learners translanguage to learn?

- E.g., West Bengal: two students composing a text together (Anderson, 2024a):

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Extract 10: Kuheli/Obs.25 (Gr.8) /24:30 (English/Bangla)

---

S1: *Na, tui ar likhisni ota.*

S2: *Ki? Ami? So at last*

S2: *last month*

S1: *we decided*

S2: *so last month. Dur baba! we have*

S1: *decided*

S2: *started*

S1: *to go, decided to*

S2: *last month we went*

S1: *Na, we start korlam, we started to*

S2: *to go for sea voyage in Indian Ocean.*

(writing) *Tui onyo kichu lekh.*

S1: *No, you don't write that.*

S2: *What? Me? So at last*

S2: *last month*

S1: *we decided*

S2: *so last month. Oh come on! we have*

S1: *decided*

S2: *started*

S1: *to go, decided to*

S2: *last month we went*

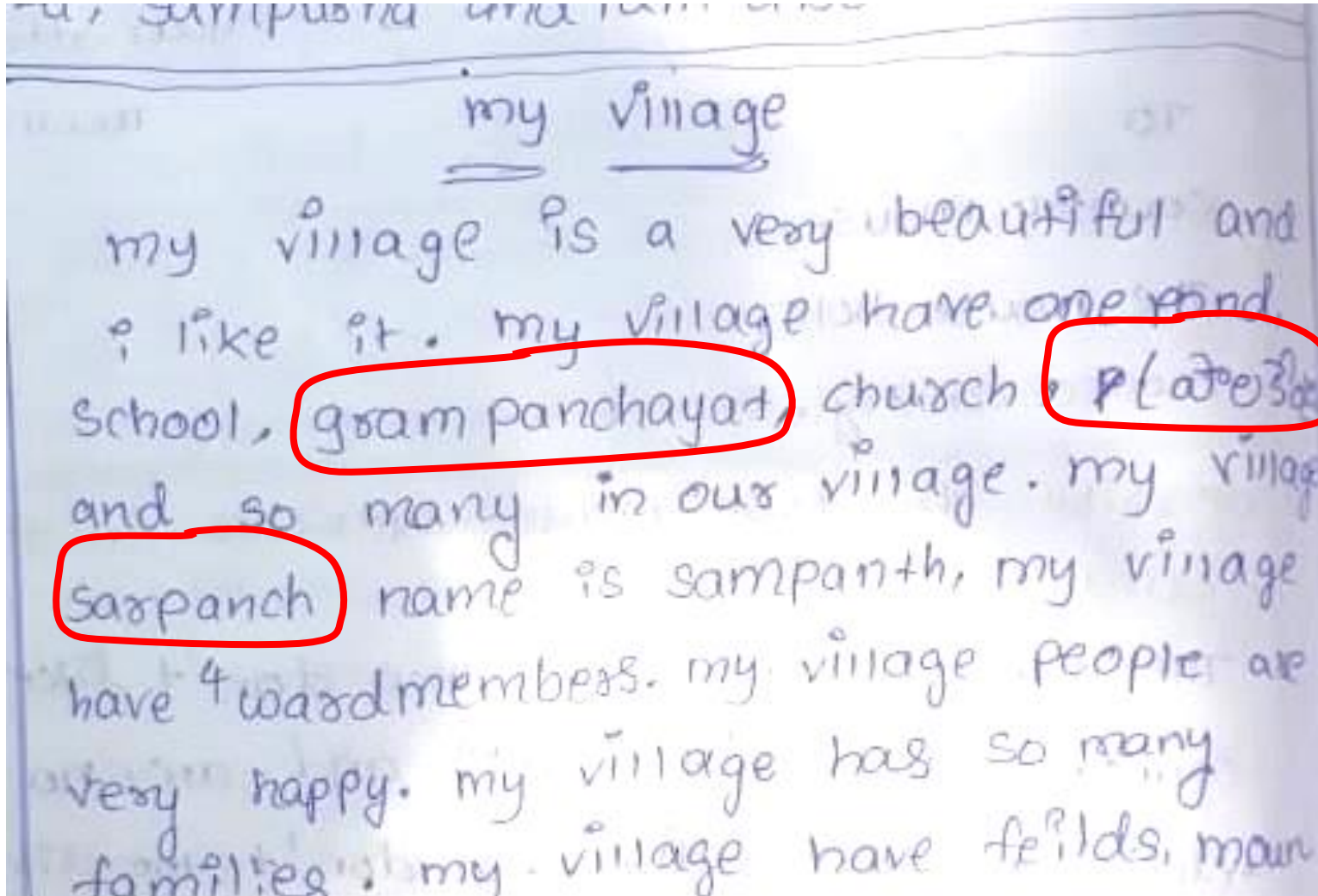
S1: *No, we start start, we started to*

S2: *to go for sea voyage in Indian Ocean.*

(writing) *You write something else.*

---

# How do learners translanguauge to learn?



Resources from learners' wider repertoires integrated naturally into English text.

(Anderson, 2021, p. 129)

# Discussion: Implications of translanguaging theory and pedagogy for teachers of English in Bolivia

Share your opinions:

1. Is translanguaging theory relevant to us?
2. What implications does it have?
3. Does it validate things you already do in your teaching?
4. Does it offer new ideas to you, new perspectives, new insights?
5. Are you concerned about any potential negative impacts it might have?

## Jason's thoughts: Potential implications for teachers of English in Bolivia

Perhaps...

- We should **stop isolating** the 'L2' from the 'L1', and begin thinking about valuing, embracing and adding to our learners' repertoires
- We should move from 'English only' to '**English appropriately**'
- We can **embrace our multilingual practices** – meshing, mixing, subverting, translating, interpreting, mediating – as part of **who we are**
- We can embrace our **expertise at 'monolanguaging' and 'monolecting'** (e.g., 'legal register' or 'academic English'); as part of our multilingual repertoire (see García & Sylvan, 2011)
- We should **recognise our expertise** in our learners' prior language, knowledge, culture and customs as '**translingual teachers**'...



# The translingual teacher (of English)

- “[a translingual teacher] 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, p. 34



How can we do this?

Translanguaging ideas from English teachers in other countries



# Practical ideas for translanguaging: 1

## Culture share (from Prof. Julu Sen, India)

- Works well with students from diverse cultures (e.g. multicultural cities).
- Ss bring items of cultural importance to class.
- Students talk about and explain the importance of these items using full repertoire as appropriate.
- Then they prepare either a text, or give a brief presentation on the item in English.



# Practical ideas for translanguaging 2: Proverb equivalents (from Messaouda Ladjini, Algeria)

- Give students 2-3 common proverbs in English (e.g., 'That's not my cup of tea', 'You can't teach an old dog new tricks')
- Get them to work in groups to try to think of equivalents in other languages they know
- Confirm answers (if required)
- Students discuss any cultural differences
- Students add to a 'proverb' wall chart, incl. all their languages



## Practical ideas for translanguaging 3: Five sentences (from Dr. Heera Rajwani, India)

- 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.

# Practical ideas for translanguaging 4: Critical news translanguaging (Jason)

- Works well in classes with two or more languages other than English
- A recent news story is chosen
- Working in small groups students analyse how the story is presented in different languages
- Drawing upon these different sources, students write a version of the story in English. Their aim should be to make it both informative and politically (more) neutral
- Students then change groups, read each other's stories and discuss them critically
- **Note:** this mimics something many language studies graduates will need to do in the future

# Practical ideas for translanguaging 5: Multilingual resources

- E.g., Mr 'Banglish'
- Good at primary level
- Bilingual poster
- Each card is stuck on with sticky tape
- English on one side
- L1 on back
- Helps to develop an understanding of equivalence between languages



# Implications for assessment

- We should move away from the ‘monolingual myth’ of CLT/SLA and particularly so-called “communicative” language testing
- This may involve a move from assessing (monolingual) communicative competence to multilingual competence (Lopez et al., 2016) or translingual competence (Anderson, 2018)
- Exams can incorporate a wider range of tasks/items on, e.g., ‘mediation’, ‘accommodation’, ‘translating’, ‘interpreting texts’ (e.g., Lopez et al., 2016)
- More voices from the Global South are required, esp. Latin America



# Call for more research and scholarship

We need more research in Bolivian classrooms:

- Scholarship that theorises translanguaging within Bolivia's contexts and history
- Research that documents, interprets and gives voice to translanguaging in Bolivia: learners' and teachers' opinions and wisdom
- Research that evaluates its 'impact' (widely defined)
- Research to convince some authorities to move away from 'English-only' / EMI-as-best policy (see Simpson, 2019)

# Slides are here

- <http://www.jasonanderson.org.uk/talks.htm> (scroll down to Recent Talks)

Jason Anderson

PUBLICATIONS TALKS PROJECTS RESOURCES BLOG

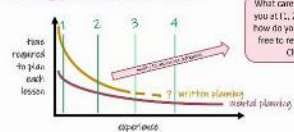
Talks: webinars, online events and public speaking by Jason Anderson

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## Planning practices over time



### (Some) Differences between global research and Southern expertise

Evidence suggests that expert Southern teachers also:

1. need to plan contingently, negotiate more with learners and select carefully from (often ambitious) curriculum content.
2. are able to design resourceless activities and get by without ICT
3. focus on building learner confidence and reducing 'hear'
4. engage in more multilingual practices and use inclusive of their learners' languages
5. engage in 'active monitoring' during collaborative learning
6. may prioritise 'understanding' over higher order thinking skills
7. may offer 'feedback' rather than critical feedback to learners



How can all these sources be brought together?  
One possible model for



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