



A Pedagogy for bi/plurilingual pupils: Translanguaging

GUIDANCE FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS



Introduction

This guidance document is for teacher educators working with student or qualified teachers of any level of experience. It acts to support your guidance to teachers about translanguaging pedagogy for pupils who live and learn in more than one language which encourages and enables pupils to draw on all of their languaging practices in the service of learning. The guidance is based on research evidence about why this pedagogy supports learning and how best to achieve this. Evidence is used here to describe the principles and suggested practice of translanguaging pedagogy. For a discussion of the concept of translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy, see section 1.3.

The document is split into

Section 1: Introducing

- 1.1) The ROMtels project
- 1.2) Terminology
- 1.3) Theoretical framework

Section 2: Teaching to Unlearn

Section 3: Using the Project Evidence to Teach Translanguaging Pedagogy

Section 4: Useful Resources






Bibliography


The document contains reference to theoretical evidence. We present many pictorial representations, with references to quotes and other original sources to support your teaching.





How to read this document

The document contains a number of icons to help you locate evidence quickly.


-  Questions teachers ask about translanguaging pedagogy and all that it involves
-  Video material from the ROMtels project
-  Further sources of information
-  Reference to the ROMtels website
-  Sources of research evidence

There are 2 versions of this guidance: hard copy and electronic copy via the research project website <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/guidancehandbooks/> 

The hard copy provides links to the website to view accompanying example video materials. These are embedded into the online version of the guidance document. The video material consists of 2 types of material:


- Videos made for enquiries consisting of characters speaking in English and a translanguaged form of: East Slovak Romani and Slovak; Czech Vlax and Slovak; Ursari and Romanian (found at <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/wg3/wg3resources/> (WG 3.6) ).
- Videos of children (and parents) learning together through problem solving, exemplifying translanguaging for learning (<https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/video/> ). These are categorized further into excerpts of: translanguaging for learning in action; translanguaging for participation, natural translanguaging and awareness of language choice; and translanguaging and affect.



The hard copy also provides links, which are embedded within the electronic version, to tools and apps which are completely free to download from the research website <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/tech> (T1) . These are categorised as:

- Tools to be used on any Microsoft touchscreen device (not Apple or Android) to support learning and to record evidence for collaborative problem solving: notepad*, colour drawing pad*, voice recorder*, camera*, postcard*, history timeline*, voting; and talking/picture bilingual dictionary.
- Puzzle apps to be used on any any Microsoft touchscreen device (not Apple or Android) to support learning through collaborative problem solving, and are configurable to any age and for any topic of study: sorting into Carroll diagram or Venn diagram; buying task; pelmanism; spot the difference; squares puzzle*; triangle tessellation puzzle*; zodiac*

*Those with an asterisk cannot be customised. Please note those without an asterisk are fully customisable to suit any age and topic of study (see section 3.2 for further information). Documents and wizards to support the use of videos, tools and apps can be found at:

<https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/tech/> 

1.1 | Introducing the Research Project: ROMtels (Roma translanguaging enquiry learning space)

This project took place across 4 European countries: the UK, France, Finland and Romania. It lasted for two and a half years. The overall aim of the project was to improve the education of Eastern European Traveller children and Roma children in particular, in primary school (age 5-11) classrooms across Europe, and one secondary school in France (with pupils up to the age of 15), to effect improved pupil engagement and motivation with the ultimate goal of improved attainment. The project was in response to data concerning persistent gaps

in school attendance and the achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils in comparison to national averages across Europe (http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance_EN.pdf), and in the partner countries specifically.

The project is also a response to the decline (or non-existence) of home language use in classrooms (age 5-11) as a pedagogic tool to raise the academic achievement of pupils whose home language(s) differs from the official language of their school. This is largely due to



The following sources provide useful comparative data about educational outcomes, alongside that published by UK government in their first statistical release documents, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics?departments%5B%5D=department-for-education>

In terms of outcomes in UK:



Healing a divided Britain EHRC, 2016; Strand (2014); Poverty and ethnicity a review of evidence, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2011; How fair is Britain, EHRC, 2010; The Poverty site at: <http://www.poverty.org.uk>.

In terms of Roma education: Advancing Education of Roma in Romania: Country Assessment and the Roma Education Fund's Strategic Directions, Roma Education fund, 2007; Being Fair, Faring Better Promoting Equality of Opportunity for Marginalized Roma, 2016; Roma Education in Comparative Perspective, 2012



For an historical overview of EAL provision in Britain, please see: <https://eal.britishcouncil.org/eal-sector/different-models-eal-provision>

For an overview of current EAL policy in England, please see: <https://eal.britishcouncil.org/eal-sector/education-policy-eal-england>

the collapse of funding dedicated to EAL (see the information box above) in the shift towards all teachers becoming 'trained in EAL', and political moves towards a more assimilationist agenda (see Smith, 2012 ). The political focus at present in England is on competence in English, as from September 2017, all schools must collect information on children's country of birth, their nationality and level of English proficiency based on 5 new levels ( see Schools Week, March, 2017).

The project began in the UK with two technologies working in tandem (digital table and large scale 360 degree projected displays) to create an immersive virtual reality-like space. The children enter the space as investigators of a particular enquiry ( see website for 4 different enquiries: <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/wg3/overviewenquiries/>). Characters appearing in the space speak to the children in English and a translanguaged form of Roma and the children's Eastern European language, to set problems and puzzles along the way. The children collaborate to solve problems thereby



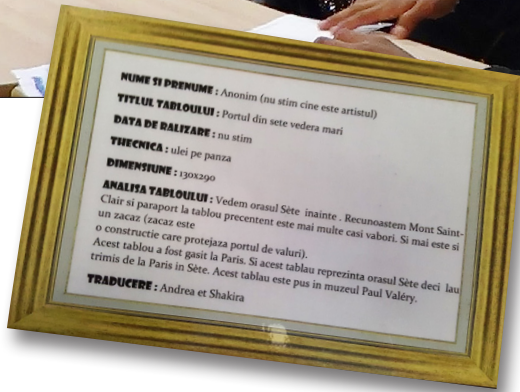
ABOVE: A still from the film of Edward Moore, owner of the warehouse in Gateshead, where the Great fire of Tyneside is reported to have started.


encouraging purposeful language use through translanguaging. The project has also provided guidance (see [!\[\]\(248b91fcdac4810ffd15cf33fb6aec6f_img.jpg\)](http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/tech/(T6))) and wizards to support the change of languages in an enquiry so this is not limited to one school or home language version.

Lessons learned were then applied to French partners who undertook a collaborative art exercise in a Museum in Sète, France. Children and parents visited a museum and analysed 4 paintings. Their task was to then present that analysis in the form of translanguaged writing for a placard for the museum displays. The series of lesson plans can be found in French




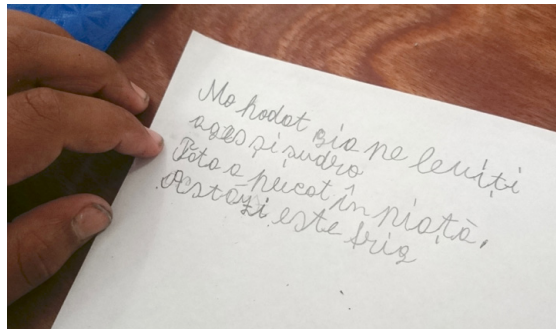
LEFT
Children and
parents working
together in Sète,
France



and English at <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/wg3/wg3resources/> (WG3.9) .

In Romania, the practice of home language use for learning, which had arisen naturally as a result of the specific circumstances of the school (see <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/results/> for details of the school in Tinca), began to be more formalised in classes. Children were encouraged to write in Romanian and Korturare (their Roma dialect), drawing on the standardised form of Romani currently being developed in Romania.

For more information about this, please refer to the conference material from Oradea at: <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/conferences/> .




LEFT
Writing in Roma
in Romania

BOTTOM LEFT
Translanguaging
to learn in Tinca,
Romania



For more detailed accounts of each partner's work see <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/wg2/>

Collaboration with parents, and the transformation of teachers' attitudes towards Roma communities, is an integral part of the project so that children's cultural and linguistic backgrounds are made available to schools by parents who trust this information is respected, valorised and used by teachers to improve the educational and social inclusion of their children. At the same time families become more knowledgeable about institutionalised education.

For details on how this happened see <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/wg1/>. Also see ROMtels handbook 3 at: <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/guidancehandbooks/> .




A full report of the project, including the educational and social impact of translanguaging pedagogy can be found here <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/results/resultsresources/> (WG6.2)

1.2 | Introducing the Pupils

The ROMtels project worked with pupils in 6 schools (5 Primary and 1 Secondary) as in the table below.

Location	School age	Notes
Newcastle upon Tyne, England	2 primary (age 7-11)	School 1: 27 identified languages; EAL ranges from 58% in year 1 to 87% in year 5. School 2: 95.22% EAL; 8.8% (63/712 children) are Roma
Sète, France	1 primary; 1 secondary	9 Roma pupils across the 2 schools. Secondary school: 20-25/500 pupils with FLS Primary school: 20/200 pupils with FLS 15 Identified languages + variations of Arabic/creole
Järvenpää, Finland	1 primary	4 Roma pupils, 2 in 'preparatory class' with 6 other pupils, learning Finnish as an additional language and 2 in special educational needs classes.
Tinca, Romania	1 primary	115 pupils to mid primary level. 100% Roma (pupils who are not accepted/welcomed into local state schools)

Introducing the terminology: EAL, FLS and other associated acronyms and phrases

The terms EAL, FLS/FSL (Français Langue Seconde/ French as a second language) and Roma used above need further explication, as they are often confusing to teachers. In the list below are some of the factors it is helpful to support teachers' understanding of the homogeneity of pupils considered under the umbrella of EAL, FLS/FSL etc 



- Whether pupils were born here or arrived during the years of formal schooling, and if so whether they have travelled within the country before arriving at your school.
- Whether the pupils are learning the language of school simultaneously with or consecutively to their other languages.
- The number of languages spoken in different contexts outside of school, and different to the language of schooling in each country. These are often referred to as home languages, but may not often or ever be spoken in the home.
- The purposes of usage of those languages, e.g. religious, family contact, formal schooling to maintain language
- The mode of communication in languages, e.g. only spoken, mostly spoken with some literacy, primarily in written form.
- The perceived and socio-historical status of their languages by the language community, the families, the pupils and the teachers in comparison to the language of schooling and any other languages.
- Whether their languages have an accepted, standardised written form or not
- Parents'/carers' prior access to education and literacy in the languages
- Pupils' prior access to education, e.g. if fleeing war, destitution, or discrimination children may have had limited access to schooling
- Parents'/carers' prior experiences of institutionalised education such as schools.
- Pupils' experience of trauma prior to arrival at school.

? It is perhaps also worth asking teachers the difference in usage of these terms:

- EAL pupils OR
- Pupils with EAL, where EAL, FLS/FSL, and so forth are terms referring to the process rather than pupils themselves, who will characterise themselves in completely different terms important to them as individuals.

i

The term EAL is argued as problematic by many researchers and academics as it generally assumes:

- pupils learning 'English as an additional language', while being linguistically and culturally diverse, constitute a distinct group with common characteristics and learning needs, and
- ethnicity and language are fixed concepts which have a neat one-to-one correspondence and which position 'EAL' learners as linguistic and social outsiders separate from the monolingual mainstream. (Ainscow et al, 2007)

Roxy Harris also problematizes simplistic understandings, introducing the notion of:

The low-key British Bilinguals: these pupils may have been born and brought up in a multilingual home in an urban area of Britain and they may have routine interaction with family and community languages other than English without claiming a high degree of expertise in these languages. These pupils are entirely comfortable with the discourse of everyday English, particularly local vernacular English. However, these pupils, along with all fellow pupils of ethnic backgrounds including white British pupils, need sustained tuition in written subject-specific standard English for academic purposes.

He also talks about:

The high-achieving Multilinguals: these pupils have a good level of expertise in one or more family/ community languages other than English. These pupils also have a good level of competence in written subject-specific standard English for academic purposes, and needs funded provision of teaching to unlock the potential to develop literacy competence in languages other than English. (Harris, R. 1997).

? Once you have established the complexity of this classification, another important question to ask concerns the tools and policies used in the schools to collect information regarding pupils' translanguaging practices. In ROMtels, we devised some discussion prompts for teachers regarding this as found on the website at <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/wg5/wg5resources/> (WG5.7).

Introducing the terminology: Roma/Romani

It is important that teachers understand the enormous complexity and range of Romani dialects and more specifically that:


- Roma exists in many dialects.
- Roma tends to be reserved for communication between members of the family or close community in the home. Otherwise they speak in their shared European language.
- Roma tend not to attribute a name to their language/dialect, referring instead to Roma, Romania, Zigan or other words meaning Gypsy or of Gypsy heritage.
- There is currently no standardised version of Roma used for writing across countries and continents. Those Roma parents and children who offered to write their dialect, did so using the orthography of their European language. So if they came from the Slovak Republic their written Roma would take on the characteristics of Slovak, and if from Romania, then it would look like Romanian. As stated earlier a standardised written form of Romani is being developed in Romania.



In the ROMtels project we found this meant that children had a variety of experiences with Roma in their homes, so their languaging practices varied greatly. For example, the Roma Slovak parents in Newcastle, UK, told us their children experienced:

- ‘fluent’ Roma, not much Slovak in the home
- mostly Slovak, a few words of Roma from the home (Slovak and Roma in a translanguaged form)
- mostly Slovak, a few words of Roma learned from other children (not from parents)
- fluent Slovak; understand some Roma but not spoken at home
- mixture of Slovak and Roma in the home
- mixture of Czech, Slovak and Roma in the home.

The pupils in Tinca, Romania, are Roma pupils who live with their families on the edge of Tinca village, and who are not accepted in the surrounding state Primary schools. This ‘private’ proRoma school (built and run by a charity) caters specifically for their education in order to enable them to join state schools.

 If you wish to know the history of Romani languages across the globe and possible reasons for their dispersion and current forms, please refer to an excellent powerpoint from experts at the Romani Project, University of Manchester at: [http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/conferences/ \(CN6\)](http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/conferences/ (CN6)) (lecture 2, day 2 of the Newcastle conference: Dr Viktor Leggio).

Also there is a powerpoint presentation about Roma in Finland by Professor Fred Dervin of Helsinki University at: [http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/conferences/ \(CR5\)](http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/conferences/ (CR5))

You may have noticed that we do not include terms such as competence or fluency in a consideration of issues. Instead, we draw on the definition of plurilingualism presented in the CEFR:

“the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social actor has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the social actor may draw”.

(Coste, Moore & Zarate, 1997, p. 12)

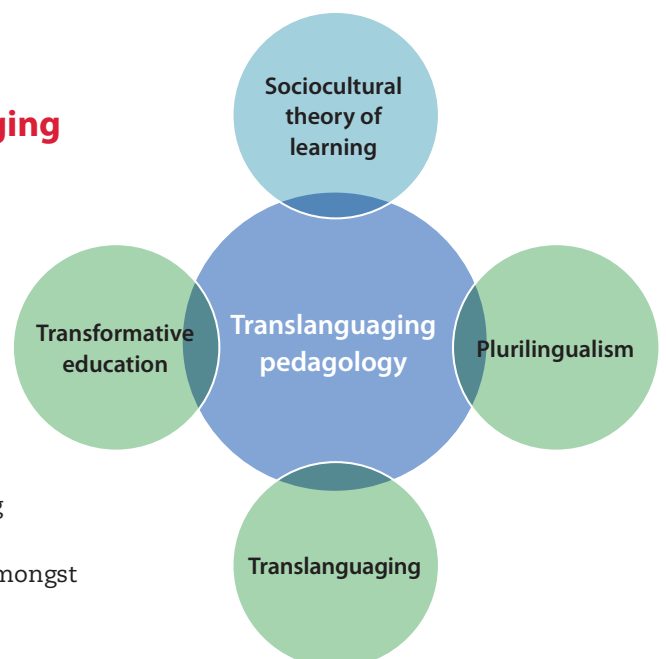
This conception is entirely consistent with our understanding of translanguaging and translanguaging pedagogy which is where we turn now.

1.3 | Introducing translanguaging pedagogy

To understand translanguaging pedagogy we draw on several overarching constructs as in the graphic representation opposite.

Sociocultural theory of mind

Learning here is conceived through a Vygotskian sociocultural lens, where learning is understood to be mediated by culturally determined symbolic tools and signs, chief amongst which is the semiotic tool of language.



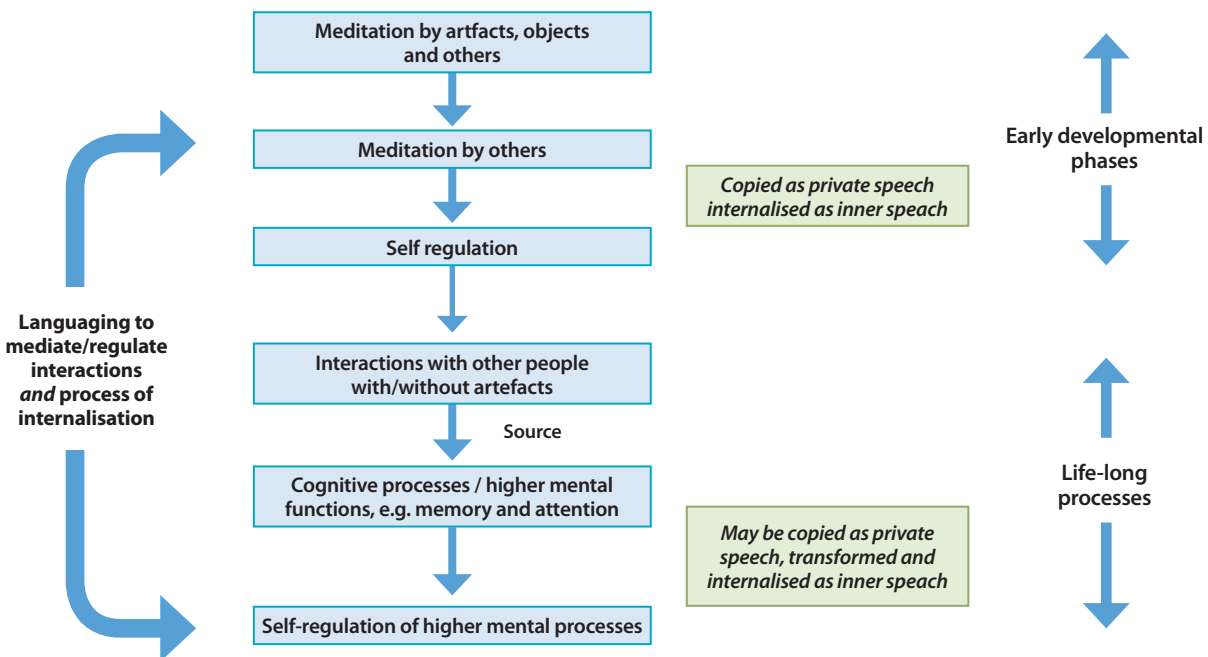
We construct meaning with others through the process of languaging or the reciprocal processes of talking to express meaning and being listened to, and of listening and making meaning of the talk of others. The act of speaking itself “is not simply a matter of memory retrieval, but a process through which thinking reaches a new level of articulation” (Smagorinsky, 1998, pp. 172-73). Vygotsky himself wrote: “The relationship between thought and word is a living process, thought is born through words. A word devoid of thought is a dead thing, and a thought unembodied in words remains a shadow” (1934/1968: 153), and “Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them. Every thought tends to connect something with something else to establish a relation between things. Every thought moves, grows develops, fulfils a function, solves a problem.” (1986: 218).



i For further exploration of the concept of languaging from a sociocultural perspective see: Swain, 2006, 2010; Swain and Lapkin, 2011; Wei, 2011)

Here languaging is a verb, a social act people do, rather than a linguistic object that is possessed and learnt independent of its use (e.g. Garcia, 2009; Swain and Lapkin, 2011). Li Wei (2011: 1224) describes languaging as “a process of using language to gain knowledge, to make sense, to articulate one’s thoughts and to communicate about using language”. Swain and

Lapkin (2011: 105) describe it as enabling the mediation of attention, recall, and knowledge creation. Based on Vygotsky’s work, Swain and Lapkin (2011) have articulated related aspects of languaging for cognitive functioning, which we will henceforth refer to as languaging (or translanguaging) for learning, encapsulated in the diagram below.



(Based on Swain and Lapkin, 2011)

Because “the source of an individual’s cognitive processes ...such as voluntary memory and attention – is in the interaction between the individual and the social world of people and its artifacts” (Swain and Lapkin, 2011: 105-106), of interest is the act of learning in action, or ‘in flight’ as Vygotsky put it. Sociocultural analysis of languaging for involves **microgenesis** or the moment by moment unravelling of joint activity, where “communicative moments are taken as the fundamental unit of analysis, as they provide the context where both individual behaviour and the sociocultural processes by which it is shaped can be studied” (Hall, 1997: 304). Hence, we are interested in the discursive practices of pupils which mediate thinking and learning during joint problem solving.

Neil Mercer, a neo-Vygotskian researcher has distinguished three types of talk pupils engage in when thinking through problems together:

- Disputational talk, characterised by disagreement and individualised decision-making.




- Cumulative talk, speakers build positively but uncritically on what the other has said. It is characterised by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations.




- Exploratory talk, in which partners engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas (Mercer 1995).



 **NOTE:** the notion of exploratory talk was first proposed by Douglas Barnes in 1976, in his extensive analysis of children’s and teachers’ talk in the classroom.

Mercer postulated that exploratory talk was the most effective for learning, but we must also understand the value of cumulative talk for learning to language.


 For more information on exploratory talk and learning see: Exploratory talk in schools: Inspired by the work of Douglas Barnes (Mercer and Hodgkinson, 2008).

Translanguaging

In line with this understanding of learning, and in order to capture the fluid, dynamic nature of languaging for learning amongst pupils who live and learn in more than one language, we turn to the concept of translanguaging. At its simplest, this is defined as the process of engaging in the “multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds.” (Garcia, 2009, p.45).

Further interrogation reveals two related assumptions within this construct:

- usage-based linguistic norms of plurilingual interaction are emphasised as opposed to monolingual norms or that which is referred to by Cummins (2005) as the ‘two solitudes’ approach to teaching

bilingual pupils in immersion and dual language programs, where two languages are kept rigidly separate.  (For an exploration of this see Cummins, 2005).

- languages are no longer understood as discrete systems but rather a language continuum which is accessed according to perceived need in context.

Garcia and Kano (2014) explain translanguaging as different to an act of switching or shifting between languages, to a selection of language features from a **repertoire** which they then ‘soft assemble’ in ways that fit communicative situations. They describe how “bilinguals call upon different social features in a seamless and complex network of multiple semiotic signs,

as they adapt their languaging to suit their immediate task.” (ibid: 260-261).



Examples of updated ways to think about multilingualism


Dynamic multilingualism (García, 2010), **flexible multilingualism** (Blackledge & Creese, 2010), **heteroglossia** (Bakhtin, 1934/1981; Bailey, 2007, Creese & Blackledge, 2014), **polylinguaging/polylingualism** (Jorgensen, 2008), **metrolingualism** (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015), **translanguaging** (García & Li Wei, 2014; Williams, 1994; Baker, 2001; Creese & Blackledge, 2010).

All references as in Zhu Hua et al, 2015.

Some teachers may question the need for this relatively new concept, when there are many other recent ‘2nd turn’ (Garcia and Sylvan, 2011) attempts to capture and conceptualise the multiple discursive practices of bilinguals. See box above for examples of these. The one distinguishing factor of translanguaging one might argue is an acknowledgment of power.

Another dimension of translanguaging, which is crucial to an understanding of translanguaging pedagogy, is the acknowledgment of differential power relations between interlocutors and between languages in terms of their perceived relative status: “The languages of an individual are rarely socially equal, having different power and prestige, and they are used for different purposes, in different contexts, with different interlocutors.” (Garcia, 2009: 45). Consequently, “an exclusive focus on the standard variety [of a language] keeps out other languaging practices that are children’s authentic linguistic identity expression” (Garcia, 2009: 36), and therefore a useful semiotic tool for learning. Of course, *this is not saying that pupils should not learn the standard form of languages*, as they must be equipped to participate equally in education, however this is measured, but the semiotic tools they use to do this learning, or any other subject requires the flexibility and creativity of translanguaging.

As educators we can either capitulate to the current norms which reinforce existing power relations, or we can act to challenge them. Translanguaging pedagogy is a tool for challenging the status quo and affording

children the right to employ every resource at their disposal for learning. <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/video/> (Translanguaging and affect). 

Translanguaging Pedagogy as a Transformative Emancipatory Pedagogy

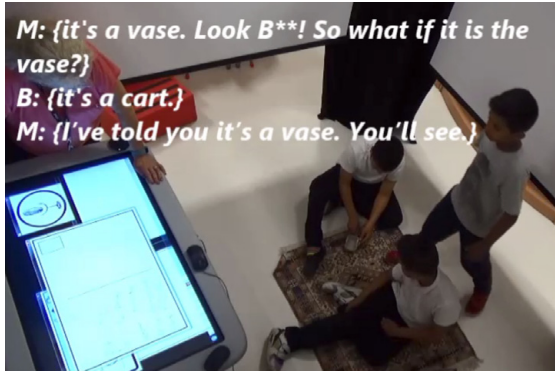
A translanguaging pedagogy enhances teaching and learning (Creese and Blackledge 2010) WHILE enabling pupils to demonstrate what they know and can do (Garcia and Li, 2014); AND develop and enact standard academic ways of languaging (Garcia and Sylvan, 2011), or what Cummins originally termed ‘cognitive academic language proficiency’ (Cummins, 2000).

It is based on an understanding of the lived reality of languaging for purposeful meaning making in plurilingual discursive practice, and therefore a normal everyday occurrence for pupils who live and learn in two or more languages. It is also based on an understanding of research evidence (see information box below), including from the ROMtels project, that enabling translanguaging in schools is hugely beneficial to pupils’ learning.



Several research studies over the last 17 years and over a range of contexts provide evidence that enabling pupils to draw on all of their languaging resources for learning supports that learning (e.g. Auger, 2005; Barradas, 2000/2003; Cummins, 2003; Mohanty, 2006; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981; Sneddon, 2000/2008; Smith, 2006, 2007; Thomas & Collier, 2001). The ROMtels project demonstrates exactly how this happens in translanguaging spaces created in schools.

Evidence from the ROMtels project has shown pupils translanguage during joint problem solving to: reason, speculate, justify, clarify, convince, recount/recall and support peers*. This happens through cumulative and exploratory talk to co-construct meaning. This sometimes occurs during the process of translating for each other and their teachers. We also found pupils translanguage to support spelling of words in English, and for task/procedural talk. The only discussions about which language to use arose when pupils needed to record evidence using the recording tools.



*Video evidence of pupils working together demonstrating translanguaging for learning in action is available on the ROMtels website. See section 3 of this handbook for guidance on how to use these effectively with students to teach about what translanguaging means and how to enable this pedagogy in their classrooms.

Hence the 'trans' in translanguaging pedagogy is:

- transcending, as it is not about the simple co-existence of two or more languages, rather it is a combining together to “generate new identities, values and practice” (Wei, 2011: 1223). It is “both going between different linguistic structures and systems and going beyond them” (*ibid*: 1222), hence creating new semiotic tools for learning.
- transformational in these new resources for learning created and in the transformation of linguistic norms of schooling.



For more information about linguistic human rights, see Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (1994); Skutnabb-Kangas (2000, 2006); and The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages at: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/european-charter-regional-or-minority-languages>

Translanguaging pedagogy is therefore viewed as a **right** for learners to draw on all of their languaging practices in the process of learning, and in learning to learn.

Creating spaces for such translanguaging to learn is hence emancipatory for pupils and is an act of transformative education in which teachers “challenge the operation of coercive relations of power in the wider society” (Garcia, 2009: 318) in order to effect more equitable education practices.

In creating this space, the status of pupils' plurilingualism, and particularly those languages which are assigned a lower status in society, indexes a shift in pupils' identity as languaging experts in the eyes of all concerned: the pupils themselves and their peers, their families and teachers, hence further acting to support more equitable practices.



Translanguaging space is defined as:

“a space created by and for translanguaging practices, a space where multilingual individuals integrate social spaces (and thus ‘language codes’) that have been formerly practiced separately in different spaces by ‘bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance’ (p. 1223).” (Hua et al, 2015: 9).

“multimodalities – gestures, objects, visual cues, touch, tone, sounds and other modes of communication besides words – and online and digital media afford new translanguaging spaces and resources for multilingual and multimodal communication.” (Hua et al, 2015: 10)



For further sources of information on translanguaging see:


<https://ealjournal.org/2016/07/26/what-is-translanguaging/>

http://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/latest/news/translanguaging_a_positive_ap.htm

2 | Teaching to 'Unlearn'

In our over 50 years combined experience, across 3 countries in teaching the inclusion of pupils who live and learn in more than one language, to predominantly student teachers, but also teachers of varying classroom experience, we have found that there are (mis)conceptions, objections and constraints which must be addressed before attempting to teach pedagogical approaches such as translanguaging, which value children's home languages. These can generally be categorized into 3 broad and sometimes interrelated groups:

- conceptual (mis)understandings
- socio-political objections
- policy constraints (real and imagined)

The ROMtels team devised an attitude survey (based on research undertaken by Mehmedbegovic, 2011 ) to reveal some of these aspects which can be found at: [http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/wg5/wg5resources/\(WG 5.4.2\)](http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/strands/wg5/wg5resources/(WG 5.4.2)).


After describing the likely nature of each aspect, we will provide guidance on how to address this, drawing on material produced for the ROMtels project as available on the project website, and in suggested activities.

Conceptual (mis)understandings

Students and teachers have many varied understandings of the process of language learning, many of which assume that multilingualism somehow *hinders* pupils' academic progress. Students and teachers must be given space to ask questions about this and discuss ideas in order to reveal their initial understandings. An audit of some description is useful to reveal prior experiences of teaching and learning. If students or teachers have taught English or French abroad as TEFL or equivalent, they may carry particular ideas about for example, how to teach languages, children's motivations for learning, the speed at which children will learn, and likely difficulties in learning English, which they conflate with plurilingual pupils' learning in their school. Also being monolingual may mean they have little affinity with the complexities of learning a curriculum through a language you are also learning. Examples of the starting assumptions and questions students and teachers are


likely to have, alongside responses based on evidence can be found in ROMtels Handbook 1 at: <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/guidancehandbooks/> .

Socio-political objections

Teacher attitudes are always rooted in personal, professional, cultural and political backgrounds and expressed differently depending on social contexts. Like identities, attitudes are multiple, negotiated and fluid; different audiences inevitably bring out different emphases, and sometimes it is difficult to effectively elicit attitudes: sometimes teachers don't realise they hold such attitudes; or they may not wish to share their attitudes in front of other professionals. ROMtels worked with teachers in Romania on stereotyping of Roma pupils and communities. This work can be found on the website under Oradea conference at: [https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/conferences/\(Oradea conference, day 2\)](https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/conferences/(Oradea conference, day 2)) .

Sometimes attitudes which appear to relate to cognition are more likely to have arisen because of stereotypes held by teachers. For example, in response to the ROMtels research teacher attitude survey, one teacher replied: "I agree [that some pupils with EAL know more English than they let us know; they're a bit lazy like that] because you hear them talking to their friends." Stereotypes of Black pupils and pupils with EAL abound in schools, but often remain unrecognised as such. In another question relating to the level of discomfort people feel when hearing other languages around them in the UK, a teacher wrote: "I don't feel Britain is a foreign land but it can be uncomfortable when people speak foreign languages."

Policy constraints (real and imagined)

This is the most complicated area to counter as many of the constraints are real! It is therefore useful to detail relevant policies in order to imagine context-relevant solutions together.  The website EAL nexus provides some useful information on EAL policy at: <https://eal.britishcouncil.org/eal-sector/education-policy-eal-england>. However, sometimes policies not typically associated with plurilingualism have just as important a bearing on teaching. In England, for example, the current policy drive towards British values and recording systems

for English language competence (to the exclusion of competence in other languages) may have a subtle and yet damaging effect on schools' readiness to allow home language use in classrooms (see Smith, 2015 and Chalcraft et al, 2017 for a critique of British values policy). Another example comes from early years research which has shown effective constraints on bilingual assistants who are not able to fully employ their bilingual funds of knowledge to support pupils' cognitive development, as their priorities for support lie elsewhere, such as in English phonics work (Robertson, Drury and Cable, 2014).

ROMtels has also found that some teachers hold views on practice informed by imagined policy constraints. For example, in the early stages of the project we found some French teachers unwilling to participate in the project because of their belief that the policy of *laïcité* (the separation of state and religion) meant that pupils must only use French in classrooms. In Finland the word *Roma* refers to both Roma people from outside the country and from within. Negative representations about these two groups appear to blend in and influence the way they are treated and talked about in society. Teachers also appear to be affected by such

Activities useful for beginning to 'unlearn'

True or false discussions: ask teachers to work in groups to place statement cards into true or false categories, then discuss as a whole class, e.g. "once pupils have survival English/Finnish, they will soon cotton on to the English/Finnish they need for learning". The way the card is phrased is very important as teachers will begin to ask probing questions such as what is meant by survival English/Finnish or how long is soon, or what do you mean by 'cotton on'? Discussing these questions publicly to reveal hidden assumptions, together with presentation of evidence from research and theory, can really help reveal and unravel misconceptions.

As above but place cards in agree/disagree categories. For example, "Pupils with EAL should not be encouraged to use their home language in school or to maintain literacy in their first language, whilst also learning English, as this is likely to cause confusion and low level literacy attainment in both languages". This phrasing can help to reveal a range of opinions based on experience. Alternatively the cards can be based on objections rooted in socio-political values such as "If children are allowed to speak to their friends in a language other children don't understand it creates a segregated class". If teachers are told they must argue from one side or the other, tensions start to become apparent and dissonance between practical experience and theoretical knowledge is elicited and can then be discussed, again alongside evidence.

Thinking skills activities such as diamond ranking to do as a class or as groups for statements to be ranked in some form or another. This is useful in terms of

activity ideas or for the interrogation of a range of values (e.g. 'children should only be allowed to use French/Romanian in schools' to 'children are entitled to use all of their languages in school').

Opinion corners: each corner of the classroom represents a stipulated view and teachers are required to stand in the corner which best fits their view. They are allowed to change corners either when the teacher educator reveals some evidence or following a teacher educator-led discussion where aspects are problematized, or when the teachers are allowed to ask each other questions. This is particularly useful for untangling tensions between values and practices, i.e. I believe X but in practice Y happens.

Opinion lines operate the same way, but instead of corners teachers stand in a straight line where each end represents polar opposite opinions and through discussions facilitated as in the opinion corners, they are allowed to move up and down the line closer to either end or the middle. They can only move to their left or right however, by speaking with the person next to them to determine their strength of opinion. An example might be: '*laïcité* means that pupils must not be allowed to speak anything other than French in school' versus '*laïcité* means that we are all equal and hence pupils should be allowed to use any language in support of their learning'.

Fear in a hat: ask teachers to write any fears or uncertainties they have about teaching plurilingual pupils based on their own experiences of teaching and learning. You can then structure your initial sessions around these questions.

misrepresentations and a clear lack of interest in both the languages and background of their children. The very idea of translanguaging for instance, which teachers have started recognising, is often used to discuss migrant education but seems to exclude Roma children.

The ROMtels research has revealed that although teachers understand the need and in most cases the right for children to be able to think and learn in their own languages in school, the same teachers also responded to the attitude survey about lessons being taught in English when pupils are being schooled in England by saying:

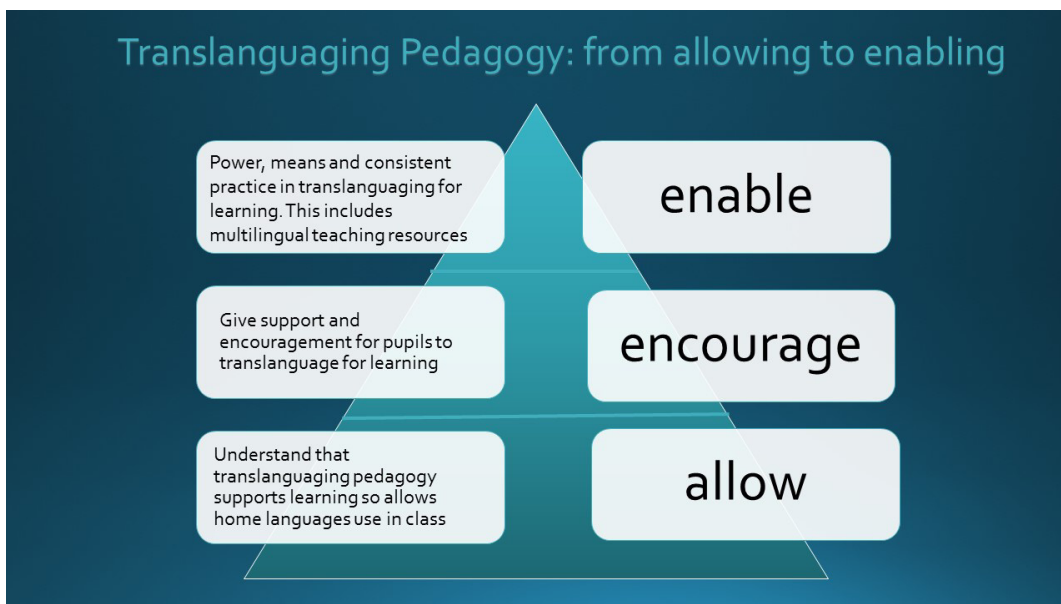
“The main language taught in schools should be English; the language of instruction should be the language the majority of people speak, e.g. French in France.”


As translanguaging requires talking for learning in class, it is also worth considering teachers’ fears about talk, learning and pupil behaviour as in Kessler-Singh & Robertson, 2016.

The activities in the orange box on page 14 are useful for attending to these (mis)conceptions, objections and (perceived) constraints; to unravel the issues imbued within and to propose counter evidence and perspectives.

3 | Using ROMtels research evidence to teach translanguaging pedagogy

In section 3.2 of ROMtels Handbook1, we introduce a conceptual model of 3 levels of engagement with translanguaging pedagogy. The aspects to ‘unlearn’ as above come before teachers can engage with these levels of engagement.



We have provided an extensive guide on how to enable translanguaging for learning in ROMtels Handbook 1 at <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/guidancehandbooks/> , so here, we explain how the video evidence has been structured on the ROMtels website and provide guidance in how to use this evidence to support teacher learning.

The videos are organised into the following subfolders (some videos may feature in several). For each subfolder we suggest some generic questions and also some questions specific to particular videos.

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL BE ADDING MORE VIDEO EVIDENCE AND UPDATE THIS GUIDANCE HANDBOOK ACCORDINGLY SO YOU MAY BE READING AN OLDER VERSION – PLEASE CHECK ONLINE FOR ANY CHANGES TO THIS SECTION.


The children involved in Newcastle are as follows:


Year 2:
 J (girl)
 SA (girl)
 L (boy)
 S (boy)

Italics = Slovak (unless indicated as English)

{italics} – East Slovak Romani

Most conversations are in Slovak, with frequent translations for the teacher into English





Year 5:
 M (girl)
 K (boy) (referred to as Dominic in the video)
 MA (boy)
 BJ (boy) – also called MA
 B (boy)

Italics = Slovak (unless indicated as English)

{italics} – East Slovak Romani.

Most conversations are in East Slovak Romani, with some switching into Slovak

Excerpts of translinguaging for learning


Cumulative talk	Exploratory talk	translation	Peer scaffolding	Appropriating standard academic language	Talking in one language to spell in another	Activating/ Demonstrating prior knowledge
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? General questions:

- What do the children use cumulative/exploratory talk to do? In other words what function do they play, e.g. reason, speculate, justify, clarify, convince, recount/recall and support peers.
- What do you notice about the way they do this across languages, i.e. by translinguaging?
- How do children demonstrate prior knowledge and how does translinguaging facilitate this?
- How does the act of translating support learning?
- What standard academic language do you see being appropriated?

? Specific questions:

NEWCASTLE

- What do you now know about these children's knowledge about the great fire of Tyneside? **Yr2V1**
- What happens after L says "they are close together"?
NOTE: THERE IS A MISTAKE IN THE VIDEO TRANSCRIPTION, AS L IS MISTAKENLY NAMED AS BO.
- What role(s) does Slovak play in supporting the spelling of the word wood in English? **Yr2V2**
- Why might the children want to translate for the teacher? After all they have just heard the character speak in English. What does this tell you? **Yr2V3**
- Why did S ask L to translate for her and why was she then dissatisfied with the translation? **Yr2V3**
- When the teacher asks L to rehearse what he's going to say about the fireman, he responds beautifully, but what happens when he is being recorded? What does this teach you? **Yr2V5**
- What do you now know about J's level of understanding about materials for building? Spot which technical terms she chooses English or Slovak for. **Yr2V6**
- How does S try to convince J she is wrong? **Yr2V6**
- How does the attempted translation into English support recall of a technical term, which is unexpected for this enquiry? **Yr5V2**
 - **NOTE Yr5V2** the transcript of this video is analysed in a powerpoint on the ROMtels website: go to <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/conferences/> (**CL2: slides 20-22**). 
- How does B relay his intended question in English when he can't find the technical language to make his meaning clear? **Yr5V3**
- How does B convince M to change his mind? **Yr5V3**

Please note: each video has a code on the website, and the following references, e.g. Yr2V1 refer to an actual video listed on <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/romtels/resources/video/>.

FRANCE

- Why does one girl say she understands when she doesn't?! **FM1**

Excerpts of translanguaging for participation

Task procedural talk	Talking back to the characters	Informal talk	Fear of formal recording of knowledge
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? General questions:

- What function does the children's translanguaging play here?
- Why do the children talk back to the characters?
- Are you surprised by how little off task/informal talk there is between pupils?
- What function does the informal talk play?

? Specific questions:

NEWCASTLE

- What is the reaction when one child swears in Romani? And what does this pupil do following that reaction? **A3:14**
- Why do you think L becomes hesitant and what does that teach you? **Yr2V5**

Excerpts of natural translanguaging and awareness of language choice

translanguaging swiftly across languages without negotiation	Negotiating language choice
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? *General questions:*

- What do these examples of swift movement across languages teach you about translanguaging? Does it surprise you?
- How do the children know how and when to use particular languages in speaking to one and other? What does this teach you about translanguaging?
- There are only two instances where children negotiate which language to use. When does this happen, for what purpose? Why do they negotiate for that purpose only?

? *Specific questions:*

FRANCE

- Why does the older boy laugh at his brother’s description of the painting when it comes to the beach? **FM3**
- What can you say about the manner of the girl who translates for her peer into Romani about the painting? **FM1**

Translanguaging and affect

Challenging the status quo	sharing cultural heritage	From shock to dignity	Parents as speakers of French and knowers of poetry	Activity engagement
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? *General questions:*

- What power relations are changed and what effect does that have on behaviour? Does it provide a challenge for behaviour management to the teacher?
- What does the children’s body language tell you about the effect of this on them?

? *Specific questions:*

NEWCASTLE

- Why do you think M is not participating in the discussions? **Yr5V1**
- What is MA trying to work out, and what does this tell you about the children’s engagement with the activity? **Yr5V1**

FRANCE

- What happens when the teacher is no longer the most expert language user in the class? **FS1**
- Look at the body language of the mother who joins the group working on the Manchester database. What does this tell you? **FP1**
- How does using the Manchester database work to disrupt existing power relations? **FP1-4**
- Pay attention to the parents speaking about a poem. What does it say about Roma parents both at the linguistic and cultural levels? What does it say about how teachers can collaborate with the parents of your Roma students? (Long French video)
- Look out for the mother who is asked to translate the word “red” from French to Romani. What can you infer from the faces and postures of the mother and her daughter located at her left? To what extent should this motivate collaboration between teachers and parents? (Long French video)

4 | Useful internet resources

Some of these resources have been mentioned already in this guidance handbook, but we mention them here again for easy access. We have no control over these websites, so please read with caution. For academic resources, please see bibliography.

<https://eal.britishcouncil.org/>

<https://naldic.org.uk/>


<http://www.theealacademy.co.uk/>

<https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/Work/EAL/>

<http://www.ealhls.org.uk/product-category/multilingual-support/>

<http://www.eal-teaching-strategies.com/eal-resources.html>

The following guidance is given in document 1 for teachers:

 Plurilingual resources include: those already published, e.g. bilingual dictionaries and dual language reading books, some with talking pens (e.g. <http://uk.mantralingua.com/>); those collected by teachers and presented in websites, e.g. SparkleBox (although look at the languages chosen here!) (<http://www.sparklebox.co.uk/languages/#.WNFMdcKsk2w>); other websites from individual schools or councils/education authorities (e.g. <http://www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk/langofmonth/> OR <http://www.fairfields.hants.sch.uk/network-eal/eal-resources/>); websites such as <http://www.emasUK.com> which are expensive but provide immediate translation into some useful classroom languages.

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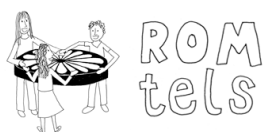
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A Pedagogy for bi/plurilingual pupils: Translanguaging

GUIDANCE FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS



Roma Translanguaging Enquiry Learning Space



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