

Teaching Excellence

Using learners' other languages in ELT

Trainer guide

Audience: Academic teaching teams including teachers, coordinators, and senior teachers to run at centre, cluster, (maybe regional) level online or in-person.

Resources

- Trainer guide
- Handouts
- Presentation (PDF)
- Teaching strategies cutups (optional for F2F workshops)

Overview of activities

The materials have been broken into two suggested sessions (**timings are approximate and may take longer**). Alternatively, you could select from the activities to combine into one session, break into smaller sessions or do as self-access or flipped training.

1. Introducing a plurilingual approach – 1.5 hour

- Reactions 15 mins
- Language terms 25 mins
- Your languages 25 mins
- Teaching beliefs 25 mins

Background reading task (optional)

2. What does this mean in our context – 1.5 hour

- Teaching contexts 15 mins
- Teaching strategies 45 mins
- Learner beliefs and expectations 30 mins
- Reflection (Revisit reactions and takeaways)

There are suggested delivery procedures below for the sessions, but you may have other ways or ideas for delivery in your context.

We would love [your feedback](#) on the materials

Practicalities	Methodology
1. Introducing a plurilingual approach	
Timing 15 mins Resources <i>Handout</i> Slides 2-4	<p>Initial reactions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask participants to read the summary 2. Highlight the recognition that, as with any perceived 'new' idea, it is likely to generate a variety of reactions from teaching colleagues. 3. Show the slide with the emotion wheel. Ask participants to share their initial reactions in the chat (if they feel comfortable) - alternatively they could annotate on the slide. (<i>in-person, they discuss in small groups and trainer monitors</i>). Point out there are no 'right' or 'wrong' reactions- all are valid. 4. Introduce the idea that emotions are guided by underlying factors such as past experience, values and beliefs, the context and cognitive or emotional needs. Recognising these helps with understanding emotions which in turn leads to managing them which is part of emotional intelligence (EQ) 5. Elicit possible causes from those willing to share. <p>Trainer Information</p> <p>This activity makes use of emotional intelligence (EQ) theory and techniques. The responses can provide useful information to help get a sense of attitudes, engagement, skills, knowledge etc regarding the topic in your context at this stage.</p>
Timing 25 mins Resources <i>Handout</i> Slides 5-7	<p>Language terms</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make sure everyone has a copy of the handout. 2. Show slide with language terms, give participants a moment to read the four descriptions (also in handout) and then elicit which of the terms describe each one. (<i>in-person- they could discuss in pairs</i>) <p>Answers: (on slide)</p> <p>A – Bilingual (proficient in 2 languages) B – Multilingual (proficiency in several languages). C – Plurilingual (Varying degrees of proficiency in several languages) D – Monolingual (Proficient in one language)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Show slide with next set of language terms. Elicit which ones they use, and if they know any more. 4. Refer participants to questions on the handout (also on slide). For online- ask or nominate someone to lead a short discussion with the group to

Practicalities	Methodology
	<p>answer these (<i>in-person, discuss in small groups</i>). Trainer monitors discussion(s) and feeds in where needed using information below.</p> <p>Trainer Information</p> <p>How easy is to apply these terms to the languages of the people above?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all terms could be applied due to the existence of and proficiency levels in a variety of languages. (e.g. when bi/multilingual- which is L1 or L2?) <p>Why might some terms be considered problematic or not relevant these days?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Mother tongue</i> could be considered 'gendered' language (what about fathers?) also not relevant for those who have grown up without a mother. <i>L1, Native language, First language</i>: An individual may learn multiple languages simultaneously from birth- so this only makes sense where languages are acquired or learned successively. Where there is more than one language from birth it also implies power struggles over which is 'first' or dominant. Also, people continue to learn languages, so language learnt at birth does not necessarily mean it is the 'dominant one later in life. <i>Home language</i> – could be considered as specific only to languages spoken at home and could be to various degrees of proficiency. <i>Own language</i> – as above, but also -when multiple languages are spoken to some degree of proficiency the idea is they should feel 'ownership' of all languages in their plurilingual repertoire. <p>Using the terms learners' languages or 'other' languages-</p> <p>Could be considered as the most inclusive term to refer to the language(s) learners know as recognises the diversity of learners linguistic profiles across all global teaching contexts.</p>
<p>Timing 25 mins</p> <p>Resources <i>Handout</i></p> <p>Slides 8-9</p>	<p>Your languages</p> <p>Aim of this activity is for participants to apply the terms to their own experiences as language learners.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the purpose of the activity (above) Direct participants to the table in the handout. They complete it with brief information about the language(s) they know. Use the example on the slide if needed. Debrief as a group (online) or in <i>small groups (in-person)</i> using the questions on the slide (and handout). The extent to which their own learning and their teaching beliefs are aligned in relation to using other languages can be explored in the next activity.

Practicalities	Methodology
<p>Timing 25 mins</p> <p>Resources <i>Handout</i></p> <p>Slides 10-13</p>	<p>Teaching beliefs <i>*learners'/parents beliefs are covered in next session.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Depending on time, start with the questions on the slide (and handout) asking teachers to consider shifts or changes in beliefs since they started teaching. The aim of this is to highlight that beliefs and methodologies are always evolving and that a move away from an English-only approach is another example of this. 2. Refer participants to the teacher comments on the handout. 3. Working individually participants read comments, consider the extent to which they agree or identify with them, then make notes in their handout, summarising their beliefs on using other languages then identify where their beliefs have come from. <p>Alternatively - Participants discuss comments and questions in pairs in breakout rooms (<i>or small groups- in person</i>).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Debrief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants share any final takeaways/ reflections from discussion. • Elicit how they might use/adapt the session activities with their learners. <p>Trainer Information</p> <p>The last two sections provide examples of activities that teachers can do with their learners to help them reflect on their language learning experience, the extent to which they use/ have used their languages and their beliefs– they show learners' languages are valued in the classroom and provides teachers with insight into the language of their learners (seen in <i>Teaching strategies</i> '1. <i>Acknowledging other languages</i>' in next session)</p>
<p><i>Reading task handout</i></p> <p>Slide 14</p>	<p>This could be done here after these materials, or after the second session (below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participants to do some background reading using the links in the reading list in the handout, or by finding their own resources.

2. What does this mean for our context?

This session follows on from part 1. Introducing a plurilingual approach

If participants didn't attend the previous session, you could provide them with the materials for self-access – and ensure they have at least done the **reading and 'reactions' activity** before coming to the session.

Timing

15 mins

Resources

Handout

Slides 16-19

Teaching contexts

Aim is to identify the extent to which context is multi or monolingual and highlight that teachers and learners don't always have to share languages to be able to make use of them as a learning resource.

1. Elicit from/remind participants of the idea of a plurilingual approach and that principled or judicious use of other languages can have many benefits.
2. Briefly elicit a couple of ideas on what 'judicious use' is and compare with definition on slide. Highlight that context is everything, it's not a one-size fits all approach.
3. One key contextual factor is the linguistic profile of learners and teachers. Direct participants to the table in their handout showing the three linguistic contexts identified by Kerr.
4. Provide a moment to read then ask them to identify which types of contexts they teach in. (*if in-person- they could discuss in groups*)
5. Highlight the implications that OL use is possible across all contexts.
6. Ask participants to brainstorm other factors that impact decisions on when, if and how to make use of learners languages (see some ideas below)

Other examples of factors could be:

- *age of learners (YL may make more use and may benefit from affective use (i.e emotional support and well-being)*
- *proficiency level (as may be common/useful in lower level)*
- *learners'/teacher preferences*
- *teacher experience/skills/knowledge*
- *activity purpose and type (some activities may benefit from allowing some language use)*
- *affective needs (responding to learners in the moment)*
- *timing (may be more efficient for clarifying or checking understanding)*

7. Participants complete part A of the table(s) in the handout to build a class profile (to be added to later with strategies)

Timing

45 mins

Teaching strategies

This activity introduces some strategies which focus on helping **learners** make use of their languages, and which could be adapted for either mono or multilingual contexts. Teachers are likely to already be using many, but aim is


<p>Resources</p> <p><i>Handout</i></p> <p><i>Cut ups of teaching strategies (optional)</i></p> <p>Slides 20-22</p>	<p>to highlight that there are ways in which OL can be brought in, whilst still maintaining English as the main focus and language of classroom (i.e to mitigate possible teacher/learner preferences for 'English-only')</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the activity using the slide and the information above. 2. For Online, put participants in breakout rooms (<i>groups if in-person</i>) of 2-3 people. They have 30 minutes to go through the strategies and complete the table in the handout and the follow up questions. (If in person- you could use the <i>cut ups</i> instead to make it more interactive. For example, putting them around the room and they walk around and discuss in pairs, or giving out cutups to each participant who summarises it for their group) 3. Depending on time, they could prioritise ones to focus on rather than doing all 10. 4. Refer participants back to their class profiles, individually, they spend around 10 mins completing part B of the table to identify any strategies they may consider using. <p>Trainer Information</p> <p>Teachers should be aware that helping learners draw from/reference their other languages related to our methodology are already reflected in our Statement of approach to teaching (as seen in handout and on slide) such as identifying learning strategies and developing confidence and learner autonomy.</p>
<p>Timing</p> <p>30 mins</p> <p>Resources</p> <p><i>Handout</i></p> <p>Slides 23-27</p>	<p>Learner beliefs and expectations</p> <p>This activity acknowledges that learner/ parent expectations are the most common concern highlighted with a plurilingual approach to ELT and explores assumptions and some potential strategies for managing these at this stage.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the activity using the information above. Draw attention to the quote which recognises that customer beliefs are important but are not aligned with current research or evidence-based methodologies. Rather they have perhaps been 'sold' the idea of English-only as the most effective way for almost a century (as have teachers). 2. Elicit answers to questions in the handout/slide (using information below). 3. Direct participants to the customer feedback examples in the handout. Provide a moment to read through and elicit reactions. (<i>in person- discuss in pairs</i>) 4. Highlight that many of the strategies seen previously can address some of the responses. Participants go into breakout rooms (<i>or discuss in pairs for in-person</i> to identify which strategies may be useful (ideas on slides if needed) <p>Trainer Information</p> <p>The key messages here are that whilst customer beliefs are important to a point, there may a tendency to assume that ALL our customers hold strong beliefs about English-only, which it is not the case (as evidenced by the examples)</p>

Another aspect to consider is that learners (particularly YLS and lower levels) are likely to be already using/referencing their OL- so with principled support by the teacher, this can be leveraged more effectively as a learning tool.

Strategies for addressing customer feedback comments.

Parents (YL classes)	Examples of possible strategies
<p>Parents who want teachers to only use English with their child.</p> <p><i>whether kids understand or not, kids and the teacher should deal with it all in english i think</i></p>	<p>Depends on teacher proficiency in learners' language.</p> <p>Rationale for teacher using OL communicated to parents where needed (e.g. meetings, reports)</p>
<p>Parents who want their child to only use English.</p> <p><i>her teacher never mentioned to student do not speak mother language. it was one of the point of dissatisfied for me, children need to understand what is effective way for themselves</i></p>	<p>Rationale/benefits of learners using OL are communicated to parents in some way e.g. meetings or homework tasks (e.g. 6. <i>Word lists</i>, 8. <i>Multilingual materials</i>, 10. <i>Homework translation</i>)</p> <p>Learners are paired with those who mostly use English (e.g. 4. <i>Project work</i>)</p>
<p>Parents who don't mind OL use but want teachers to monitor its use.</p> <p><i>my kids felt excluded as they were the only non XX kids. it's completely natural for the kids to gather together and speak their mother tongue but i wish the teachers / staffs would have done something to make them feel better</i></p>	<p>Create awareness/ valuing of all learners; languages (e.g. 1. <i>Acknowledging OL</i>)</p> <p>Negotiating OL use with learners (e.g. 7. <i>Other-language moments</i>)</p> <p>Help learners make principled use of OL (e.g.- 6. <i>Word lists</i>, 2. <i>reflecting on learning</i>, 3 <i>generating ideas</i>, 9, <i>rehearse-repeat</i>)</p>
<p>Parents who want the teacher to use some OL to support their child when needed.</p> <p><i>...try to translate for students who cannot understand certain English explanations from teachers, especially those who start lessons directly at the age of 14.</i></p>	<p>Create awareness and valuing of learners; languages (e.g. 1. <i>Acknowledging OL</i>)</p> <p>Not penalising learners for some use of OL (e.g. 5. <i>Code-switching</i>)</p> <p>Help learners make principled use of OL (e.g.- 6. <i>Word lists</i>, 2. <i>reflecting on learning</i>, 3 <i>generating ideas</i>, 9, <i>rehearse-repeat</i>)</p> <p>Parents are involved through homework tasks (e.g. 6. <i>Word lists</i>, 8. <i>Multilingual materials</i>, 10. <i>Homework translation</i>)</p>
<p>Parents who want a plurilingual approach for their child (e.g. lower levels)</p> <p><i>I think that the methodology could be improved for children who are coming into contact with the language for the first time... they could develop a program that allows children who are approaching the language for the first time to communicate in both English and XX...</i></p> <p><i>(my daughter) doesn't understand and can't follow since the lessons are only in English</i></p> <p><i>.the rule to speak 100% in English generated frustrations, especially in</i></p>	<p>Any of the strategies could be used.</p>

	<p>moments when it is obvious that the student does not understand</p>													
	<table><tr><th>Adult learners (and YLs)</th><th>Examples of possible strategies</th></tr><tr><td><p>Learners who only want to use English</p><p><i>I strongly believe that it is better to think in English without my mother language, as it can help me improve faster</i></p><p><i>From my point of view using English is the most significant and effective way to improve and understand English</i></p></td><td><p>Learners use English instead of OL when given the choice (e.g.- 2. <i>reflecting on learning</i>, 3 <i>generating ideas</i>, 9, <i>rehearse-repeat</i>)</p><p>Learners are paired with others who also want to only use English (e.g. 4. <i>Project work</i>)</p><p>Learners do any of the strategies, but only use English.</p><p>Create awareness/ valuing of all learners; languages (e.g.1. <i>Acknowledging OL</i>)</p></td></tr><tr><td><p>Learners who would like primarily English, but don't mind some principled use of OL</p><p><i>I think the use of English in class should be more strictly observed. 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	<i>English language to understand the meaning more</i>	
Resources <i>Handout</i> Slide 28	Reflection <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask participants to revisit their emotional reactions and rationale from session 1 2. Participants make a note of three key points they have taken from these two sessions and share if they wish. 	