

IATEFL 2025

Forum on Plurilingualism

Principled plurilingual strategies for scaffolding learning in lower-proficiency classes

Huma Hasna Riaz Ahmed

This handout summarises the forum talk by providing practical ideas for integrating learners' languages to foster engagement and inclusivity in the classroom. It also includes a list of recommended books for teachers, digital multilingual tools, and references from the forum talk.

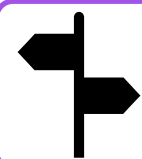
Plurilingual teaching strategies



Incorporate students' home languages in classroom print materials such as posters and flashcards. Display all languages at the same size and prominence as English.



Learn key phrases such as "Hello" and "Good morning" in students' languages to break the ice. Use their languages for giving instructions and managing your classroom where possible and necessary.



Give students a choice and set clear expectations for using other languages.



Preview concepts in students' languages to activate and build background knowledge, prior to teaching new content in English.



Students can brainstorm key lesson vocabulary in their languages.



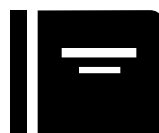
Use contrastive analysis as a teaching strategy. Provide explicit opportunities to students to compare and contrast languages to support cross-language transfer of learning.



Set up peer translanguaging groups and small group instruction in learners' languages while they brainstorm ideas, research online, discuss and summarise English texts, and prepare for speaking and writing activities.



Provide written feedback in English and oral feedback in shared languages where possible.



Students can keep multimodal, multilingual journals to reflect on their learning.

Recommended books for teachers

Rethinking the Education of Multilingual Learners – Jim Cummins

Explores multilingual education, identity, and pedagogy

Using Multilingual Approaches: Moving from Theory to Practice – British Council

(Kathleen Heugh, Janet Armitage, Kerry Taylor-Leech, Nicci Bilington, Sue Ollerhead)

A resource book of strategies, activities, and projects for multilingual classrooms

Using the Mother Tongue: Making the Most of the Learner's Language – Sheelagh Deller & Mario Rinvulcri

Advocates for the role of students' first languages in language learning.

Translation and Own-Language Activities – Philip Kerr (Cambridge University Press)

Discusses how translation can support English language learning

Linguistic Landscapes in English Language Teaching: A Pedagogical Guidebook – Edited by Osman Solmaz & Steve Przymus

Explores how linguistic landscapes can be used in English teaching.

Digital multilingual tools for the classroom

[Reverso](#) – AI-powered translation, grammar checking, and contextual learning

[Book Creator](#) – Create and publish multilingual digital books

[Quizizz](#) – Game-based quizzes with support for multiple languages

[Blooket](#) – Interactive classroom games for learning and engagement

[Gimkit](#) – Live learning games with a competitive edge

[Mentimeter](#) – Live polls, word clouds, and audience engagement in multiple languages

[Kahoot!](#) – Gamified quizzes that can include multiple languages

[Quizlet](#) – Flashcards, games, and study sets in various languages

[Lingopie](#) – Learn languages through TV shows and movies

IATEFL forum talk references

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