Bit of background

"*Evidence from research and practice is presented which suggests that the rationale used to justify English only in the classroom is neither conclusive nor pedagogically sound.*"

(Auerbach, 1993:9)

Read the following summary

Moving from a monolingual to a plurilingual approach in ELT

Despite almost a century of influential literature and resulting methodologies promoting an 'English-only' or *monolingual approach* we are seeing a shift in the industry in acknowledging that this is not necessarily the most effective approach. It is one that can marginalise languages other than English, does not reflect the realities of language learning and processing, and can breed discrimination against 'non-native' teachers.

Changes including the rise of multilingualism, recognition of plurilinguistic competence, an expanding bank of research and publications and modern methodologies such as pedagogical translanguaging now <u>do</u> encourage a *plurilingual approach,* on that makes use of other languages in ELT.
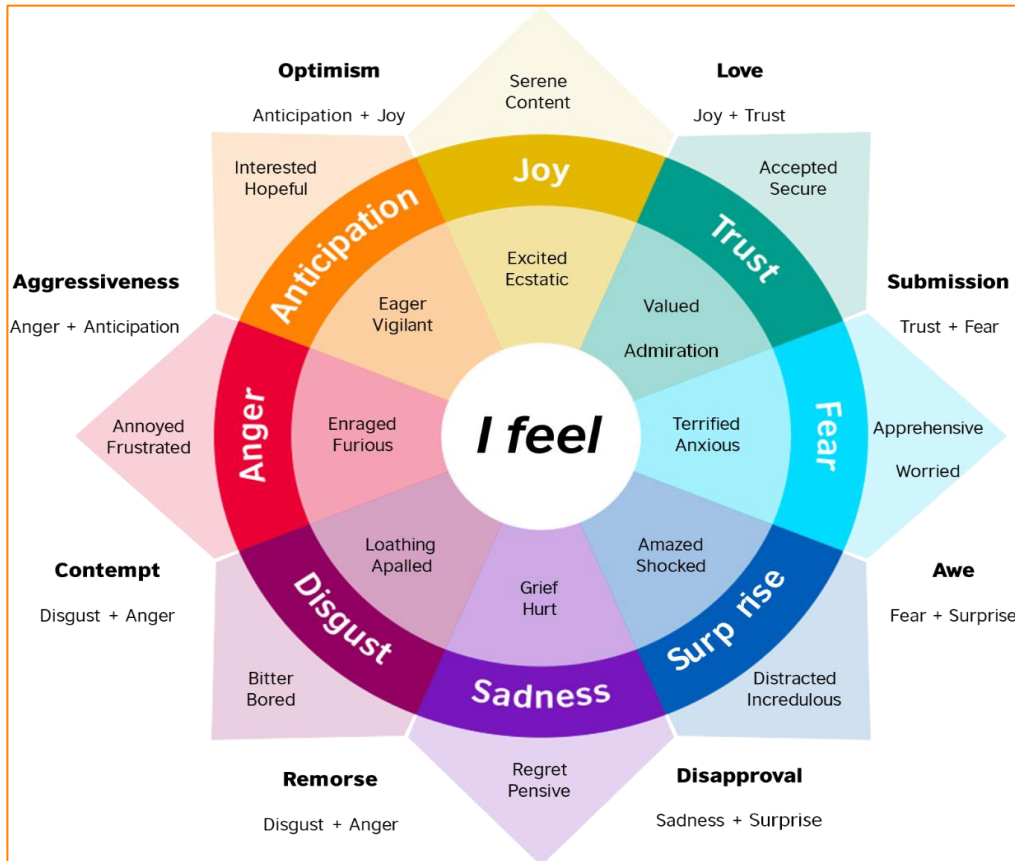
A *plurilingual approach* views languages as interconnected with people naturally drawing from <u>all</u> their available linguistic resources to communicate Maximum exposure to the target language is still recognised as important, but making principled or 'judicious' use of learners' existing linguistic knowledge is now well-established as bringing many inclusive, practical and affective benefits.

"*It is time for TESOL professionals to accelerate the learning process by using plurilingualism as a resource and not as an obstacle.*"

(Cenoz, J. & Gorter, D. 2013)

Reactions

- What **emotions** do/did you feel reading about the rise of a plurilingual approach in ELT? *(use the wheel below to help if needed)*

- What might be **reasons** behind your emotions? *(use the ideas below to guide you)*

- *My core beliefs and values feel threatened.*
- *I don't understand the rationale.*
- *I am worried I don't have the required knowledge, skills, or resources.*
- *I feel powerless and not in control.*
- *I can only see the challenges.*

- *I understand the rationale.*
- *I can see many opportunities.*
- *I can clearly see the benefits.*
- *It reflects my needs and wants.*
- *It aligns with my core beliefs and values*

Language Terms

- Which of the following terms best describe each of the four people below.

Monolingual   **Bilingual**   **Multilingual**   **Plurilingual**

A. *I grew up with a Japanese-speaking father and an English-speaking mother. I learned both languages at home and at school and am fully proficient in both.*

B. *Where I grew up, French and Arabic were the official languages, and I can speak both fluently. I started learning English in lessons at Primary school, and I can now speak that fluently too.*

C. *I spoke Romanian until I was 6 when I moved to Mozambique. I continue to speak some Romanian at home but have become more proficient and fluent in Portuguese as it was the language of study from school to university. I have a comfortable proficiency in English due to English-speaking friends and media, and I can communicate quite well in Makhuwa, which I picked up living here.*

D. *I learned English from birth. Whilst I know some basic phrases in Spanish and German, I wouldn't say I have any degree of proficiency in another language.*

Below are some terms that are used to describe a persons' language(s)

L1/L2	**first language /second language**	**additional language**
other language	**native language**	**mother tongue**	**dominant language**
home language	**own language**	**foreign language**

- Which ones do you tend to use?

- How easy is to apply these terms to the languages of the people above?

- Why might some terms be considered problematic or not relevant these days?

- Why might the term *learners' languages* or *'other' languages* be more suitable?

Your languages

- Make notes in the table below about the languages you have learned/ are learning.

Language	How I learned/ am learning it	What I use it for/ can do in it

- Using the **terms** from the section above how would you describe **yourself** and the **languages** you know?

- As a language learner, how did you use your other language(s) to help you learn new ones?

- To what extent does this reflect the approach and techniques you use to <u>teach</u> languages?

Teaching beliefs

Think about your first year(s) of teaching and compare what you do now.

- How has your general teaching approach evolved? What do you do differently now? What is the same?

- What has influenced any changes in your teaching style and beliefs?

Using other languages.

- To what extent to you identify/agree with the following teacher comments?

Inclusion of other languages adds more cultural awareness and respect for others to lessons and increases rapport and curiosity. It empowers learners and allows them to understand that all languages are valuable, not just English.

It creates a laziness amongst students who can just ask the teacher what a word is in their language instead of actively thinking about the context.

If other language use is tolerated or actively encouraged, then the target language loses its importance, and the class and course can easily get off track.

Trying to totally exclude learners' L1 is unrealistic- being able to come to class being themselves is important, they speak another language and that is undeniable, we cannot pretend it's not there.

Other-language use can facilitate the learning of complex language, prevent frustration, engage struggling learners and create a positive learning atmosphere.

Teachers should try to limit their use of other languages in class because it reduces the L2 input learners have.

The use of the learners' other language helps them feel more confident and, in my experience, learning is easier for them in lower levels of proficiency.

Sticking to English can build Ls' confidence. Ls are pushed to develop survival skills such as paraphrasing or explaining meaning in different ways if they can't use L1.

If the majority of students share one language, using that can make students who do not use that language feel excluded.

Comparing and contrasting differences and similarities with English aids recognition and retention of key language features and develops general linguistic awareness.

- How would you summarise **your** teaching beliefs about using other languages in ELT?

- What has influenced your views/beliefs towards using other languages in English teaching and learning?
  - *My **own language learning** experience*
  - *My **own reading** into the subject area*
  - *My own **classroom research and experimentation***
  - *Doing **teaching qualifications** or **courses***
  - ***Guidance** from **mentors or observers***
  - *Attending **INSETT** in my context*
  - *Attending **external** webinars or conferences*
  - ***Informal discussions** with colleagues*
  - *Noticing my **learners' behaviour***
  - *Other:*

- To what extent are your current beliefs aligned with the methodological shift in ELT?

Reflection

- How could you use/adapt the activities from this session with your learners?

- What would you like to find out more about at this stage?

Teaching Contexts

Research recognises the benefits of 'judicious use' of learners' languages to enhance teaching and learning when and where appropriate.

Judicious use can be defined as making **thoughtful and principled, planned or reactive decisions, (based on contextual factors)** to use learners' other languages as a resource when it benefits or improves the teaching and learning experience and environment.

Phillip Kerr identifies 3 main types of **'linguistic' classroom contexts** (A, B, C) in his book *Translation and Own-language Activities* (2014).

Type	Learners	Teacher	Implications for other language use
A	There is no shared language. All or most learners have different languages	• Doesn't have any proficiency in any of the languages of their learners. • Has proficiency in a language of one or two learners	Teacher uses English in the classroom. May want to use shared language with individual learners if needed. Learners can use English to share information about and discuss their other languages. Learners can be encouraged to refer to and draw from their other language(s) and do individual tasks (e.g planning)
B	Some learners or groups of learners share languages	• Has proficiency in one or some of the shared languages. • Doesn't have any proficiency in any languages of their learners	Teacher uses English in the classroom. May want to use shared language with individual learners if needed. Learners can use English to share information about and discuss their other languages. Learners can be encouraged to refer to and draw from their other language(s) and do individual tasks (e.g planning) Pair and group work could be used where there is more than one learner from each language group.
C	All learners share a common language. (Monolingual)	• Has some level of proficiency in the shared language of their learners. • Doesn't have any proficiency in the shared language of their learners.	Teacher could use shared language in the classroom where proficiency permits should they want to. If no proficiency, teacher can research features of learners' shared language to develop understanding and provide support. Learners can be encouraged to refer to and draw from their other language for individual, pair, or group work.

- Which context(s) reflect the classes you teach?

´

- As well as the linguistic profiles of learners and the teacher, what **other factors** might influence a teacher´s **decisions** on **if, when and how** to make judicious use of learners' languages in English teaching and learning?

Age of learners

type of activity

Class profiles

Select one or two of your classes and complete the information in **part A** of the tables below.

A	**Language(s) known by learners**	
	Language(s) known by teacher	
	Age of learners	
	English level of learners	
	Course type *(e.g Exam prep, General English)*	
B	Strategies I could use with this class.	

A	**Language(s) known by learners**	
	Language(s) known by teacher	
	Age of learners	
	English level of learners	
	Course type *(e.g Exam prep, General English)*	
B	Strategies I could use with this class.	

Teaching strategies

There are many teaching strategies to include, not exclude, learners' languages in English language teaching and learning whilst **maintaining English as the main focus/language of the classroom.**

Below are some examples. These are illustrative of ways in which other languages could be used, rather than should be used.

Read the strategies (or prioritise some) and for each one:

- Consider which linguistic context(s) it could be used/adapted for (A,B,C)
- Identify its suitability for different ages and levels.
- Decide the extent to it reflects planned or reactive decisions for use.

Strategy	A, B, C	Ages	Levels	planned or reactive use
1. Acknowledging other languages Find out what languages the learners have such as doing a survey or poster. They can also discuss how they learned them and how they used different languages to learn others. This builds intercultural awareness; shows learners their languages are valued and provides teachers with insight into learners' languages to inform planning.	*All*	*All – more scaffolding needed for Early Years*	*All*	*planned -survey,* *reactive-referencing languages during course*
2. Reflecting on learning Reflecting is a meta-cognitive strategy, not necessarily a language exercise. It aims to develop awareness and understanding about mental processes, so doing it in a more dominant language can be more beneficial. Learners could use other languages to complete reflection activities either by individual thinking and making notes or discussing with a partner/group.				

Strategy	A, B, C	Ages	Levels	planned or reactive use
3. Generating ideas When speaking/ writing, learners may have many ideas in their minds but struggle to formulate them in English. Teachers can ask them to first brainstorm, organise, and outline ideas in another language then support them in transferring these into English. This allows learners to access more extensive and complex ideas and language, helping lighten the cognitive and affective load, saving time and aiding task completion				
4. Project work When researching and preparing for project on a topic, learners do initial research for concepts and ideas in any language they choose, but then share, prepare, and present in English. This helps generate more complex and creative ideas and develop linguistic and content knowledge across languages.				
5. Codeswitching Codeswitching -where learners drop in words from another language when speaking English- is a natural process for learners and can be commonly seen these days on social media. Accepting rather than admonishing some codeswitching helps learners´ maintain speaking fluency, reduces anxiety, and provides opportunities for teacher/learner to identify and fill language gaps with translations (recasting) or eliciting from peers/group.				

Strategy	A, B, C	Ages	Levels	planned or reactive use
6. Multilingual word lists Learners use translation tools or peer/teacher support to find and record new vocabulary in both English and other language(s) in class. To pre-teach vocabulary, learners could be given a list of English words to take home and translate using tools or parental support. This helps clarify understanding, aid retention and develops translation skills.				
7. Other-language moments Learners can sometimes simply get tired when constantly listening and speaking in English. Providing learners the option to take a moment in another language can help leaners refocus and reflect. These could be negotiated with learners in terms of time (e.g. every 30 mins, x times during a lesson/task) or related to purpose (e.g. for brainstorming, comparing grammar) to develop awareness of their other languages as a learning resource.				
8. Multilingual materials Provide or ask learners to find real-world examples of material which have English alongside other language(s) such as signs, labels, flyers, instructions etc These can be used to introduce and practice language structures or vocabulary and helps develop noticing and translation skills.				

	A, B, C	Ages	Levels	planned or reactive use
9. Rehearse- repeat Learners rehearse a communicative activity (e.g roleplay, conversation, presentation) in another language before attempting it in English. They could compare the two versions afterwards. This can help challenge advanced learners, by raising specific awareness of the difference between their ability to express themselves in English and another language. For lower-level learners it can help generate more complex ideas and personalised language than if it had it been done only in English.				
10. Homework translations Learners find are given something to find outside the classroom in their other language to translate into English at home using translation tools and/or parental support. They bring these to class to share. Older learners could discuss challenges with the translations to develop linguistic awareness and noticing and translation skills.				
Strategy	**A, B, C**	**Ages**	**Levels**	**planned or reactive use**

Follow-up

- Have you as teacher used any of the suggested teaching strategies?

- Have you noticed your **learners** using/doing any of these?

- Do you have any other strategies you'd like to share?

- Look back at your **class profile(s)**. Complete **part B** with some strategies that you might consider using with your learners.

Learner beliefs and expectations

A commonly heard concern or perceived challenge of including other languages in ELT is the potential negative reactions from learners and particularly parents.

> "*We would be unwise to underestimate the significance of the students' beliefs about the most effective language teaching methodology for them, even if these beliefs are not informed by the insights of applied linguistics*" (Kerr, 2014:4)

- To what extent do you think learners/ parents in your context hold 'English-only' beliefs/expectations?

- What are your assumptions based on?

- Below examples of comments from parents and learners.
  To what extent do they reflect your experience or assumptions?

Parents	Adult learners
whether kids understand or not, kids and the teacher should deal with it all in english i think	*I strongly believe that it is better to think in English without my mother language, as it can help me improve faster*
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	*From my point of view using English is the most significant and effective way to improve and understand English*
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 would like)..explaining parts in XX language after explaining them in the English language to understand the meaning more*
…try to translate for students who cannot understand certain English explanations from teachers, especially those who start lessons directly at the age of 14.	*other students told the teacher "I don't understand, could I ask some colleague or you tell me in XX " and the teacher refused to do it… I think that in the aspect of someone who is just beginning to deal with the language you should be a little more flexible and help the student feel more motivated,*
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 think the use of English in class should be more strictly observed. I chose this place to give as many opportunities as possible to use English, so please take this into consideration when conducting classes*
(my daughter) doesn't understand and can't follow since the lessons are only in English	*. I used some XX, but it was a little uncomfortable to see them {teacher} tell me not to use XX with an expression on their face that said they didn't like it*
.the rule to speak 100% in English generated frustrations, especially in moments when it is obvious that the student does not understand	*completely teaching English at level a1 or a2 is not suitable*
Young learner	
I don't use my native language often in English classes, because I think it is disrespectful to my teacher, who doesn't speak my language	

- Do you have any advice or teaching strategies that would help in addressing or responding to any of the comments above and the underlying beliefs?

e.g. **Learners who only want to use English**	*Learners use English instead of OL when given the choice (e.g.- 2. reflecting on learning, 3 generating ideas, 9, rehearse-repeat)*
I strongly believe that it is better to think in English without my mother language, as it can help me improve faster	

Background reading task:

Below is a reading list related to taking a plurilingual approach in ELT.

- Select a couple of articles, resources or research papers to read.
- Make notes on any takeaways from your reading below. *(e.g. What did you learn? Any new teaching ideas? Anything you are not sure about? etc)*
- Share your reading with others. Where possible, you could select the same resource(s) as a peer and arrange a time to discuss your reading together.

What I read

Takeaways

What I read

Takeaways

What I read

Reading list

Anderson, J. (2023) _Translanguaging in the ELT classroom._ Modern English Teacher. Vol 32, Issue 2

Auerbach, E. R. (1993). _Re-examining English Only in the ESL Classroom_. TESOL Quarterly, _27_(1), 9–32.

Ayachia, H.(2018) _The Revival of Translation as a Fifth Skill in the foreign Language Classroom: A Review of the Literature_. AWEJ for Translation & Literary Studies Vol 2:2

Brinkmann,L, Duarte,J. & Melo-Pfeifer (2022) Promoting plurilingualism through linguistic landscapes: A multi-method and multisite study in Germany and the Netherlands TESL Canada Journal Vol 38(2) p88-112

Celic, C and Seltzer, K (2013) Translanguaging: A CUNY-NYSIEB Guide for Educators. New York, NY: CUNY-NYSIEB

Cenoz, J. & Gorter, D. (2021). _Pedagogical Translanguaging_. Cambridge University Press

Cenoz, J. & Gorter,D. (2013) _Towards a Plurilingual Approach in English Language Teaching_: TESOL Quarterly, Vol. 7(3) p591-599

Council of Europe (2020), Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Companion volume Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg

Cummins, J. (2007). _Rethinking monolingual instructional strategies in multilingual classrooms_. Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 10(2), 221–240.

Cummins, J. (2022). _Pedagogical Translanguaging: Examining the Credibility of Unitary versus Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory_. OLBI Journal 12 p33-55.

Erling, E, Adinoff, L. & Hultgren, A.K (2017) Multilingual classrooms: opportunities and challenges for English medium instruction in low and middle income contexts. Report

Kerr, P. (2014) _Translation and own-language activities_. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hall, G., & Cook, G. (2013). _Own-language use in ELT: exploring global practices and attitudes_. Oxford University Press.

Heugh, K, French, M, Armitage, J, Taylor-Leech, K, Billinghurst, N and Ollerhead, S (2019) _Using multilingual approaches: moving from theory to practice_. British Council.

Huang, X., & Chalmers, H. (2023_). Implementation and effects of pedagogical translanguaging in EFL classrooms: a systematic review._ Languages, 8(3).

Lucas, T., Villegas, A.M, & Freedson-Gonzalez, M. (2008). _Linguistically responsive teacher education: preparing classroom teachers to teach English language learners._ Journal of Teacher Education, 59(4), 361-373.

MacSwan, J. & Faltis, C.J (2020_) Codeswitching in the classroom: Critical Perspectives on Teaching, Learning, Policy, and Ideology. R_outledge, New York

Norris, L. (2019) _Using Multilingual Approaches_. London: British Council.

Strakova, Z. (2021). Implementation of plurilingual approach into the foreign language teaching. Journal of Language and Cultural Education.

Spyropoulo, V, 2024, _Embracing multilingualism,_ ELgazette, issue 487, December 2023

Tran, D, K. (2024) Revisiting the Utilization of Mother Tongue in L2 Classroom: Implications for EAP Classroom Journal of Effective Teaching Methods Vol 2.(1)p18-26

Reflection

- Reflect on your initial reactions. Has anything changed? Why? Why not?
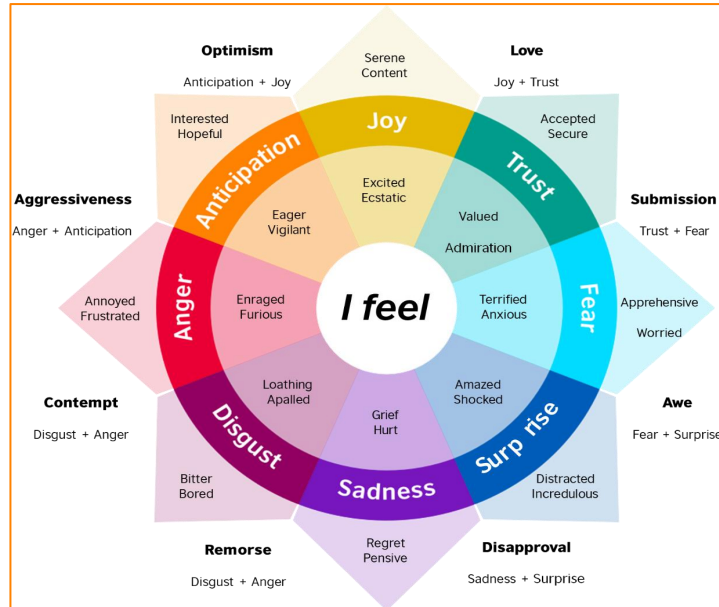
- What are three key points you are taking away from these materials in relation to you and your teaching?