



Translating translanguaging into our classrooms: Possibilities and challenges

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Abstract

With a focus on Australian Aboriginal students, in this paper we argue that translanguaging provides a useful resource for multilingual learners. We point out that although translanguaging is a relatively recent term, in Indigenous Australia it has been used consistently throughout the ages as people from different languages communicated with each other. We argue that through the use of translanguaging in the classroom, children can be supported to draw on the wide range of linguistic resources they bring with them to school. Using data collected from an Aboriginal school in the Northern Territory and one in Western Australia, we illustrate the ways in which this perspective can inform approaches to teaching which will both enhance these learners' communication skills in Standard Australian English (SAE) in the classroom, and, importantly, at the same time demonstrate that the languages the children come to school with are valued.

Introduction

Translanguaging is the practice of multilingual speakers moving easily back and forth across their entire linguistic repertoire to engage in interactive meaning-making processes (García and Li, 2014; Li, 2011). Similar terms to translanguaging include codemeshing (Canagarajah, 2011); translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2013); polylingual languaging (Jørgensen, 2008) and flexible bilingualism (Creese and Blackledge, 2010). In this paper we use the term translanguaging to reflect the widespread adoption of this term in the recent literature where this movement between the minority languages the students speak at home and the target language, in this case Standard Australian English, can support their target language learning.

In countries across the world, many people grow up as multilingual speakers using one or more languages and/or dialects at home and in their communities. In Australia, the traditional owners – the Indigenous people of Australia and the Torres Strait – may speak a range of dialects and languages including Standard Australian English (SAE), Aboriginal English (AE), creoles (known as Kriols), mixed languages and/or traditional Indigenous languages (TILs). We begin with a focus on the widespread and complex linguistic ecology of Indigenous Australia (see Simpson and Wigglesworth, 2018 for more detail). We then turn to what we know about translanguaging in the classroom and use examples from our own work to illustrate translanguaging in action. We conclude with a call to teachers to consider the role translanguaging might have as part of their classroom pedagogy.

Indigenous languages in the Australian context

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3 Approximately 3% of the Australian population identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres
4 Strait Islanders (known collectively as Indigenous or First Nation Australians), and just
5 over 10% of this group continue to speak the traditional language of their community,
6 although with variable levels of proficiency. Of the estimated 250 languages originally
7 spoken, only about 120 languages are still spoken reflecting a dramatic decline since
8 colonization, and only about 13 are considered strong, i.e. being transmitted
9 intergenerationally (Marmion, Obata and Troy, 2014). Examples of those still learned as
10 a mother tongue include Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Warlpiri, Murrinhpatha and Wik
11 Mungkun. With growing support for traditional language revitalization and revival, some
12 schools include the teaching of the local traditional language as a school subject, but this
13 is not a consistent feature of Australian schooling. Other schools have a long-term,
14 officially resourced bilingual program involving the language of the local Aboriginal
15 community in classroom learning.
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19 Mixed languages, creoles, and Aboriginal English are also widely spoken. The mixed
20 languages spoken by Aboriginal people, such as Light Warlpiri (O'Shannessy, 2013,
21 2015) and Gurindji Kriol (Meakins, 2008, 2013; Meakins et al., 2019) are composed of
22 elements with clear provenance from a traditional language source together with English
23 or Kriol based sources. In contrast, Australian creoles are predominately English-lexified.
24 The English-lexified creole, known as "Kriol", is spoken across northern parts of
25 Australia by over 20,000 Aboriginal people, and has multiple dialects. Like all creoles, it
26 has emerged from language contact and shift processes that generated a pidgin contact
27 language, which expanded and became the primary language of communication
28 throughout many Aboriginal communities. English-lexified creoles are not dialects of
29 English as they do not share the same lexical, phonological, morphosyntactic and/or
30 pragmatic properties as English (Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo, 2013).
31 Aboriginal English, however, is a non-standard dialect of English which is acquired as a
32 mother tongue by many Aboriginal people. It is an English dialect that varies from SAE
33 at all linguistic levels – phonetically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically – but
34 whose surface features still have much in common with SAE (Eades, 2013). As with
35 Kriol, there is regional and social variability in Aboriginal English, and both tend to be
36 used as a lingua franca.
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41 One or more of these languages are spoken by Aboriginal people as a mother tongue and
42 all are full and dynamic languages which can be used for a multitude of purposes in
43 everyday life. They are especially important for conveying Aboriginal cultural meanings
44 and expressing significant sociocultural connections, particularly those to land and
45 family. This applies to traditional and mixed languages and to the English-lexified
46 creoles, as well as Englishes that are spoken almost exclusively by Aboriginal speech
47 communities. For example, there are Kriol relationship terms that have been historically
48 derived from English to indicate family relationships (e.g. mami 'mum') but their
49 meaning has been extended to include additional blood relationships as well as other
50 traditional cultural ties. In this way, the meaning has been greatly extended from the SAE
51 source lexeme 'mum'. Similarly, many varieties of AE show due respect to elders
52 through the labels 'aunty' and 'uncle', appropriated from English. All these Aboriginal
53 languages can be used to be inclusive of all those within the speakers' speech
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community, but they can also be selected to exclude others purposefully from the discourse by using words and terms unknown to others.

Traditionally, Aboriginal people were multilingual in their traditional languages. At the very least most Aboriginal people spoke two languages and/or dialects (see Table 1 for examples), minimally their own mother tongue and an additional language often with broader communicative reach, and although this is no longer universally the case, it is still quite widespread. When additional languages are acquired, this is only to the extent that opportunities for learning them allow. In some contexts, children will have exposure to multiple languages from birth, with equal or different intensities which influence their acquisition trajectory. Even though SAE is the dominant, national, standardised language in Australia, it can be a foreign language in some Aboriginal language contexts where children may only actively engage with it once they come into the classroom.

Mother tongue	Additional language(s)	Language learning context
Traditional Language, e.g. Warlpiri, Pitjantjatjara, Wik Mungkun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional traditional language/s • Aboriginal lingua franca, e.g. Kriol, Aboriginal English etc • Standard Australian English (SAE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trad.Lang: informal acquisition from family & community; maintenance program &/or mother tongue medium in school • Aboriginal lingua franca: informal acquisition from family, community and Aboriginal networks further afield • SAE: English as a Foreign Language in the classroom
Creole, e.g. Kriol, Yarrie Lingo, Cape York Creole etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Australian English (SAE) • Traditional Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creole: informal acquisition from family & community; mother tongue medium &/or language awareness in school • Trad.Lang: informal acquisition from family & community; revitalisation program in school • SAE: English as a Foreign Language in the classroom
Aboriginal English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Australian English (SAE) • Traditional Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Eng: informal acquisition from family & community; mother tongue medium &/or language awareness in school • SAE: English as an Additional Dialect • Trad.Lang: informal acquisition from family & community; revival program in school

Table 1. Common language backgrounds and language learning contexts for speakers of Indigenous languages

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4 Children beginning school with a language other than that used for classroom instruction,
5 for example, a minority language, or a non-standard dialectal form such as AE, may be
6 disadvantaged if educators are not sufficiently cognizant of the language background of
7 their students. This is particularly important given the foundational purpose that language
8 serves in our schools, including with regard to the development of literacy. In this paper
9 we argue that it is vital that the multilingualism of such children, particularly Aboriginal
10 students, not only be recognised, but also actively supported within our classrooms.
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14 Whilst historically there was strong support for bilingual education in some parts of
15 Australia, particularly the decades of 1970s-1990s, it has declined over recent decades
16 (see, Simpson, Caffery and McConvell, 2009; Wigglesworth and Lasagabaster, 2011),
17 with English used as the language of instruction in recent times in nearly all Australian
18 classrooms (see Devlin, Disbray and Devlin, 2017 for further discussion). That is, in the
19 majority of Australian schools the curriculum is delivered in English regardless of
20 students' mother tongue and/or their SAE proficiency levels. In many cases this has
21 meant, in practical terms, that teachers have required students to switch to using only
22 SAE in the classroom. Effectively this means that the responsibility has rested with
23 "minority language" students to accommodate the communicative imperative of SAE.
24 There has generally been little consistent systematic support provided for the use of
25 students' mother tongue, although in many Indigenous community based schools, local
26 support staff who speak the children's L1 are often employed to ameliorate this situation.
27 Even so, use of the mother tongue in the classroom appears to be considerably under-
28 utilised in Australian classrooms, despite its considerable potential as a useful educational
29 tool. This is also despite our long-standing knowledge about the importance of the
30 development of the first language for supporting success in second language learning
31 (Cummins, 1976, 2000) including for literacy development in the second language
32 (Bialystok, Luk and Kwan, 2005). For example, García and Vazquez (2012) indicate that
33 the development of metalinguistic awareness and literacy can be enhanced when a focus
34 is given to the differences between the home language and the language used in school. A
35 current trend reported in contemporary linguistic literature describes translanguaging as a
36 natural behaviour among multilingual people which can be harnessed by encouraging
37 multilingual students to use all their language resources for classroom learning (García
38 and Li, 2014; Li, 2011).
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44 The role of translanguaging

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46 There is considerable evidence that Aboriginal people can draw on their linguistic
47 resources and move between different varieties of their languages as needed and as
48 appropriate (for more details, see for example, Oliver and Nguyen, 2017; Simpson and
49 Wigglesworth, 2018; Vaughan, 2018). Although translanguaging involves fluid
50 movement between linguistic codes, for Aboriginal people, moving between SAE, AE,
51 Kriol and/or a traditional language is not a random activity; rather it is "a well governed
52 process that is used as a communicative strategy to convey linguistic and social
53 information" (Grosjean, 1999: p. 286). It can be used in ways that are both powerful and
54 playful, and for purposes that allow it to support effective interaction and communication.
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Specifically, it allows language users to make themselves understood and to help them ensure they have understood the intent of their conversational partners. To achieve this, those engaging in translanguaging mix their language repertoires, making linguistic choices to match the situation and their needs. In this way translanguaging represents both a psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspective of language use. Furthermore, as Li (2011) suggests, translanguaging allows speakers (and writers) to convey a certain nuanced meaning – allowing creativity and criticality of language use. This can be achieved in ways that allow users to contrast and compare different language phenomena, and to mesh their meaning in ways that allow for cultural hybridity. As well as providing evidence of translanguaging practices, research has shown Aboriginal participants to be very attentive to their linguistic choices, experimenting with the form of their language in ways that demonstrate a heightened linguistic consciousness.

Although the term translanguaging is not new, first being labelled in Welsh by Williams in his 1994 PhD thesis and then translated into English, its uptake within the educational domain is a relatively recent phenomena and its applications for classroom pedagogy are still being explored. In Australia, in some educational sectors, a focus for Aboriginal language speakers in English medium classrooms has been on developing their code-switching skills, reflecting a set of beliefs that speakers need to translate meaning from mother tongue to school language to facilitate their learning and that switching to the designated target language for the classroom (SAE) will allow them to successfully accomplish this (Sellwood and Angelo, 2013: p. 255). As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators have indicated when reflecting on their own schooling experiences, they were left “sitting like statues” after being told not to speak in their mother tongue, being told their mother tongue was “wrong” when they came to school, and being “afraid of being wrong” due lack of proficiency in their early levels of SAE (Angelo and Carter, 2015: pp. 130-131). Yet a bilingual speaker’s languages are “not monolithic autonomous systems” (García and Li, 2014: p. 9) and do not exist as discrete linguistic repositories. So there is now increasing awareness that bilingual (and bidialectal) speakers do not simply shift or shuttle between two languages as represented in descriptions of code-switching, with its focus on linguistic items – such as lexical choices, semantic meaning and grammatical form. Instead such speakers engage in translanguaging which, as a descriptive construct, is more broadly encompassing and concerned with communication and how meaning is made and understood so that speakers can use their complete language repertoire (García and Li, 2014) to engage in meaningful discourse through this practice.

We argue that translanguaging has the potential to improve pedagogical practice in remote Aboriginal schools by serving a variety of educative purposes and as a conceptual underpinning of classroom practice, with the potential to make positive contributions to multilingual students’ learning as well as developing social and cognitive awareness during collaborative interactions in the classroom. For example, Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012) argue that multilingual students will develop greater understanding and internalization of the content discussed in class because translanguaging can be used to scaffold students learning thus functioning as a “powerful learning tool” (Mary and Young, 2017: p. 111). Children accessing their own home language(s) can help them to

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3 mediate the cognitive demands of their learning (Swain and Lapkin, 2000) and of the
4 learning process (DiCamilla and Antón, 2012) in the target language. Rather than
5 detracting from learning, learning can be enhanced by encouraging students to use their
6 mother tongue for learning classroom content, regardless of the medium of instruction.
7 Antón and DiCamilla (1998) found that beginning-level learners draw on their L1 to
8 access and learn L2 linguistic features (e.g., vocabulary items and grammatical
9 structures). Emergent bilinguals can use translanguaging strategies to support their own
10 meaning making (Alvarez 2014; García, 2012) and to develop complexity of their
11 language production (Creese and Blackledge, 2010; García and Li, 2014). Even very
12 young children in their preschool years have been shown to draw on translanguaging
13 strategies to communicate (Wilson, Hurst and Wigglesworth, 2018), to help their own
14 understanding, and to help others understand their communicative intent (García, 2011).
15 This has also been found to occur beyond the level of oral language with immigrant
16 Latino children using their home language to support their comprehension of written text
17 and their literacy understanding more generally (Soltero-González, 2009).
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21 The move to more fluid use of students' languages in the classroom has begun to occur as
22 more educators recognise that students' use of their entire range of language resources
23 can be used inside the classroom in ways that support their classroom learning and their
24 SAE development. Aboriginal people are historically a highly multilingual population,
25 and so Aboriginal speech communities have always engaged in the multilingual practice
26 of translanguaging, and children acquire it naturally. Alert educators may observe that
27 their Aboriginal students are sophisticated language users, a fact which can be effectively
28 harnessed for classroom learning and for learning the language of classroom instruction –
29 typically the standard language form of English. In contrast, some of the ways the
30 linguistic concept of code-switching has been operationalized in classroom language
31 pedagogies have not fostered Aboriginal students' engagement in classroom learning
32 where, according to Angelo and Carter (2015: p. 131), “the roles of varying proficiencies,
33 dynamic translanguaging and language teaching and learning” had no place in some
34 simplistic renditions of CS as a language pedagogy.
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39 By encouraging students to freely access their home language, they can make sense of the
40 content and procedures inherent in classroom teaching. As Johnson (1999: p. 62) suggests
41 it also helps obviate the relegation of control in meaning making where the *other* system
42 (i.e. the home language) is perceived as “wrong, deviant, unimportant, primitive, or even
43 invisible” – a view which continues to resonate with respect to Indigenous languages. It
44 also provides both teachers and their students with greater choice, giving options to
45 enhance the meaning-making within the learning process.
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48 Translanguaging in Action

49

50 In the examples below, we draw on data collected from two Aboriginal schools which
51 were part of a larger project. The data were collected in three different classrooms from
52 children aged 6, 8 and 10. In each classroom five children and the teacher wore a small
53 audio recorder with a lapel microphone attached. The recordings were set up at the
54 beginning of the class, and the children were recorded through to the end of the
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playground session immediately following the class. Teachers were recorded only for the period of the class itself.

The recordings were transcribed, where necessary with the help of a local Indigenous Teaching Assistant, and analysed for differences in language use in the classroom, versus language use in the playground. We draw here on several examples from the recordings which illustrate the ways in which teachers can engage in practices informed by translanguaging which demonstrate that they recognise and value the cultural and linguistic knowledge that these children bring to the classroom, and allow the children the freedom to express this cultural and linguistic knowledge.

One approach teachers can adopt is encouraging students to construct meaning in ways that draw on those language resources that are most accessible to them (the learners) and most appropriate to both the interlocutor, the audience, the context, and their needs in ways that acknowledge the students' home language, but also provides models of other forms of language, such as SAE. The following examples occurred while the class was out on a brief bushwalk in the bushland opposite the school between the teacher and one of the primary school students, with other students around:

Example 1.

Student A: [goolu matila]
 Teacher: What is it... say good bye?
 Student A: No I dat say um 'Wait dere'
 Teacher: What is it?
 Student A: [goolu matila] das mean 'wait'

 Student A: [goolu matila]

In this example, rather than admonishing the student for speaking another language, the teacher engages with the student guessing at the meaning and allowing the students to correct her. And later on during the same bush walk:

Example 2.

Student B: *Dila* ... snake
 Teacher: I don't want to see a snake (laughs)
 Student C: Me and my sister Roxanne lit fire snake
 Teacher: Did you?
 Student B: And dats the old word
 Teacher: And what do you ...
 what's the word for snake?
 Student B: Um *Dila*

In example 2, again the teacher does not provide corrections, nor prompt or recast, but instead engages in a meaningful exchange drawing from the students various language varieties in ways that construct the students as the holders of knowledge. At the same time, even whilst showing interest in the student's L1, the teacher continues to use SAE,

building on the student's use of home language and elaborating it into SAE, and thus providing a model for that form of the language.

In a further exchange from Example 1 and 2 above, Example 3 shows how the students and teacher use first the traditional language word and then the English word for lizard and in this way develop mutual understanding and shared meanings in which the teacher becomes the learner.

Example 3.

Teacher: What have we found now?
 Student D: Balabala
 Teacher: A balabala?
 Student D: A lizard
 Teacher: Ah balabala is a lizard

In many ways, the distinction between the two constructs of CS and translanguaging is akin to one of product versus process. Where code-switching has been used in Australian classroom language pedagogy for Aboriginal students, it has focussed on the production of a particular predetermined language, on demand, moving students from producing one language to another. Translanguaging is more concerned with the process of making meaning using all the linguistic resources at the student's disposal. As Baker (2011: p. 288) describes it, translanguaging is "the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two (or more) languages" that is, using the linguistic repertoires of a speaker concurrently. Furthermore, it allows them to express themselves in socially, culturally and contextually appropriate ways (García and Li, 2014) as shown in Example 4.

Example 4.

Girl 1: Pop, my grandfather and my Meme, we went out hunting for Bulogi.
 Boy: Bulogi! Bulogi!
 Girl 2: It's called a cow...
 Girl 1: Yeh, cow... whatever!
 Boy: Bulogi!
 Girl 1: That's what they call it!
 Boy: Hehehe
 Teacher: That's okay, that's good... yeh.
 Boy: Bulogi!
 Teacher: Yes?
 Girl 1: That's what they call it at Tenant Creek style, you don't know!
 Teacher: Tenant Creek style, okay.
 Girl 1: Yeh, they call it Bulogi.
 Teacher: Bulogi, okay.
 Boy: Bulogi!
 Teacher: They call it Bulogi, okay.er
 Teacher: Tell me about... yeh.

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3 Boy: Hahaha
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6 In this example from a classroom, the tension between the use of other languages in the
7 classroom is clear. Two female students actively support the use of ‘Tenant Creek style’
8 language in the classroom, explaining its meaning to the class and the teacher who is
9 supportive of its use and seeks to understand further. Meanwhile, the boy’s response
10 appears to represent resistance. In this way, the use of other languages in the classroom
11 through a translanguaging-informed approach can be invaluable in shifting the mindsets
12 of students and teachers alike to achieve inclusivity in the classroom and beyond. It is a
13 strengths-based approach from which students can build greater knowledge and
14 understanding of the world around them.
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17 There is, however, some way to go with this approach. Harnessing all students’ language
18 resources for their learning sits in stark contrast to pedagogical practices that give little
19 countenance to cultivating a multilingual ethos in the classroom. Yet these Aboriginal
20 students bring with them a great ability to move between languages as shown in Example
21 5 which takes place during their break in the classroom:
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24 **Example 5**

25 Student F: Did you bin all the way ye-yesterday?
26 Teacher: Yeah I went all the way to Canberra on the weekend
27 Student F: Wha?
28 Teacher: To Canberra
29 Student F: To Canberra?
30 Teacher: Four hours on an airplane
31 Student F: Oh
32 Student F: Ulpara, ulpara, ulpara thantha wayt (swearing).
33 Student G: You not fast ulpara, ulpara.
34 Student F: David, um, Anise is teasing me.
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38 This example illustrates the ability of the student to switch from Aboriginal English in
39 line 1, reiterated by the teacher in SAE in line 2, and then the student changing to his
40 traditional language in line 8 before almost immediately switching back to SAE to
41 complain to the teacher about student G’s behaviour.
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44 **Moving ahead with translanguaging**

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46 Encouraging translanguaging can serve as a means to help improve engagement,
47 performance and achievement for those Aboriginal children who do not have SAE as
48 their first language/dialect. Importantly classroom approaches that foster translanguaging,
49 as illustrated in, for example, Poetsch (2018) also signal to the students that their full
50 linguistic repertoire, including their home language(s), is valued and it is not just SAE
51 that is privileged. As Alvarez (2014) suggests, translanguaging provides a way to value
52 those who are multilingual speakers, providing opportunity for them to express their own
53 meanings and to create their identities in ways that explicitly support their home language
54 and culture. This is, of course, is predicated on there being sufficient overlap in the
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interlocutors' linguistic resources to enable translanguaging behaviours (see challenges below).

It also helps address the monolingualization that is reflected in some school policies and in comments from teachers such as “Only speak English” and “Leave your language at the gate”, which are sentiments that have been expressed within the earshot of the authors of this paper. In such cases, the infamous Australian ‘monolingual mindset’ (Clyne, 2006) is not only explicitly stated to students, but the effects of not valuing students’ mother tongues are inculcated implicitly, too. Furthermore, in language contact and language shift contexts, where Aboriginal students’ mother tongue is English-based (i.e. an English-lexified creole or an English dialect), students’ languages are not always recognised or respected as full communicative codes by educators and community members. Speakers in these contexts need actively implemented programs of ‘language awareness’ to counteract negative attitudes about their mother tongue. Otherwise, even speakers themselves may believe an English-based mother tongue such as AE to be “rubbish talk” as it is described by some speakers themselves.

Multilingualism needs to be intentionally valued and fostered. Adopting a translanguaging approach is one way to address current inequities around language and language use in schools, especially for those whose home languages have no historical pattern of recognition in the classroom, which could include AE, creoles, mixed languages and/or traditional languages. At the same time as addressing this social justice need, it also provides the opportunity to foster positive relationships, not only between teachers and students, but also between school communities and the families of students (McMillan and Rivers, 2011).

The question that remains, however, is how to implement a translanguaging-informed approach within Australian classrooms where the language of classroom instruction is predominantly SAE. As illustrated in the examples above, recent data collected in schools do, however, suggest that it is indeed possible to allow Aboriginal students to successfully move across their full linguistic repertoire in the classroom context, especially in less formal contexts, such as in the playground and during school excursions.

Furthermore, teaching in Australian schools is governed by the Australian (national) Curriculum (ACARA, 2014), and there appears to be clear alignment between translanguaging pedagogies and required English curriculum content. For example, the descriptors for the ‘Language’ strand of the English curriculum, which consists of ‘Language variation and change’ and ‘Language for interaction’, shows considerable policy support to enable the use of translanguaging strategies across most year levels from Foundation to Year 10 as outlined in Appendix 1. Even within the ‘Literature’ strand, which is separate from the ‘Language’ strand, it is clear that students’ full linguistic repertoires can be incorporated into the teaching of this subject across the year levels. The descriptors from each of these strands (Appendix 1) show the potential ways the curriculum fits with translanguaging strategies that explicitly value and investigate multilingualism in the classroom and the community.

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4 Whilst the curriculum has the potential to enable translanguaging in the classroom, the
5 challenge is how to enact it in an education system replete with monolingual
6 understandings despite policy signals to the contrary. Many Aboriginal mother tongues,
7 despite being English-lexified creoles or English-based dialects, are not recognised in
8 educational settings, in part because generalist classroom teachers, already overstretched
9 in their daily working lives, often have little background or training in language learning
10 and second language/dialect acquisition.
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13 Enacting translanguaging

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16 Enacting translanguaging within the classroom is not trivial, and requires a number of
17 enabling conditions to support its uptake, including sufficient overlapping linguistic
18 resources between interlocutors, teacher and community language awareness, time and
19 space for implementation, and, perhaps most importantly, having educators give due
20 recognition to the students' existing language knowledge. Teacher awareness of the
21 language background of their students remains variable at best and in many places around
22 the world, including in Australia, teachers tend to stigmatize the non-standard dialects
23 (Siegel, 2006, 2010) and minority languages spoken by their students (Orellana and
24 García, 2014) and these new dialects lack consistent recognition as autonomous
25 languages.
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29 It is not surprising, therefore, that the translanguaging practices of Aboriginal students,
30 and the inherent metalinguistic awareness this expresses, are not actively utilised in many
31 classrooms. This was illustrated by Moses and Wigglesworth (2008) where students
32 remained silent even though they had knowledge about the topic the teacher was
33 attempting to discuss. The interaction had the potential to engage students, if only their
34 background knowledge could have been unleashed by bringing to bear all the language
35 resources students and their teacher had in common to negotiate meaning together – a
36 necessary pre-condition for classroom approaches for translanguaging.
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39 As Trudgill (2012: p. 2) pointed out, languages and dialects are neither “good or bad, nice
40 or nasty, right or wrong – they are just different from one another”. To value all
41 languages, we need to recognise that all languages and dialects are complex, and reflect
42 complex cultural relationships and semantic understandings. By doing this it is possible
43 to create a classroom atmosphere where languages and dialects are seen as important,
44 mother tongues are valued and all language resources can be brought to bear on the
45 learning. In such contexts, translanguaging can be accepted as the norm and the
46 classroom becomes a translanguaging space (Li, 2011) where all languages spoken by the
47 students contribute to the learning that occurs. This may involve explicit teaching of
48 students, or at the very least modeling to them how to draw on their complete language
49 repertoires when learning in the classroom (as indicated in Examples 1-4 above).
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52 Conclusion

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3 There is great promise where classroom teaching is imbued with translanguaging
4 understandings, however, given the current impost on teachers in terms of the extensive
5 curriculum demands, implementing translanguaging-informed practices needs to be
6 undertaken with care (see McSwan, 2017 for detailed discussion of this). This is because
7 it requires a flexibility in approach, both in terms of teaching strategies, and the
8 application of the curriculum and assessment that may prove difficult for some teachers if
9 implemented without sufficient support and understanding. Assessment is especially
10 challenging under Australia's current national testing regime (NAPLAN¹). The adoption
11 of translanguaging practices in the classroom requires, where possible, a whole-school
12 and community approach. Attaining consensus for this, particularly outside the schools,
13 may be difficult to achieve given the national propensity to a monolingual mindset.
14 Nevertheless, research has shown that community members are supportive of adding
15 SAE to students' existing language resources (e.g., Oliver et al., 2013), along with
16 valuing their mother tongue (Angelo and Carter, 2015; Oliver and Forrest, in press) and
17 maintaining and augmenting their traditional languages (Angelo and Poetsch, 2019).
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22 As a relative newcomer to educational practice, the role of translanguaging in different
23 contexts needs to be explored. For example, research is needed to address what role
24 translanguaging might have in contexts where the L1 of the children is a traditional
25 language, a Kriol or Aboriginal English, or whether translanguaging might be
26 differentially useful in contexts other than primary schools, such as the high school,
27 Vocational Education and Training (VET) or tertiary levels.
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31 Incorporating the multilingual practice of translanguaging in the classroom provides an
32 opportunity for multilingual learners to have agency and to benefit from their linguistic
33 repertoire that, to date, simplistic interpretations of CS have not been able to satisfy. It
34 gives credence to the multilingual capabilities of such learners, especially Aboriginal
35 students who have a diverse array of languages and proficiencies, but whose voices have
36 been silenced by a curriculum and teaching practices that have not recognised what they
37 have to offer. It also provides a way to address the monolingual mindset that is prevalent
38 (Clyne, 2006) and highlights the importance of languages – not only for developing SAE
39 proficiency, but the contribution of it to learning more generally.
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55 ¹ The Australia-wide National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy was
56 implemented in 2008 and administered annually.
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Appendix 1

	Language		Literature
	Language variation and change	Language for interaction	Literature in context
F	Understand that English is one of many languages spoken in Australia and that different languages may be spoken by family, classmates and community (ACELA1426)	Explore how language is used differently at home and school depending on the relationships between people (ACELA1428)	Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences (ACELT1575)
Yr 1	Understand that people use different systems of communication to cater to different needs and purposes and that many people may use sign systems to communicate with others (ACELA1443)	Understand that language is used in combination with other means of communication, for example facial expressions and gestures to interact with others (ACELA1444). Understand that there are different ways of asking for information, making offers and giving commands (ACELA1446)	Discuss how authors create characters using language and images (ACELT1581)
Yr 2	Understand that spoken, visual and written forms of language are different modes of communication with different features and their use varies according to the audience, purpose,	Understand that language varies when people take on different roles in social and classroom interactions and how the use of key interpersonal language	Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created (ACELT1587)

	context and cultural background (ACELA1460)	resources varies depending on context (ACELA1461)	
Yr 3	Understand that languages have different written and visual communication systems, different oral traditions and different ways of constructing meaning (ACELA1475)	Understand that successful cooperation with others depends on shared use of social conventions, including turntaking patterns, and forms of address that vary according to the degree of formality in social situations (ACELA1476)	Discuss texts in which characters, events and settings are portrayed in different ways, and speculate on the authors' reasons (ACELT1594)
Yr 4	Understand that Standard Australian English is one of many social dialects used in Australia, and that while it originated in England it has been influenced by many other languages (ACELA1487)	Understand that social interactions influence the way people engage with ideas and respond to others for example when exploring and clarifying the ideas of others, summarising their own views and reporting them to a larger group (ACELA1488)	Make connections between the ways different authors may represent similar storylines, ideas and relationships (ACELT1602)
Yr 5	Understand that the pronunciation, spelling and meanings of words have histories and change over time (ACELA1500)	Understand that patterns of language interaction vary across social contexts and types of texts and that they help to signal social roles and relationships (ACELA1501)	Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts (ACELT1608)
Yr 6	Understand that different social and geographical dialects or accents are used in Australia in addition to Standard Australian English (ACELA1515)	Understand that strategies for interaction become more complex and demanding as levels of formality and social distance increase (ACELA1516)	Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1613)
Yr 7		Understand how accents, styles of speech and idioms	Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints

	express and create personal and social identities (ACELA1529)	about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1619)
Yr 8	Understand the influence and impact that the English language has had on other languages or dialects and how English has been influenced in return (ACELA1540)	Understand how conventions of speech adopted by communities influence the identities of people in those communities (ACELA1541)
		Explore the ways that ideas and viewpoints in literary texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts may reflect or challenge the values of individuals and groups (ACELT1626), and, Explore the interconnectedness of Country/Place, People, Identity and Culture in texts including those by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors (ACELT1806)
Yr 9		
Yr 10	Understand how language use can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people (ACELA1564)	Compare and evaluate a range of representations of individuals and groups in different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1639)