

# Translanguaging, Emotionality, and English as a Second Language Immigrants: Mongolian Background Women in Australia

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# Translanguaging, Emotionality, and English as a Second Language Immigrants: Mongolian Background Women in Australia

## **Abstract**

Drawing on the translanguaging practices of Mongolian background English as a Second Language (ESL) immigrant women in Australia, this study points out two main theoretical points: (1) when translanguaging moves beyond the classroom, it may provide ESL immigrants with an emotionally and linguistically safe space where they feel comfortable in managing their negative emotions through employing multiple entangled layers of linguistic and paralinguistic resources; (2) translanguaging data further presents that these ESL immigrants are deeply emotional and are prone to depression, putting their mental wellbeing in jeopardy. As a result of their depression, their academic concentration is inhibited, as is their ability to learn English well or easily. We, as TESOL educators, therefore, need to consider two critical educational implications: (1) how ESL immigrant students use different linguistic repertoires outside the classroom, what they talk about, and which emotions they prefer to express in which forms of their linguistic repertoire; and their multiple emotions, traumas and psychological issues embedded within their multiple ways of learning, being, and speaking; (2) consolidate appropriate interventions aimed at reducing depressive symptoms that have the potential to negatively impact academic performance existing in L2 sociocultural contexts.

# 1. Introduction: Translanguaging and Playfulness

Translanguaging has received increasing attention from TESOL scholars and educators in pedagogical settings in recent years, with a large number of studies and resources available for classroom practices and activities (Back, 2020; Goodman & Tastanbek, 2020; Kim & Park G., 2019; Tian, Aghai, Sayer & Schissel, 2020). The primary concern of translanguaging reiterates the troublesomeness, if not uselessness, of demarcating language categories, for the flexible and fluid transitioning between and across languages in

the classroom (Li & Zhu, 2013; Otheguy et al., 2015), presenting more nuanced and on-thespot negotiation of linguistic resources for meaning-making (Li, 2018). The main focus is on language learners' and users' "fluid and creative adaptation of a wide array of semiotic resources," and "a product of their sociohistorical trajectories through a multitude of interactions across space and time" (Hawkins & Mori, 2018, pp. 2-3). It is, thus, understood through complex processes of entangled and intertwined resources – the (dis)assemblages of fluid, mixed, kaleidoscopic, and non-static semiotic resources, modes, emotions, acts, genres, and repertoires (Dovchin & Lee, 2019). Translanguaging problematises the concept of fixed language boundaries, and their inadequacy to comprise communicative practices formed out of the complexity of linguistic, non-linguistic, and semiotic repertoires in an effort to apprehend the critical hurdle of linguistic diversity (Blommaert, 2019) in today's highly diverse classrooms (Sultana & Dovchin, 2019). The main ethos of translanguaging indicates that the so-called languages (e.g. English, Japanese, etc.) become continuously dis-invented and reconstituted (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005), while language users are involved with the constant process of semiotic mobility across time, space, and resources, and dislocation from and relocation into newer social contexts (Canagarajah, 2013; Canagarajah & Dovchin, 2019).

Translanguaging pedagogy is often positively identified, where it increases students' creative engagement, allowing the flexibility to appreciate and use the home language at school, while students can still learn the target language (Menken & Sánchez, 2019). It eases the pressure of not having to constantly dwell on responding only in the target language, providing language learners with a safe and convenient space (García & Li, 2012). Students may take translanguaging to heart, feeling the ease and relief to fully participate in classes, instead of being inhibited by the idea of having to use only the target language (Menken & Sánchez, 2019). The fluidity of translanguaging may further highlight students' playful interactions (Li & Zhu, 2019) or "playful naughtiness" (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p.111), where students' linguistic repertoires are often connected with forms of "pleasure of doing things differently" (Pennycook, 2007, pp. 41-42). Students may engage in multiple forms of the laughing aspect, where they are able to create second or alternative lives in the classroom, with playful interactions and exchanges (Sayer, 2013; Sultana, Dovchin & Pennycook, 2013). Translanguaging is often regarded as the "ludification of culture" (Li & Zhu, 2019, p. 13), subverting the roles and breaking the boundaries through play. Students employ translanguaging as space and resources for creative and innovative use of parodic language varieties to "mock their teacher, to mock each other, [...] to mock their school's attempts to

transmit reified versions of 'cultural heritage'" (Blackledge & Creese, 2009, p. 252). These playful aspects of translanguaging are identified with the forms of pleasure, fun, mockery, teasing, banter, and humour (Dovchin, 2015), accentuating students' sense of joy and comfort (Kim & Park, 2019) while allowing their rebellious side to resist the dominant language ideologies (Li & Zhu, 2019).

Meanwhile, a very important consideration that has commonly been overlooked in the literature, is the evidence of translanguaging used by speakers to deal with complex issues such as depression, despair, frustration, trauma and negative emotional expressions. The playfulness in translanguaging pedagogy has quite extensively focused on frivolous exuberance of language learners, usually dwelling more on conviviality and vivacity than actual or potential precarious realities that occur behind the classrooms. This study, therefore, seeks to intervene in this research gap and expand the current critical dialogues in translanguaging by moving beyond "playfulness," where the rights and wellbeing of language learners are at stake.

# 2. Translanguaging and Emotionality

By moving away from the dominant focus on jubilant scenes of "playfulness" that have dominated the translanguaging pedagogy, this study seeks to highlight the fact that when translanguaging moves to certain contexts beyond the classroom, it may become English as a second language (ESL) immigrants' safe emotional space to manage, express, and negotiate one's complicated emotional, psychological, and mental issues triggered by "precarious" lived experiences, affected by failing social and economic networks (Piller & Takahashi, 2011). ESL immigrants may experience a vast number of challenging situations at some point during their pre/post settlement, such as cultural and linguistic shock, trying to fit into a new environment including schools and workplaces, learning new or different languages, unemployment or survival jobs, lack of access to academic/health opportunities, homesickness, separation, loneliness, and other discrimination-based exclusions in the various contexts of the host society (Dovchin, 2019; Park S.Y. & Bernstein, 2008). Since the language of instruction in school, university, or work settings is English-only, ESL immigrants must follow English as the primary language curriculum of a host society (Pacheco, 2018). As a result, they are also under continuous pressure of speaking, thinking, writing and communicating through Standard English in both institutional and noninstitutional settings in the host society (Piller, 2016).

The accumulation of these chains of stressful events can have negative impacts on immigrants' emotional state, physical and mental welfare, weakening one's sense of belonging to the host society and other severe long-lasting psychological and mental consequences such as depression, fear and anxiety, shock, stress, and self-harm (Husain & Howard, 2017). Piller (2016, p.194), for example, reports an example of an international student from South Korea, who left a suicide note under her unit coordinator's office door because she was about to fail a unit at the University of Sydney. In that note, the student described herself as a 'loser' who did not have enough English to cope with her course. She felt 'guilty' that her English was not better and that she 'betrayed' her parents with her poor English, and other people who cared for her. Dovchin (2020) similarly discusses the cases of international students in Australia who suffer from serious psychological damages such as social withdrawal, sense of non-belonging, low self-esteem, fear, and anxiety over using and speaking English in academic and non-academic settings. These psychological traits are often triggered by their experience with linguistic racism such as "ethnic accent bullying" and "linguistic stereotyping." Dovchin (2020) also reports the death by suicide of a Chinese national and Melbourne university student, who had exhibited signs of undiagnosed mental ill-health over his insecurity of English skills, confronting language barriers and experiencing study difficulties at university. Drawing on a large corpus of domestic migrant workers' trauma narratives characterised by repeated crying, Ladegaard (2015) notes that these women suffer from trauma and unspeakable humiliation. As these women make sense of their traumatic experiences, it becomes clear how peer support becomes essential in the narrators' attempts to rewrite their life stories from victimhood to survival and beyond.

Canagarajah (2017), likewise, presents how Zimbabwean nurses working in UK hospitals of the UK conform to the monolingual language requirements, while also adopting mild and hidden forms of translingual resistance through engaging with in-group strategies. When they are together, they employ translanguaging without feeling external pressure of using only English in a standard form. They seek to overcome their inadequacy in formal English competency through collaborative language production by helping each other produce materials that may satisfy institutional expectations (Canagarajah, 2017, pp. 31–32). Establishing in-group translanguaging is, thus, deemed as free of surveillance – "safe houses" for these nurses, as they seek out each other for consolation, emotional affinity, and spaces for relief. Because they were able to find relief from their own interactions, they are eventually more likely to work more efficiently (Canagarajah, 2017).

Understanding the various elements, standards, and multiple contexts that constitute translanguaging in relation to ESL immigrants' emotionality is thus important for TESOL educators, who are looking for different ways to support ESL communities. It will raise awareness among TESOL educators in terms of understanding ESL immigrants' real-life emotional, mental, and psychological conditions, acknowledging that every learner comes into the classroom with multiple outside factors that could affect their fundamental learning ability (Benson, 2011; Sandwall, 2010; De Costa et al., 2019). In fact, recent studies in second language acquisition have similarly highlighted the importance of supporting ESL students' socio-emotional experiences when learning a new language (Back et al., 2020). Some scholars advocate for teachers' support strategies to help students manage their varied emotional and psychological issues and encourage them to dynamically achieve their learning goals (Meyer & Turner, 2007). In particular, in the second language learning context, the importance of teachers' skills and strategies to decrease language learners' negative emotions, while encouraging their positive emotions has also been emphasised (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Understanding how the learners' emotions work in learning and pedagogical decision-making could offer language learners positive and meaningful learning experiences (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). If students are dealing with emotional, mental, and psychological issues outside the classroom, they will not be as prepared or focused on learning (Park M.H., 2014). It is therefore imperative to come up with ways to identify those problems and address them early on.

One valuable means of understanding these important factors is through investigating translanguaging in different real-life scenarios of our students, because highly intense emotional expressions triggered by precarious psychological and mental issues often remain masked by students in the formal situations and could well be disassociated from academic contexts such as the classroom (Dovchin, 2015, 2018). Academic and institutional culture, in particular, constructs emotional rules for its participants to control their "bad" and "negative" emotions such as anger, anxiety, frustration, and vulnerability while expressing their "positive" and "legitimate" emotions such as empathy, calmness, kindness, and being carefree (Ding & De Costa, 2018; Gkonou & Miller, 2020; Wolff & De Costa 2017). Consequently, the emotionality of ESL learners can be suppressed, as they encounter constant academic pressure of speaking only English and being subjected to communicative surveillance in the classroom. For this reason, we know far less about the nuanced, day-to-day, and highly individualised emotionality of our students. It is essential to understand our students' emotional and psychological realities in understanding their hindrance towards their language

education. How willing or motivated are they to learn? What are the hindrances and obstructions for education? What things actually discourage or demotivate their focus on learning? What happens when these ESL immigrants leave the classroom and go back to their real world? How to build a curriculum that can account for ESL immigrants' emotional and mental wellbeing within the classroom?

Investigating translanguaging of ESL immigrants, thus, seeks to contribute to the literature in TESOL by investigating their complex emotional and mental circumstances in relation to their English language learning practices. Beyond the classroom, there is a much broader range of interactional contexts than can exist in the classroom, where the only people that a student can interact with are the teacher and other students (Nunan & Richards, 2015). By revealing intimate emotional and psychological experiences out of the realm of the classrooms and into the light of critical academic analysis, this study seeks to examine how the daily "lived translanguaging practices" of ESL immigrants may help us better understand our students' lived experiences. Two main research questions are, thus, addressed in this study: (1) what devices, modalities, and resources are utilised to form translanguaging for Mongolian background ESL immigrants in Australia in certain non-classroom contexts? (2) how is translanguaging recruited by Mongolian background ESL immigrants in Australia to construct, manage, negotiate, and express their reduced emotional, mental, and psychological issues?

## 3. Linguistic Ethnography

The study presented in this paper is based on a larger linguistic ethnographic (LE) research project which investigates the daily language practices of 100 culturally and linguistically different (CaLD) ESL immigrants with diverse sociolinguistic, ethno-racial, and religious backgrounds living in Australia. LE is a qualitative design used in understanding language users' everyday linguistic experiences and practices in real-life contexts, applying the adoption of both "linguistic" and "ethnographic" views (Maybin & Tusting, 2011). Out of the broader 100 research participants, the paper specifically focuses on eleven women of Mongolian background living in Western Australia (see Table 1), who were observed from the period of August 2018 until August 2020 in multiple offline places (see Table 2). A "snowballing" method (Beauchemin & González-Ferrer, 2011), was applied, where a new research participant was recruited from one particular research participant's recommendation to another. As the Mongolian community is very small in Western Australia, all participants, more or less, knew each other. As a result, a corpus of research cohorts started growing

immediately. Snowballing as a purposeful method of sampling was also used to identify and select groups of CaLDs based on their sociolinguistic and ethno-racial background, requiring that participants were immigrants to Australia (15 years or less) and that they were of non-English speaking backgrounds.

"Include Table 1 about here"

The qualitative method of open ethnographic observation (OEO), as one of the main methods of LE, was primarily used to document the language practices of these ESL immigrants in informal settings. OEO can be applied to observe the participants as they go on with their lives and entail documentation through field notes of multiple observations, on the spot interaction, and reflections that are experienced by the ethnographer on site of the investigation (Copland & Creese, 2015). It further sets up possibilities for the constant and extended company between the researcher and the key participants through informal discussions, interactions, and interviews, making the ethnographers' interpretations more accurate and reliable as they have the opportunity to create more meaningful relationships with the participants while accessing a more in-depth insight into participants' perspectives, thoughts, and actions. OEO also permits for the formation of mutual partnerships, or as 'discursive shadowing' noted by Dewilde & Creese (2016), to which the researcher and the key participant are often co-invested and collaborated in the dialogues. As an ethnographer, the researcher played multiple roles: observer, researcher, interlocutor and friend. Since the researcher shared a similar ethno-linguistic background with these women (Mongolian), some of these roles were either mutually exclusive or supplemented each other at other times. While maintaining these multiple roles was challenging, it also allowed valuable and in-depth insights. Because the researcher and participants have established a close and trusting relationship, the participants were generous with their accounts and narratives.

Overall, 32 hours were spent with these women in diverse settings, and 11 hours of communications were audio-recorded. All extracts in this paper were retrieved from these hours of audio-recordings and observations. Most of the time, the researcher spent 1-2 hours with the participants without using any audio-recording, cooking, shopping, hiking, visiting cafes etc. After spending considerable time together, the participants were informed about the beginning of the audio-recording and the main questions were raised in order to understand what participants' everyday sociolinguistic practice would look like. The main questions

were geared towards these women's challenges of living in Australia, their linguistic choices and problems, and their emotional and mental wellbeing in relation to their English practices (see Appendix 1 for interview questions<sup>i</sup>). In that way, participants gained the opportunity to share their stories as they were experienced by them, as well as offer their own reflections on matters recognised by the researcher (Copland & Creese, 2015).

Interactions were primarily conducted in Mongolian, but English was also used sporadically, depending on the participants' linguistic choice. Audio recordings in Mongolian were manually transcribed, and the primary Mongolian texts were translated into English by the researcher. The standard Cyrillic Mongolian texts were transliterated by the researcher into the Roman Mongolian scripts following the Leipzig Glossing Rules to ensure easy accessibility to the readers. Data examples were transcribed by modifying Ladegaard's (2014) transcription conventions in Appendix 2<sup>ii</sup>. Recordings with English were transcribed using the online certified Trint software which ensures data security management. Trint allows users to upload the audio file in English and automatically transcribes it using artificial intelligence. To ensure rigorous and accurate analysis, the data collected from OEO enabled the researcher to further analyse the findings, where the researcher used two different methods (deductive codes/inductive codes) for the verification of the findings. The analysis tracked both deductive codes related to research questions and inductive codes associated with participants' reflections. It also enabled verification and editing of text transcripts to ensure the accuracy of the information, while the final transcribed text is exported to a Word file. After double assessment and cross-examination of the data through these two codes, the corpus data was thematically analysed into sets of main themes, which were then categorised for their linguistic and content similarities and differences. After the completion of data coding, data extracts from interactions were not only analysed from the perspective of what research participants tell us (content) but also how they tell us (linguistic analysis of translanguaging, tones, paralinguistic features, emotions, etc.). This is significant because it offers some first-hand insights on how translanguaging practices occur both in terms of its structure and content (Dovchin, 2019).

"Include Table 2 about here"

The data analysis has illustrated that all eleven Mongolian women, including international students, housewives and employed immigrants have reported their common goal (1) "to successfully integrate into the Australian society" and feel in order to do so they have (2) "to improve their English language [through] education". Although these women have been living in Australia for a while, they are still neither confident nor content with their level of English. As a result, a majority of housewives and employed immigrants attend English classes offered for immigrants around the country (e.g., free English classes at public libraries, the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) by the Australian Government, English classes at TAFE - Technical and Further Education institution, that provides a wide range of predominantly vocational courses); while international students are only focused on courses through their university hosts.

Nevertheless, these women's English learning journey has not been very smooth, as one of the most challenging issues that hinder them from focusing on their English language education seems to be related to depression. All eleven women have noted their encounter with both major and minor depression since they started living and studying in Australia. Their depression is mostly associated with homesickness, grief and loss, unemployment, academic failures, the pressure of using only English, discrimination, language and cultural barriers, and loneliness. As a result, these women are not able to fully focus on their academic life, education, learning, and improving their English.

More alarmingly, most of these women are also not able to seek help from professional psychologists or therapists because they are not confident enough with their English to share their mental and emotional problems with English-speaking psychologists. Instead, they become their own therapists and counsellors as they listen to each other's problems, sympathise, and reflect their own issues and challenges, seeking each other out for consolation, emotional affinity, and spaces for relief. The main communication medium for these in-group interactions has been identified as translanguaging as these ESL immigrants feel no external authoritative pressure of using only English or sticking to certain emotional norms or social obligations. In the next sections, the interaction between the researcher and participants during OEO will be presented: the participants in Section 4 are the representatives of ESL immigrants, who have been living and working in Australia for at least around ten years; the participants in Section 5 are the representatives of international students who have been living in Australia between 1-3 years.

**Ethics** 

The study was conducted with regulations for ethical research approved by the Human Research Ethics Office, Curtin University, WA (HRE2018-0529). Prior to data collection, all participants received the participant information sheet (aims, objectives, ethical concerns, and researcher's contact information), consent form, and the project leaflet in a physical or a digital form. As most participants in the study were not native English speakers, additional detailed explanation adapted to their level of English proficiency was provided to ensure a complete understanding of the research aims and questions. Even though there were no foreseeable risks, discomforts, or inconveniences from the research project, all participants were still provided contact information for counselling services if the project at any stage impacted their psychological wellbeing. Participation in the research was voluntary, allowing participants to withdraw at any stage of the research project. All participants have been given pseudonyms to ensure anonymity.

# 4. Depression, ESL immigrants and translanguaging

Extracts 1 and 2 presented in this section are retrieved from the larger audio-recording corpus of OEO, which contains an informal interaction between Bolor and the researcher. As they cook dinner together in Bolor's house, Bolor starts sharing some of the most challenging times she had experienced since she migrated to Australia, when she got married to an Australian man, who was working in the mining sector in Mongolia. When she first arrived in Australia, her English was not necessarily good, as she started attending available English classes in public libraries around her city. Unfortunately, she started suffering from depression due to homesickness and loneliness and was not able to focus on her English. She started smoking heavily and drinking wine while crying all by herself. Due to her low proficiency in English, she was also not able to seek psychological assistance.

"Include Extract 1 here"

During the OEO, Bolor expressed her desire to speak English with the researcher in order to practice her English, as the researcher starts speaking English (line 1). Once she starts revisiting her encounter with depression, she becomes highly emotional, and her voice starts trembling and becomes wobbly (line 2) while responding to the researcher's question in English (line 2). However, as soon as the conversation becomes emotionally tense, Bolor

Bolor's depression got worse when she failed her driving test several times in Australia. She was not able to get to the places where she really wanted to be, including her English classes. As Bolor further states in her interview, "I could not even attend my English

classes anymore as I couldn't drive. I was so frustrated because I really enjoyed attending those classes. Those classes were keeping me sane" (Interview during the OEO, September 9, 2018). Bolor, therefore, felt an even greater urgency to improve her English because her driving tests were also heavily dependent on her English proficiency. Unfortunately, her depression became a significant hindrance for Bolor in focusing on her daily activities and responsibilities, let alone her English language education. In line 2, Bolor describes how she felt confined and restricted when she failed her driving test, and her loneliness, using the combination of the Mongolian expression "joloonii" ["driving"], and the English word, "exam," entangled within the Mongolian suffix, "-daa" [the], forming the phrase, "joloonii examdaa" ['the driving exam']. The driving test failure affected her emotionally and mentally as she cried herself "to death," while feeling "handicapped." Bolor incorporates "handicapped" within the Mongolian phrase, "sanagdsan ue" ['the period when one feels 'handicapped'"], producing 'handicapped sanagdsan ue" ['the period when one feels handicapped'"], producing 'handicapped sanagdsan ue" ['the period when one feels

Note also that the Russianised Mongolian idiomatic expression "mashin tereg" ["a car or something like that"] – the combination of the Russian root term, "машина" ["car"] with the Mongolian phrase, "tereg" ["cart"] is formed. The localisation of Russian is associated with the sociolinguistic history of Mongolia when it was a satellite of former USSR for 70 years until 1990. After 1990, Mongolia peacefully transitioned itself from a communist to a democratic society. During socialist Mongolia, the Russian language was the most important foreign language. The old Mongolian script, inherited by the Mongolians from the Genghis Khan era, was replaced with the Russian Cyrillic at the time, which is still the standard orthographic system of contemporary Mongolia. Consequently, it is also common for Mongolian speakers to use Russian linguistic resources, as many Russian originated words and expressions have been absorbed into the Mongolian language and currently used as a local language. By the end of the audio-recording, Bolor composes herself, as her crying seemed to have helped her reach a "catharsis." Ladegaard (2014) highlights the evidence of a link between crying and catharsis in the context of foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong who shared their trauma narratives with the researcher. While there is no evidence of the long-term effect of crying, his study provides some evidence that there is at least a short-term positive effect of crying in the form of emotional relief. Some of his informants, who cried continuously as they shared their traumas, became notably more vocal and open after they cried. Similarly, Bolor was heard mentioning, "uilaad setgel ongoichikhloo," ["I feel much better after crying" during the OEO. Extract 3 offers another example of an ESL Mongolian

immigrant, Khulan, who also suffered from depression like Bolor. The researcher and Khulan are enjoying coffee in the café, while Khulan is describing how she lost her motivation to learn English and live a full life in Australia due to her depression. As Khulan describes, "I was not able to focus on practising my English because I was just so depressed because of my new life in Australia. Studying English becomes the last thing in your mind when you are down" (Interview during the OEO, September 9, 2018).

"Include Extract 3 here"

In line 1, Khulan compares her previous established life with proper job and education in Mongolia to her current "unemployed" life in Australia, where she "stays home all day". Khulan is extremely sad, which is expressed by her soft-spoken voice with long pauses and breakdowns, and by her constant and repeated tag questions - "Tee?" ["Right?"] - at the end of her each statement. When she repeats "Tee?", she raises her voice with long pauses, as if she is trying to hold her emotion, while inviting her discussant to agree with her, or seeking affirmation and validation from her interlocutor. Khulan defines the fundamental reason for her depression: that is, "from hero to zero" scenario where she had it all in Mongolia while she lost everything in Australia because her Mongolian university diploma was not accepted as the legitimate evidence of her education and skill in Australia.

While Khulan uses linguistic resources from three languages such as English, Russian and Mongolian, they are neither clear-cut nor desirable in a translanguaging lens as they camouflage through complex forms of combination. It is therefore not possible to rule out the possibility that these camouflaging phrases could either be from Russian, English or Mongolian. For example, Khulan uses the Anglicised Mongolian phrase, "depressend orson" ['had depression'] – the integration of English expression "depression" into the Mongolian phrase "orson" ['had']. She further uses the Russianized Mongolian term, "diploom bolokhguishd" ['diploma didn't work'] through lengthening the sound 'o' in the original Russian word, "dunnom" ['diploma'], into the Mongolian phonetic system "diploom," while also adding the Mongolian phrase "bolokhguishd" ['didn't work']. It could be possible that the Russian word "dunnom" has been Mongolianized through the assimilation within the Mongolian expression, "-iig khuleej avahgui" ['wasn't accepted'], creating the Russianized Mongolian term "diplomiig khuleej avahgui" ['diploma wasn't accepted']. However, the

English version of "diploma" could not be necessarily ruled out either. In line 3, Khulan explains that her motivation to learn English, including the motivation to do anything in life, has decreased due to depression, using another camouflaging phrase "motivaatsgui bolchikhdog" ["losing motivation"]: the combination between the English term, "motivation" and the Mongolian phrase, "-gui bolchikhdog" ["losing or having no"], where the "motivation" has been Mongolianized through replacing the "-tion" with the lengthened Mongolian sound, "-aats [-gui bolchikhdog]". Nevertheless, there is another possibility that the word for motivation in Mongolian could also be from the English term "motivation" or Russian term, "мотивация" or ["motivation"].

Overall, both Bolor and Khulan are able to share their most emotional but precarious moments through translanguaging while finding emotional relief, catharsis and linguistically secure and safe environment during the conversation. Their translanguaging practices are attested in contexts where different linguistic (English, Russian, and Mongolian) and paralinguistic resources (cries, long/short breaks, pauses, deep sighs, whispers, wobbly voices, tag questions, soft voices) are layered and entangled together to express their intense emotion of sadness, failure, grief, and loss, while revisiting one of their darkest times — depression, which caused these women to lose their focus and motivation to live a meaningful—social life, yet alone, to learn and advance their English.

# 5. Depression, international students and translanguaging

Out of eleven research participants, five Mongolian women came to Australia as international students. They all have indicated their struggle with minor/major depression in relation to their academic failures, mostly based on the language barrier, and the constant academic pressure of speaking and writing in English. As Nomin describes, "I became so stressed when I realised that being a non-native speaker of English in Australia is haunting. I was so confident with my English when I was in Mongolia, and now at my university here, my confidence level went to zero. I've realised I'm so behind" (Interview during the OEO, September 20, 2018). Another international student, Erdene, states:

I *cried almost every night because I couldn't understand what I was supposed to write* for my assignments. I also *couldn't* contribute to classroom interactions because I was ashamed of my English. I never felt so lonely and horrible in my life before. (Interview during the OEO, September 11, 2018).

Their depression significantly hinders them from successful academic performance. In order to manage their stressful times as international students in Australia, these women spend considerable time together for emotional relief and sympathy. Consider the examples below, where the researcher is hanging out with her best friend, Gerel, who is an international student from Mongolia. They are talking about another Mongolian international student, who suffered from clinical depression in Australia. The main conversation topic started with the challenges of being an international student in Australia, including how Gerel encountered discrimination due to her Mongolian accent when she speaks English in the classroom. Gerel further notes that her mental wellbeing was at its worst when she started her first assignment at her university. Then their conversation transitions to their Mongolian friend, X, who came to Australia as an international student. X could not succeed in her academic studies due to the language barrier, constant pressure of using English, and low confidence in her English abilities. She failed her university exams multiple times and was not able to make friends or socialise. As a result, X suffered from clinical depression and tried to commit suicide. Eventually, she was sent to a mental health unit in Australia, as she started experiencing hallucinations. Gerel effectively uses translanguaging as she expresses her deep shock and disbelief at the traumatic experience of her Mongolian friend's suicide attempt, while also conveying her sympathy and compassion towards her friend.

"Include Extract 4 here"

In line 1, the researcher expresses her severe shock of hearing her Mongolian friend's depression, using Anglicised Mongolian phrases, 'aimar major depressiond orsiin bainaleeshd, medsen uu?' – the integration of English expression 'major depression', integrated into the Mongolian phrase '-d orsiin bainaleeshd' ['got involved' (metaphorically meaning 'suffering')], supported by an echo question through a rising intonation, "medsen uu?" ["didn't you know?"] – a type of direct question that repeats a part or all of something which someone else has just said; or a parrot question of a "repeat, please" question to express one's surprise and disbelief. In line 2, Gerel explains why she was not able to visit her troubled friend because she was also having her own medical operation during that crisis. She incorporates the Russian word, "onepaquan" [referring to "surgery" or "operation"] into the Mongolian phrase "-d orj baisan" ["having"], forming "operatsind orj baisan" ["[was]

having [medical] operation"]. In line 3, researcher reports that their friend X was suicidal, using the English word "suicidal," absorbed into the Mongolian phrases such as "[suicidal] bolson baina leeshd!?!" ["became [suicidal]"], while Gerel acknowledges the fact, stating "[suicidal] ch yu baikhav" ["sort of suicidal"] (line 4). In line 5, the researcher mentions her friend's suicide attempt of overdosing her medication, while Gerel confirms that X has indeed overdosed (lines 6 & 8). Gerel and the researcher express their intense shock through loud gasps, strong exclamations, rising intonations and raising voices, "BUR UURANDAA EM UUSAN!!" (line 6); "UUSAN! UUSAN! UUSAN!" (line 8). Gerel further expresses her sympathy towards her troubled friend in the next Extract 5.

"Include Extract 5 here"

Gerel states how she knew straight away that X was depressed when they met for the first time (line 1), absorbing the English phrase "depressed" within the Mongolian phrase, "bolsiin baina" ["became"], forming the Anglicised Mongolian expression, "depressed bolsiin baina" ["became depressed"]. In line 3, Gerel further states how she tried to help X, embedding the English expression, "took her under my wings" within the Mongolian syntax, "Tegeed bi ankhnaasaa aimar [So, I really kind of] took her under my wings gedeg shig [as if]" because "I really cared for her". After a long pause, in line 4, Gerel becomes more emotional as her voice becomes wobblier, trying to describe how she felt exactly the same when she first arrived in Australia. She also tries to explain how she felt sorry for her friend, as she integrates multiple emotional Mongolian words and phrases such as "Aimar uruvduud" ["Awfully felt for her"], "Aimar khetsuu" ["Awfully hard!"] (line 4). Overall, through translanguaging, Gerel is able to share her intense emotional feelings of shock, disbelief, sympathy, and empathy towards her troubled friend while also reflecting her own experience. The translanguaging practice is profuse with the multiple layers of different linguistic (English, Russian, and Mongolian) and paralinguistic resources (loud voices, gasps, rising intonations, wobbly voices, exclamations, repeat/echo/tag questions), while reflecting one of the darkest times of her Mongolian friend who suffered from clinical depression, and Gerel's own reflections.

# 6. Discussion

This study seeks to investigate translanguaging and its link to emotionality as a critical approach to understand the ESL immigrants' sociolinguistic and emotional realities in specific non-academic settings. Data findings suggest that being immersed in the dominant English language context does not necessarily ensure that ESL immigrants persistently use English in the target society. In fact, extensive and constant exposure, or pressure from the English-only environment in Australia triggered these ESL EAL immigrants to avoid speaking English-only, as they often felt confined by English-only practices (Pacheco, 2018). Translanguaging, in this regard, seems to have become a preferred mutual communicative basis and strategies for these women, when they reach out to each other for emotional and mental support (Dovchin, 2020). Translanguaging has provided these women with linguistic liberty – which they cannot necessarily share with any other out-groupers – to converse freely without having to conform to any linguistic or societal norms.

Data examples, thus, present us with two important theoretical points. First, in a similar vein to a current tendency in translanguaging (Hawkins & Mori, 2018; Tian et al., 2020), these ESL immigrants' translanguaging practices are clearly formed by the import of multiple layers of linguistic resources. As Mongolian immigrants living in Australia, a society where English is used as the primary language for varied purposes, it is common to find dialogues such as in data examples, where they extensively incorporate English resources. Yet, they also move beyond English resources, as they integrate Russian linguistic resources because of their close attachment and sociolinguistic history with the former USSR (Extracts 2, 3, 4). The linguistic outcome is the combination of English and Russian resources, camouflaging through the complex forms of Anglicised/Russianised Mongolian terms, syntax, expressions, and phonetics.

More importantly, the study shows that translanguaging interactions cannot necessarily be filled with constant positive and playful emotional aspects such as laughing, bantering, mocking, and teasing, as widely reported in the previous studies (Li & Zhu, 2019). In fact, as examples in this study present, translanguaging may provide these immigrants with the spaces where they can feel comfortable and confident in expressing their negative emotions. ESL immigrants are able to tell, discuss, respond to, challenge, and work through their highly emotional and deeply psychological experiences, as they share and express their intense sadness, grief and loss as presented in Extracts 1, 2 and 3 through paralinguistic resources such as cries, long/short breaks, pauses, deep sighs, whispers, wobbly voices, tag questions, soft voices; and the expression of their intense shock, disbelief, sympathy, and

empathy through the incorporation of varied paralinguistic expressions, modes, genres, emotions, and voices (e.g., loud voices, gasps, rising intonations, wobbly voices, exclamations, repeat/echo questions) as shown in Extracts 4 and 5. Translanguaging, thus, can be deemed as free of surveillance — an "emotionally safe house" for these ESL immigrants as they are also able to find emotional and mental relief by consoling each other and establishing in-group emotional solidarity (Canagarajah, 2017). In other words, translanguaging talk can be regarded as a signal that multilingual individuals are feeling emotionally safe—whether it is expressed as ludic behavior in the classroom or through sharing troubles in conversations with close friends.

Second, translanguaging practices as presented in this study, reveal to us that these ESL immigrants are deeply emotional, and their psychological and mental wellbeing is in

ESL immigrants are deeply emotional, and their psychological and mental wellbeing is in jeopardy, as they are particularly prone to depression due to an accumulation of varied traumatic and precarious events that happened to them over the course of their lives as migrants (Piller, 2016). Data examples show that the majority of these women may have developed an emotional and psychological shock through adjustment disorder, or also known as "acute stress reaction" (Yakushko et al., 2008), which often happens due to extreme life changes in the new environment. All these women suffered from some level of depression, without seeking professional help due to their insufficient access to English (Dovchin, 2020). We could, consequently, point out that a good portion of immigrants' depression and stress is directly related to their not learning English well or easily. These ESL immigrants are not able to think straight or feel entirely focused on their journey of acquiring English effectively. Depression is one of the main themes across the discourses of these ESL immigrants, which hinders them from living a meaningful social life, let alone focusing on their English language education and other academic successes. This outcome is consistent with DeRoma, Leach & Leverett's (2009) well-known study on the association between self-reported depressive symptomology and college academic performance, in which students presenting with moderate levels of depressive symptoms demonstrated lower performance within academic environments compared to those with normal and minimal levels of depression.

# 7. The Educational Implications of Translanguaging and Emotionality Based on these data findings, some recommendations are proposed for TESOL practitioners and educators, in terms of applying translanguaging and its link to emotionality in ESL immigrants' language education. First, in order to improve ESL immigrants' linguistic and communicative competence in the host society, and to maximise the opportunities for them to

become integrated into the new society, TESOL educators should note that ESL immigrants' emotional, psychological, and mental factors might hinder them from effective language learning (Gkonou, Dewaele & King, 2020). Depression is causing chronic emotional and psychological stress to these ESL immigrants, and prolonged exposure to depression may prevent them from learning and increase the cycle of learning disruptions. Outcomes suggest a need for appropriate interventions aimed at reducing depressive symptoms that have the potential to negatively impact academic performance existing in L2 sociocultural contexts. This will bring desired reality to the educational policy-making which heightens the appeal of the curriculum to the ESL students and consequently ensures more engagement and better second/foreign language acquisition for them (Tomlinson, 2011). Understanding our students' socio-emotions, thus, may open up the opportunity for TESOL educators to recognise ESL immigrants' learning challenges, as it may help teachers and policymakers understand multiple desires, emotions, traumas, psychological, and mental issues embedded within their multiple ways of learning, being, and speaking (Lau, 2016).

Second, as educators, we must play a critical role in recognising the symptoms of emotional and psychological difficulties and treat them with caution at the classroom level. Proper mediation and guidance from teachers can, to a great extent, facilitate students' ESL communication, which in turn can help maximise the results of successful TESOL education. What might be helpful is for teachers to understand the fact that classrooms and language learning practices are often contributing factors to their students' difficulty in learning and to depression and stress. As such, TESOL educators should become aware of how to put students in contact with professional help and make those recommendations to their students in an appropriate manner. Instructors in TESOL programs themselves should not be completely oblivious to the practical challenges faced by ESL students, as they should be provided with instructions on various practical issues that were presented in this study such as driving lessons and tests, psychological counselling and therapeutic services, and other varieties of social events that may play an essential part in boosting students' ESL communicative competence. During TESOL programs, any party involved can contribute to its effectiveness by being more cooperative and sensitive to students' emotional needs and difficulties, which will, in turn, make the environment more holistic to learning and educational exchange. Last but not least, it could be useful for future researchers to make a link between the classroom and out of classroom translanguaging practices of our ESL students with immigrant backgrounds in order to transfer the knowledge from real-life settings to academic contexts pragmatically.

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Table 1

# Participants' Demographic Information

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#	Pseudo Names	Age	Living in Australia	Job
1	Saruul	35	▶ 15 years	Housewife
2	Bolor	34	16 years	Housewife
3	Tseren	35	▶ 12 years	Receptionist at hotel
4	Khulan	27	1.5 years	International student
5	Gerel	39	6 years	Housewife
6	Tsetseg	26	5 years	Kitchenhand
7	Nomin	27	2 years	International student
8	Alimaa	36	1 year	International student
9	Erdene	36	1 year	International student
10	Chimeg	40	2 years	International student
11	Altai	42	5 years	Housewife

# Table 2

# Data Collection Information

#	Pseudo Names	Locations	Hours Spent	Audio-recorded Hours
1	Saruul	Saruul's house	4 hours	2
2	Bolor	Bolor's house	3 hours	1
3	Tseren	Pub	3 hours	1
4	Khulan	Café	2 hours	1
5	Gerel	Café	2 hours	1
6	Tsetseg	Library	2 hours	1
7	Nomin	Library	1 hour	1
8	Alimaa	Supermarket	2.5 hours	1
9	Erdene	Erdene's house	4.5 hours	1
10	Chimeg	Mongolians' event	4 hours	1
11	Altai	Mongolians' event	4 hours	1
		Total hours:	32 hours	11 hours

# Extract 1

	Conversation Transcript	English translation
1.	Researcher: What do you think the main reason for	What do you think the main reason for your depression?
	your depression?	
2.	Bolor: I think living away from home, being a mom,	I think living away from home, being a mom, [and] (2.0) I
	[and] (2.0) I had no friends (1.0) <u>Something like that</u>	had no friends (1.0). Something like that you know what I
	I baikhgui yu tee? [wobbly voice]	mean? [wobbly voice]
3.	Bolor: Yamarvaa neg duu chini neg memorytei	Some songs are often associated with some kind of
	kholbootoi baidag shdeetee:? [sobbing]	memories, ri:ght? [sobbing]
	7	
4.	Researcher: /TIIM/	/YES/
5.	Bolor: / <u>Aaviig sanagduuldag ch yum uu:</u> / [sobbing]	/Like reminding me of my dad, for exa:mple/ [sobbing]
6.	Researcher: /Aankhan/	/Yep/
7.	Bolor: Ter duug sonsson chini bi shuud ingeel	When I listened to that song [sobbing] ↑I HATED THAT
	[sobbing] 个I HATED THAT TIME! Shuu:d ochood	TIME! I just wanted to turn that song o:ff imme:diately [as
	untraamaa:r sanagdaad. 个TEGEED BI UURIIGUU	soon as it started playing]. 个THEN I REALIZED THAT I
	MEDSEN BAIKHGUI YU. BI YOSTOI AIMAR	MUST HAVE BEEN AW:FULLY DEPRESSED [at the time]

<u>DEPRESSED BAISAN BAIKHAA:</u> [sobbing]	[sobbing]

# Extract 2

	Conversation Transcript	English translation
1.	Researcher: Hmmm	Hmmm
2.	Bolor: (2.0) <b>Mashin</b> tereg baridaggui. 个Garaad	(2.0) I could not drive a car [or something like that].
	uulzii gekheer naiz baikhgui. Tegeel buur aimar	个I did not have friends to hang out. I had a lot of
	handicapped sanagdsan ue aimar ikh baisan (1.5).	awful times when I felt I was awfully handicapped
	Yamar saindaa joloonii shalgaltandaa unachaad	(1.5). I remember I was crying myself to death when I
	ukhtelee uilj baisan [wobbly voice]	failed my driving test [wobbly voice]
	$\Box$	

# Extract 3

Conversation Transcript	English translation
1. Khulan: Er ni shuud ajild oroy gesen tertee tergui	I wanted to work straight away but my diploma didn't
minii diploom bolokhguishd, TEE (2.0)? TERNEES	work, RIGHT (2.0)? I HAD DEPRESSION BECAUSE OF
BOLJ L DEPRESSEND ORSON UGAASAA! Mongoliin	THAT BASICALLY! The Mongolian diploma wasn't
diplomiig khulee javakhgui. Teriig khuleen	accepted, RIGHT? I would have to start studying
avkhuulakhiin tuld dakhiaad ekhnees ni surch	everything from scratch, RIGHT (9.0)?
baigaa baikhgui yu, TEE (9.0)?	
2. Researcher:/Tekh:/	/Yeah:/
3. Khulan: Tekheer yamar ch <i>motivaat</i> sgui	That's why, I lost all my motivation, RIGHT (20.0)?
bolchikhdog yum bainaleeshd, TEE (20.0)?	

# Extract 4

	Conversation transcript	English translation
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1.	Researcher: ↑X AIMAR MAJOR DEPRESSIOND	个YOU DID HEAR THAT X SUFFERED FROM MAJOR
	ORSIIN BAINALEESHD, MEDSENUU:?	DEPRESSION, DIDN'T YOU:?
2.	Gerel: ↑Tii:shdee: Tegsii:shdee: Emneleg memlegt	个Yes: I di:d. She was admitted to the hospital. I couldn't
	khevteed. Bi yag tukhain ued ni bi yag emnelegt	visit her [in the hospital] at that time because I was in the
	operatsind orj baisan bolkhoor bi ochij chadaagui	hospital myself having my surgery
3.	Researcher: /Tsaadakh chini bur suicidal bolson	/[I heard] she was a:lmost suicidal?/
	baina lee:shd?/	
4.	Gerel: Suicidal ch yu baikhav, /Tsaadakh chini bur/	Sort of suicidal, /She even did/
5.	Researcher: /Em zem uusan geneleeshd/	/[I heard] she even overdosed her medication/
6.	Gerel: ↑/BUR UURANDAA EM UUTSAN!!/ [loud	个/SHE OVERDOSED WHEN SHE WAS FRUSTRATED!/[loud
	gasps]	gasps]
7.	Researcher: /个TIIN! UUKHGAAD BILUU:? UUSAN	/个YES! [I heard] SHE WAS ABOUT TO OVERDO:SE? OR HAS
	GENE LUU:?/ [loud gasps]	[she] A:CTUALLY OVERDOSED?/[loud gasps]
8.	Gerel: ↑UUSAN. UUSAN! [loud gasps]	个OVERDOSED! OVERDOSED! [loud gasps]

# Extract 5

	Conversation transcript	English translation
1.	Gerel: Tsaadakh chini ugaasaa bi ankh taniltsaad	I ↑ IMME:DIATELY NOTICED THAT she was depressed
	depressed bolsiin baina gej bi 个MEDSIISHDEE SHUU:D	when I first met her! (2.0) [wobbly voice]
	(2.0) [wobbly voice]	
2.	Researcher: Tiim uu?	Really?
3.	Gerel: Tegeed bi ankhnaasaa aimar took her under my	So, I really kind of like took her under my wings. ↑I
	wings gedeg shig ↑ I REALLY CARED FOR HER [5.0]	REALLY CARED FOR HER [5.0]
4.	Gerel: Aimar uruvduud (3.0) Bi bur bainga (3.0) khun	[I] awfully felt for her (3.0)! I was constantly (3.0) It was
	baikhgui bolokhoor 个AIMAR KHETSUU: 个 BI UURUU	↑AW:FULLY HARD when there was no one [for her]. ↑I
	ANKH YAG TIIM BAISAN BAIKHGUI YU:? [tsaadakh] chini	WAS EXACTLY LIKE HER WHEN I FIRST [arrived], YOU
	bur khoyor jil neg ch khun medekhgui. /个 <u>MONGOL</u>	KNO:W? [X] did not know anyone for two years [after
	KHUN MEDDEGGUI BAISAN GEED BAIGAA YUM CHINI/	she arrived in Australia]. /个[She told me that] SHE DID
	[wobbly voice]	NOT KNOW ANY MONGOLIAN PERSON [at the time]!/
		[wobbly voice]
5.	Researcher: /Hmmm/	/Hmmm/
6.	Gerel: Tegeed, argagui biz dee:?	So, [it was] understandable, wa:sn't it?

# **Semi-Structured Interview Questions**

- Please tell me about your linguistic and cultural background.
- What is your first/heritage language?
- What languages do you speak in the household?
- What are the biggest challenges you started experiencing in Australia?
- What is the role of English in your daily lives?
- How often do you use English? Where, how and when?
- How often do you use your native language? Where, how and when?
- Do you go to specific English courses or classes? Where, how and when?
- What do you do to improve your English? Where, how and when?
- How often has your English level affected your daily lives, academic lives and workplace negatively? If so, why, where and how?
- Do you feel people might judge you based on how you speak/write English? Why? Why not?
- What is the most significant pain point related to speaking English? Why?
- What's the hardest part about speaking English?
- What type of people did you talk about to help you with your English? What are you currently doing to make the challenges easier?
- Do you want to improve your English? If so, why and how often?
- What is the biggest hindrance or challenges towards your English learning practices?
- How often are you mentally and emotionally prepared to speak English?
- Have you ever felt any pressure of using constant English? When, how and why?
- Have you ever felt depressed, stressed or upset because of your English or anything else?
- What were the main reasons for your negative emotional symptoms since your life in Australia? When, how and why?
- What have you done to overcome your depressive symptoms?
- Have you sought any help? Why? Why not?
- How is your life in Australia compared to your home country? Negative and positive experiences

# ii Transcription Conventions

regular fonts	Mongolian
italics	■ English
bold	Russian
[]	non-linguistic features, explanation of utterances
	or situations for readers' comprehensibility
(2.0)	pause in seconds
?	question/rising intonation
!	exclamation
CAPITALS	pronounced with stress/emphasis
//	interruption; //as I said// = overlapping speech
: (as in ah:)	the vowel sound is prolonged
$\uparrow$	high pitch
<u>underline</u>	the feature of crying/wobbly voice

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>i</sup> Appendices

<u> </u>						
#	Pseudo Names	Age	Living in Australia	Job		
1	Saruul	35	▶ 15 years	Housewife		
2	Bolor	34	16 years	Housewife		
3	Tseren	35	➤ 12 years	Receptionist at hotel		
4	Khulan	27	➤ 1.5 years	International student		
5	Gerel	39	6 years	Housewife		
6	Tsetseg	26	5 years	Kitchenhand		
7	Nomin	27	2 years	International student		
8	Alimaa	36	➤ 1 year	International student		
9	Erdene	36	➤ 1 year	International student		
10	Chimeg	40	2 years	International student		
11	Altai	42	5 years	Housewife		

# Author Manus

#	Pseudo Names	Locations	<b>Hours Spent</b>	<b>Audio-recorded Hours</b>
1	Saruul	Saruul's house	4 hours	2
2	Bolor	Bolor's house	3 hours	1
3	Tseren	Pub	3 hours	1
4	Khulan	Café	2 hours	1
5	Gerel	Café	2 hours	1
6	Tsetseg	Library	2 hours	1
7	Nomin	Library	1 hour	1
8	Alimaa	Supermarket	2.5 hours	1
9	Erdene	Erdene's house	4.5 hours	1
10	Chimeg	Mongolians' event	4 hours	1
11	Altai	Mongolians' event	4 hours	1
		Total hours:	32 hours	11 hours

# Author Manus