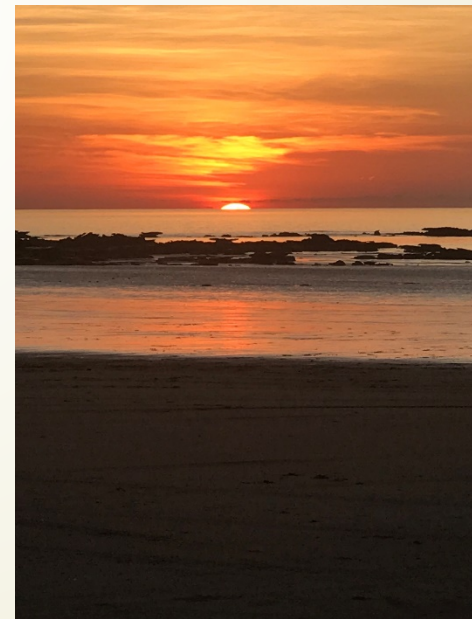




Curtin University


The diverse interactions of Aboriginal EALD speakers: Codeswitching, translanguaging or “whatever”

Professor Rhonda Oliver





Acknowledgements

- ▶ Traditional custodians
 - ▶ To those participants who contributed to the stories I will tell today.
- 

A language analogy



What hand do you write with?



Approximately 90% of the world is right handed

Based on superstitions, in early times in western societies left handed people were made to switch to their right hand with reported physical and psychological consequences

In some cultures there are religious customs related to using particular hands

➤ With both our hands and our language we need to:

- Make things/meanings
- Understand and do things capably
- Be confident rather than “clumsy”
- Be flexible according to context
- Have access to a range of resources/tools
- Have a strong sense of identity (noting change over time and according to circumstance) e.g., *sporting stars who are lefties*



- So here is a story of three generations...

Left handed to right handed



Ambidextrous to mostly right handed, with a few contextual adaptations




Left handed and sometimes ambidextrous depending on need and context



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- So who do you think has been advantaged or disadvantaged by 'left/right handedness'?

- And how does this relate to language learners and multilingual speakers?

(e.g., for school students home and school language may be the same and for others these difference – bringing advantage or disadvantage)

- Have the changes by the third generation of 'handedness' also occurred in our multilingual society? (Jo L-B: *problem of bilingualism*)
 - Can we put in place mechanisms that ensure advantage rather than disadvantage in relation to language in our society?
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Background

- ▶ Many people grow up multilingually, speaking one or more home languages and dialects and this is also true of Australian Aboriginal people (e.g., *the group of men shown to the right*).
- ▶ They may speak Standard Australian English (SAE), Aboriginal English (AE), Kriol and/or traditional languages (Eades, 2013).
- ▶ Whilst I'm talking about Aboriginal languages and the potential for translanguaging in this context, I propose that it can equally apply to a range of languages and contexts.

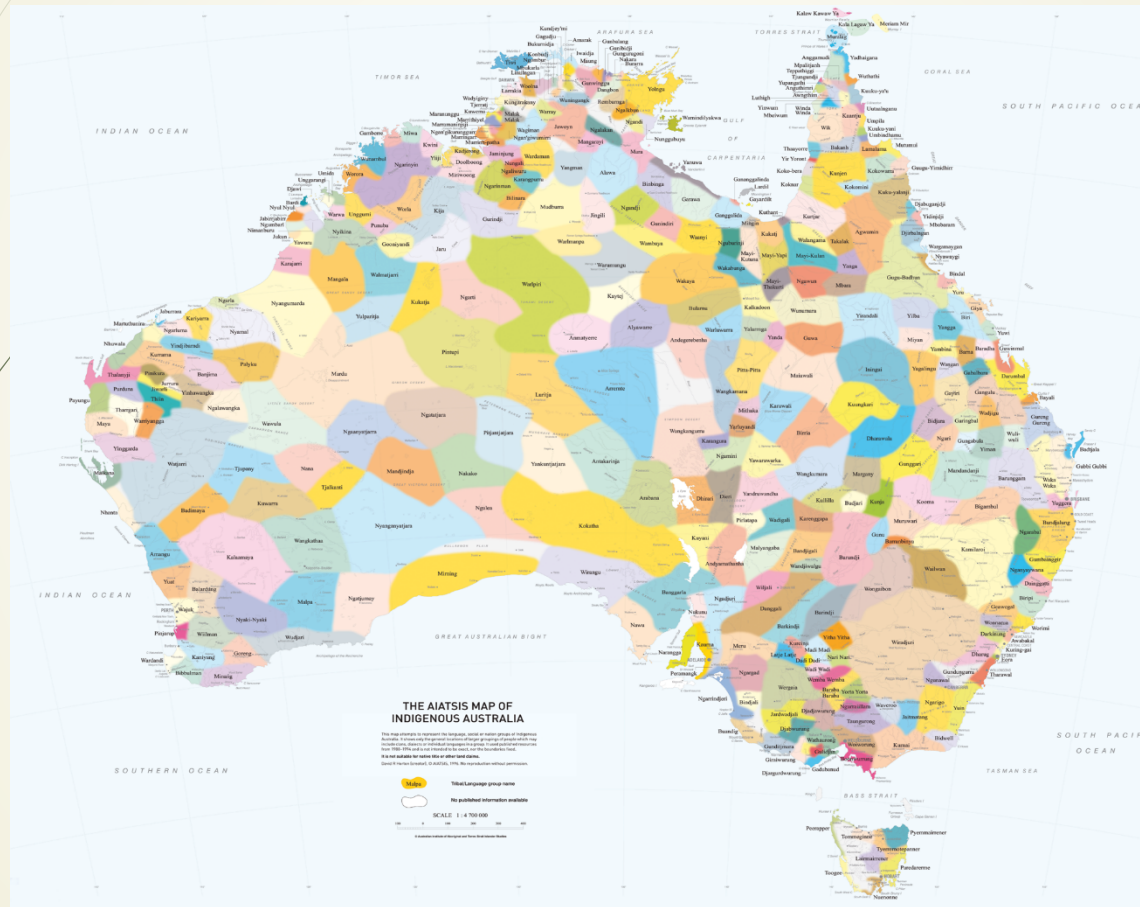


Aboriginal languages



- ▶ Australian Aboriginal people represent 3% of the population
- ▶ Currently 11% of the Aboriginal population speak a traditional language
- ▶ Only about 70 languages spoken today (*see map to follow, but questions exist regarding its accuracy*)
- ▶ All Aboriginal languages highly endangered: By 2050 no traditional languages may be spoken in Australia (McConvell and Thieberger 2001).
- ▶ However, Kriol (which is a creole) is spoken across the northern parts of Australia and is quite prevalent in a number of communities

Aboriginal languages



Aboriginal English

AE is a dialect of English that is used as the Lingua Franca by many Aboriginal people. It is as rule governed as SAE, but varies from it at a number of levels, e.g.:

- ▶ Phonetic

- /th/ as /d/

Dat ding might break...

- ▶ Grammatical

Ah Jayziyah you **bin** touch
green...

- ▶ Semantic

What you **mob** going for?
Wadjela; gardia; yorga

- ▶ Pragmatic

Gimme! Gimme!




Language Varieties

- ▶ As Trudgill (2012, p. 2) pointed out, languages and dialects are neither “good or bad, nice or nasty, right or wrong – they are just different from one another”.
- ▶ To value language, we need to recognise that all languages and dialects are complex, and reflect complex cultural relationships and semantic understandings.
- ▶ Such recognition is particularly important in our classrooms because *developing and extending understanding* is key to good teaching



Aim

- ▶ To describe the multilingual linguistic repertoire of different school aged Aboriginal speakers
 - ▶ To examine how to take advantage of this repertoire using a translanguaging approach to enhance teaching and learning, and for the development of SAE for Aboriginal students
 - ▶ Outline an approach (translanguaging) that may be useful in classroom contexts with multilingual students
- 



Translanguaging

- ▶ Is when speakers move between various linguistic codes (e.g., 5 year old in our pilot study)
- ▶ Is concerned with multilingual meaning making and experiences (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014)
- ▶ Note: When communicating we all employ whatever linguistic features are at our disposal (Jørgensen, 2008)
- ▶ Other related terms include:
 - Codemeshing (Canagarajah, 2011)
 - Translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2013)
 - Polylingual languaging (Jørgensen, 2008)
 - Flexible bilingualism (Creese & Blackledge, 2010)

Translanguaging & Aboriginal people

- ▶ Aboriginal people can and do draw on a wide range of linguistic resources and move between their different varieties in their language repertoires as appropriate (when given the opportunity to do).
- ▶ Translanguaging builds upon 'cultural hybridity' reflect the current status of many Aboriginal students and young adults - as Aboriginal, as a young person as a someone with a creative persona (Oliver & Nguyen, 2017):





Advantages

- ▶ Translanguaging can be powerful as it grants agency to the speakers (Rosen, 2017)
- ▶ Unlike codeswitching it “resists the asymmetries of power” (Garcia & Leiva, 2014, p.204), but efforts in the CS space have paved the way for home language recognition...but it is time to ‘move on’.
- ▶ Helps overcome the “deficit perspective” (Rose, 2017, p.41), (Note: *prior to the work of Kaldor, Malcolm etc., AE was invisible – even today the perception about AE can be still negative – “rubbish talk”*)
- ▶ Helps obviate the relegation of control of meaning making where the *other* system is perceived as “wrong, deviant, unimportant, primitive, or even invisible” (Johnson, 2000, p. 62)
- ▶ It can contribute to ‘self-esteem and overall wellbeing’ (Mary & Young, 2017) and in positive ways to identity formation (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014). See over:



Why this approach?

- It encourages students to construct meaning in ways that draw on those language resources that are:
 - most accessible to them (the learners);
 - most appropriate to both the student, the audience, the context,
 - and best suited to their needs.
- It does so in ways that acknowledge the students' home language, but also provides models of other forms of language, such as SAE (*as in the previous example the teacher does not speak AE, but models SAE whilst acknowledging the expertise of the student*)



Advantages

- ▶ It is a resource and tool, but also a value (i.e., it is an ideological practice) (Strazer, 2017);
- ▶ It has the potential to be socially transformative;
- ▶ It is a communicative strategy to convey linguistic and social information (Grosjean, 1999);
- ▶ It is interactive and can be playful;
- ▶ It is an individual skill (Canagarajah, 2011), although communities may regularly engage in this practice – as do many Aboriginal people and other multilingual speakers;
- ▶ Mignolo (2000) describes it as a ‘lifestyle’ (p.264);
- ▶ It reflects the ‘integratedness of languages in the daily lives of speakers’ and the ‘fluidity of real-life language practices’ (Jonsson, 2017, p.22 & 23), particularly (but not only) in Aboriginal communities.




Translanguaging vs codeswitching

- ▶ Translanguaging – is about communication, drawing on all of a speaker's linguistic resources – it is **holistic** (Hopewell, 2017)
- ▶ Translanguaging “the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two (or more) languages” (Baker, 2011, p.288) – doing this **concurrently** (see over)
- ▶ Codeswitching treats language as discrete entities (Garcia, 2009), and so meaning is created **consecutively** in that speakers shift or shuttle between their languages (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014)
- ▶ Process vs Product: Translanguage vs CS



Why translanguaging in schools?

- ▶ Benefits students as they use all their linguistic resources – which are united in a common underlying proficiency (Cummins, 1981) and makes ‘connections’ with a speaker’s languages (Nation, 2001)
 - ▶ Promotes of a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter, serving to mediate the learning process (Di Camilla & Anton, 2012, p.161) including cognitively complex ideas (Swain, 2006)
 - ▶ Aids the development of the weaker language
 - ▶ Facilitates home-school links, cooperation and participation
 - ▶ Allows integration of fluent speakers with early learners (Baker, 2011, p.288)
 - ▶ Addresses perception that multilingual students are a ‘problem’ to be addressed (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010)
- 



Translanguaging to address our 'monolingual' education

- ▶ Monolingual norms dominate educational policy and assessment regimes
- ▶ Rosen (2017) claims national syllabi is one component of the monolingualization process.

(e.g., A curriculum writer explicitly stated if a student can't do it in SAE, then they are deemed unable to do it at all).




Translanguaging and education


In contrast to this monolingual mindset translanguaging:

- Encourages inclusive language practices in the classroom
- Addresses social justice
- Shifts focus to the speakers rather than their codes (whereas codeswitching focuses on codes)
- Recognises “the diverse language backgrounds of the students and a promotion of these as a foundation for all further learning”
- Recognises a capable speaker engages in *appropriate* language use (e.g., in the way we observed during our pilot)
- Engages local communities with schools

(e.g., *Welcome signs in a variety of languages ... except one!*)




Translanguaging and education (continued)

- ▶ It can be used to complement the language of schools and assist in meaning making
 - ▶ Opens up knowledge transfer
 - ▶ Classroom teachers can use it to accelerate the language and literacy achievement of emerging bilingual learners (Hopewell, 2017, p.73).
 - ▶ It enables scaffolding – a powerful learning tool (Mary & Young, 2017, p.111)
 - ▶ **Important to note:** Teachers do not need to be bilingual themselves to embrace translanguaging
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Translanguaging and the curriculum

- There is a real window of opportunity because...
- At present the Australian curriculum states:
“Understand that English is one of many languages spoken in Australia and that different languages may be spoken by family, classmates and community (ACELA 1426)
- That is, awareness and understanding of language **including home language** is part of the curriculum.




Translanguaging and pedagogy (things to do)

- ▶ Teach students to draw on their complete language repertoires when learning (not just language learning!)
- ▶ Let students collaborate with other students speaking the same language/s when this can help them learn
- ▶ Create a classroom atmosphere where translanguaging is accepted as the norm – that is create a translanguaging space (Wei 2011)
- ▶ Be open to using different language tools (dictionaries, charts etc)
- ▶ Invite students to participate in metalinguistic discussions by, for instance, contrasting and comparing to other languages (e.g., *how to point*)

Acknowledgement to Carly Steele for this information



More things to do

- ▶ Promote language awareness and take advantage of opportunities to reflect explicitly on language and its use (e.g., Oliver, Grote, Rochecouste & Exell, 2012, 2013 a & B).
 - ▶ Use local community members, including education assistants (AEOs, AEWs etc).
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David Mundraby, Esme Murgha, Evette (Pamela) Mundraby, Frank Canendo, Jasmine Canendo, Kay Sands, Kerry Bulmer, Malambie Uderwood, Maree Fournile, Mina Andrews, Paul Neal, Samantha Miller, Sharna Ambrym, Silvia Barlow, Tina Yeatman, & Vincent Murgha



Yarrrie Lingo, a creole spoken at Yarrabah in Far North Queensland, is the everyday language of most Yarrabah residents and the first language of most children here. Yarrrie Lingo developed because the mission settlement at Yarrabah established an entirely new speech community where speakers of up to 40 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island languages were brought into contact. Due to our colonial history, Yarrrie Lingo consists of words of mostly English origin which have different pronunciations and meanings, take different endings, go in different sentence patterns and are used in different cultural ways. This is why Standard Australian English (SAE) speakers do not automatically and completely understand Yarrrie Lingo speakers and vice versa. No official spelling system exists for Yarrrie Lingo at this time so English spelling has been adapted to represent Yarrrie Lingo as accurately as possible. The purpose of this poster is to raise awareness about language varieties - such as Yarrrie Lingo - spoken around us.

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Resources



- <https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/>
- Learning resources from Dept of Education WA – Deadly ways to learn, Tracks to two way learning, Solid English, Two Way English
- Learning resources from Education Queensland – Break it Down, Build it Up Learning Framework, ESL Language and Teaching Strategies (ESLATS)
<http://indigenous.education.qld.gov.au/school/language-perspectives/Pages/default.aspx>
- Hudson, J. & Berry, R. (1997) Making the Jump. Catholic Education Office: Kimberely.



Translanguaging and pedagogy (things NOT to do)

Avoid:

- ▶ Deficit constructions “Student B can’t....”
- ▶ Simplistic solutions “Just teach code-switching”
- ▶ Treating students as blank slates (e.g., “Leave your language at the gate”)
- ▶ Imposing ‘English only’ rules
- ▶ Preventing staff from using their own L1s



Challenges



- ▶ “How to protect the identity and integrity of individual languages whilst recognizing and promoting fluidity of linguistic diversity and contact between languages” (Li Wei, 2016, p.7).
- ▶ Dilemma for educators – does incorporating translanguaging practices diminish opportunities for developing SAE?
(And there are for many second language speakers important reasons for this to be developed).
- ▶ How do we incorporate translanguaging within our assessment protocols – in the classroom and more broadly (see over)

Challenges and Assessment

- ▶ NAPLAN: 'For every jurisdiction, the percentage of Indigenous students who achieved below the national minimum standard is more than twice the percentage of non-Indigenous students who achieved below the national minimum standard' (ACARA 2013: 127).
- ▶ And yet, from our own observations, we know that even young Aboriginal children have developed a high level of communicative competence (*example from our pilot study*)



Conclusion

Translanguaging:

- ▶ Helps to overcome the monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2005)
- ▶ Recognises the value of home language and being multilingual
- ▶ Is a matter of social justice
- ▶ Enables a view of language that is holistic
- ▶ Supports learner understanding, meaning making and achievement
- ▶ Has the potential to be transformative (*hopefully multilinguals are the 'lefties' of the future*).

Thank you!

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