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From Research to Practice: Translanguaging Activities for Multilingual Classrooms in India

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Abstract

While Indian classrooms are inherently multilingual, instructional materials—particularly textbooks—continue to remain largely monolingual, offering limited scope for learners to draw on their full linguistic repertoires. Through a review of published empirical research on the use of translanguaging-oriented materials across primary, secondary and tertiary levels, government, low-resource and special-needs schools and linguistically diverse regions, this article examines how multilingual resources have been pedagogically mobilised in teaching-learning processes. The thematic analysis identifies the key pedagogic functions for which multiple languages are leveraged in instructional materials. Aimed at teachers and teacher-educators, the article presents a collection of accessible, classroom-ready activities from the reviewed studies to illustrate how learner languages can be meaningfully incorporated into classroom interaction. By translating research insights into pedagogically actionable practices, the article aims to support the implementation of translanguaging materials as a purposefully planned, pedagogical resource for learning in multilingual classrooms. This approach distinguishes the review's focus on designed instructional materials from broader accounts of translanguaging as a classroom disposition or naturally occurring practice.

Introduction

India is home to an extraordinary range of languages (UNESCO, 2009) and the 2011 Census records 121 languages and over 1,600 reported mother tongues, reflecting the deeply multilingual nature of Indian

society (Devy, 2013; Mohanty, 2019). Yet this linguistic diversity is rarely reflected in the design of classroom materials, as textbooks are written either in English or in a single regional language, with little acknowledgement of the multilingual repertoires that learners bring to the classroom. One notable exception is the Government of Odisha's textbook, *My English Book* for Grade 3 (2019), which incorporates bilingual texts and represents a conscious effort to acknowledge learners' multilingualism.

Scholars have long noted that India's societal multilingualism does not automatically translate into classroom multilingualism (Mohanty, 2019). While multilingual practices are a normal feature of social life across the country, schooling has historically operated through monolingual models of instruction, particularly in English-medium education. This reflects a pattern in which socially dominant languages function as media of instruction (MOI) while minority and home languages remain structurally absent from formal teaching and learning. As a result, learners who navigate multiple languages outside school often encounter classrooms where their linguistic resources are largely invisible.

The consequences of this disconnect are visible in both learner outcomes and classroom practice. The UNESCO *Bhasha Matters: State of the Education Report for India* (Panda, 2025) underscores the scale of the problem: nearly 44% of Indian children begin school in a language different from their MoI, creating what it describes as a double learning burden—decoding an unfamiliar language before they can begin to grasp content. Additionally, national assessments such as ASER (2024) have repeatedly documented low levels of reading proficiency among primary learners. Teachers too face constraints: even when they recognise the multilingual resources of their learners, institutional expectations, monolingual instructional materials, and lack of guidance on how to draw on multilingual repertoires often limit how these resources can be leveraged in practice (Anderson, 2022; Mukhopadhyay, 2021; Pathak, 2023; Mukhopadhyay & Tsimpli, 2024).

Role of Teaching Materials in Language Teaching

Instructional materials—and textbooks in particular—play a central role in shaping what happens in classrooms. Richards (2001, p. 1) notes that in many contexts, materials serve as the primary source of language input and practice, determining the content of lessons, the balance of

skills taught, and the kinds of language activity learners engage in. Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 315) argue that "the textbook has a vital and positive part to play in …the teaching and learning of English." Crucially, they see it not as a static artefact but as a potential agent of change: a tool through which new pedagogical orientations can be introduced into classrooms in a systematic and replicable way.

This understanding of materials as agents of change has particular significance for multilingual English classrooms in India. If textbooks have hitherto been designed monolingually—treating learners' home languages as irrelevant to the formal learning process—then redesigning or supplementing them to incorporate translanguaging is not a minor adjustment but a transformative pedagogical act. Materials that deliberately draw on learners' linguistic repertoires reframe the multilingual classroom from a site of linguistic deficit into a resource-rich environment. They make it possible for teachers—many of whom work without sustained professional development support—to plan and enact translanguaging systematically, rather than relying on spontaneous instinct. It is in this sense that translanguaging-oriented materials carry the greatest potential: not simply as repositories of bilingual content, but as frameworks that legitimise and structure the use of all the languages learners bring to the classroom.

Recent research has argued for pedagogic approaches that treat multilingual practices as resources rather than obstacles to learning—most notably translanguaging, the fluid and purposeful use of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire for meaning-making and learning (García & Wei, 2014). This review approaches translanguaging specifically from the perspective of *teaching materials*: the lesson plans, task sequences, worksheets, authentic texts, and textbook units through which translanguaging is planned, structured, and made available to teachers and learners. This scope is significant. As Cenoz and Gorter (2025) argue, pedagogical translanguaging—teacher-designed instructional strategies that deliberately activate learners' full linguistic repertoire—has particular potential in contexts marked by educational inequality, precisely because designed multilingual materials reduce the cognitive and affective load on learners navigating an unfamiliar language of instruction.

This perspective resonates with recent curricular shifts in the Indian context: the National Education Policy 2020 advocates mother-tongue-

based multilingual education up to at least Grade 5, recommending that wherever possible the home language should serve as the medium of instruction in the early years (p. 13). The National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023 (p. 179) builds on this by recommending the integration of learners' home languages as a resource across subjects—not only in language classrooms. Both documents signal a policy intent that calls for concrete pedagogical tools, yet the curricular vision has outpaced the availability of materials that operationalise it in classroom practice.

While a growing body of Indian research has documented translanguaging as it occurs in classroom interaction, far less attention has been paid to the role of materials in systematically planning, supporting and enacting a translanguaging approach. This review directly addresses that gap. It examines how published empirical research from Indian classrooms has operationalised translanguaging through designed tasks and materials, and what teachers and materials designers can draw from this body of work.

This article is organised in the following manner: it first outlines the scope and methodology of the review, then presents a thematic analysis of five recurring pedagogic functions that translanguaging serves across the studies, each illustrated with classroom-ready activities drawn from the corpus. It concludes with a discussion of cross-cutting patterns and implications for teachers and materials writers working in India's multilingual classrooms.

Scope and Methodology of the Review

This review focuses specifically on Indian multilingual education (MLE) research—a body of work that has developed its own distinctive character in response to India's unique sociolinguistic conditions. This early scholarship was shaped by the multilingual education programmes of the 1990s and 2000s, which documented the use of tribal and minority languages alongside dominant regional languages in primary classrooms (Mohanty, 2006; Panda & Mohanty, 2009). Over the past decade, translanguaging has emerged as a more coherent pedagogic and theoretical framework for understanding multilingual language use in educational contexts. From around 2015, a growing body of Indian research—including the MultiLiLa project (2017–2020) and the Cambridge-EFL University teacher training project (2022-2023)—began

to examine translanguaging in a systematic manner in classroom settings, with a view to examining how multilingual resources can be leveraged as part of pedagogy (Mukhopadhyay, 2021; Pathak, 2021; Anderson, 2022). Focusing on this period therefore, allows the review to capture the development of translanguaging as a pedagogically oriented area of Indian research and to identify studies that document concrete classroom practices.

To capture this body of work systematically, papers were selected on the basis of five criteria: (i) the study was conducted in an Indian classroom context or involved Indian teachers, (ii) the study included a description of instructional materials, classroom activities, tasks, or worksheets that drew on learners' home languages, (iii) the study was empirical in nature, rather than purely theoretical, (iv) the publication type included journal articles, book chapters, or collaborative project reports, and (v) the study spanned a variety of educational contexts. A total of eighty-five papers were identified through searches in academic databases like Google Scholar, JSTOR and ERIC using keywords such as *translanguaging*, *bilingual materials, tasks* and *Indian classrooms.* Following screening against the selection criteria, sixteen papers were retained for thematic analysis; the remaining were excluded on grounds of insufficient classroom or materials focus, or purely theoretical orientation or non-Indian context. The final corpus focuses on studies published between 2015 and 2026 across Telangana, Assam, Maharashtra, and West Bengal as representative of research in India.

Coding

Each paper was coded against a matrix that captured context, level, languages involved, task and material types, pedagogical functions and extractability of classroom activities. While not all studies contained explicit tasks or materials, approximately ten studies described lesson procedures and pedagogic activities or strategies illustrating how translanguaging can be incorporated into teaching. Themes were derived from patterns across the types of tasks documented and the pedagogical purposes they served—an approach grounded in the selection criteria and coding matrix itself rather than in a general qualitative research framework. This materials-specific analytical logic was informed by the pedagogical translanguaging literature (García & Wei, 2014), which

provided the classification for identifying and naming the functions that multilingual materials serve in classroom contexts.

Five pedagogic functions of translanguaging tasks emerged from this analysis: (i) developing comprehension and meaning-making, (ii) building cross-linguistic and metalinguistic awareness, (iii) using culturally embedded authentic materials, (iv) promoting translingual output, (v) building learners' confidence, identity and inclusion. These functions map directly onto the seven translanguaging goals listed by García and Wei (2014, pp. 120, henceforth G&W, 2014) as indicated in each theme heading below. As Treffers-Daller (2025b, p. 4) cautions, one of the central challenges facing the field is the absence of clear "clear diagnostic criteria which specify which practices count as translanguaging and which do not. Without such criteria, the term risks becoming too broad or analytical to be helpful. Responding directly to this concern, the present review demonstrates what pedagogical translanguaging in the Indian context looks like when it is purposefully designed—by mapping the materials, tasks and activities, the languages and contexts in which they have been used to the distinct pedagogical purposes they serve. In doing so, it offers teachers and teacher-educators not just an argument for translanguaging but a concrete, categorised account of how it can be operationalised in classroom practice.

Thematic Review and Activities

The five themes discussed below represent recurring pedagogic patterns across studies conducted in different regions, levels and language combinations. Using activities drawn from the reviewed studies, each theme illustrates a distinct way in which teachers and researchers mobilised learners' multilingual resources within their respective research contexts. These activities have been adapted into a classroom-ready template for ease of planning and application across different linguistic combinations and classroom settings.

Pedagogic Functions of Translanguaging Tasks

Translanguaging for Vocabulary Development

Before turning to the five themes, one cross-cutting function deserves explicit mention: vocabulary development. Across almost all the studies in this corpus, home languages are mobilised at the point where learners encounter unfamiliar lexical items—to elicit L1 equivalents, build

synonym and antonym networks (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2023), to explore cross-linguistic form-meaning relationships through semantic feature analysis (Pathak, 2023), to discover vocabulary through sensory and cultural engagement with authentic materials (Raman & Vijaya, 2021), to develop lexical awareness through wordplay and cross-linguistic pun analysis (Raman, 2024) and reduce the cognitive load of simultaneous content and language acquisition. Vocabulary development is not treated here as a separate theme because it is rarely a standalone activity—it is embedded in comprehension work, metalinguistic inquiry, authentic materials engagement and production tasks. Teachers are invited to notice it as a recurring thread running through all five themes.

The thematic discussion below turns to the specific pedagogic functions through which translanguaging supports classroom learning.

Theme 1: Comprehension and Meaning-Making *(Goals 2 and 3 of G&W, 2014): Build Background Knowledge; Deepen Understanding, Develop and Extend New Knowledge*

The most comprehensively evidenced theme across the corpus is the use of home languages as a scaffold for comprehension—a planned, purposeful use of L1 at specific moments in a lesson to activate background knowledge, clarify meaning and support inference, before learners move towards engagement in the target language. Anderson (2022), in a comparative study of expert teachers across three states, documents naturally occurring translanguaging strategies like multilingual board work, L1 annotations in textbooks, i.e., using the more expressive language to carry the conceptual weight of a lesson. Mukhopadhyay et al. (2023), in a classroom observation study conducted across four government EMI schools in Hyderabad, document how teachers used Telugu, Hindi and Lambadi to scaffold comprehension of English texts with Grade 5 learners. The study presents a translingual reading development model structured around six steps from lexical analysis through post-reading whole-text representation, with L1 embedded at every stage. Teachers elicited home-language equivalents and used multilingual explanations and questioning to scaffold comprehension before learners engaged with the English text. At the undergraduate level, Raman (2023), working with multilingual and multicultural undergraduate learners at EFL University, Hyderabad, used home-language grouping—placing learners who shared languages—for text preview and review to discuss

reading content before whole class sharing. Synthesising findings from various projects on reading, Mukhopadhyay and Tsimpli (2024) confirm that reading outcomes improve under two conditions: when home-to-school language continuity is maintained and when teachers actively use translanguaging pedagogy rather than simply permitting it. One example of this approach is Pathak's (2021) bilingual reading task in Assamese and English, as detailed below.

Table 1: *Bilingual Reading Task*

Activity	**Bilingual Reading Task**
Level	Primary (Grade 3–6)
Primary Skill Focus	Reading; Writing
Translanguaging Focus	Home language used to scaffold reading comprehension, reducing cognitive load without replacing English engagement
Materials	Level- appropriate reading text; bilingual text-map (home language/English); summary writing
Steps	1. Pre-reading: Show learners pictures related to the (Assamese) festival *bihu*. Elicit key words in both languages and discuss them. 2. While-reading: Learners read a text on *bihu* and complete a bilingual text-map in Assamese. 3. Discuss responses and provide English equivalents (whole class activity). 4. Post-reading: Learners write a summary in their home language based on the text-map. Then they translate it into English. ***Teacher tip***: The goal is not to stay in the home language but to use it as a bridge. Once learners have the meaning, move them towards English – but do not penalise the home-language step.
Extension	Ask learners to find out about festivals that happen during Sankranti in other states and talk about them in Assamese. Use the text-map to research about *kongali* and *rongali*. Write paragraph(s) in Assamese followed by English.

Theme 2: Cross-Linguistic and Metalinguistic Awareness *(Goal 4 of G&W, 2014): Develop Cross-linguistic Transfer and Metalinguistic Awareness*

A distinct category of translanguaging activities in the corpus treats multilingualism as an object of inquiry rather than simply as a support tool—developing cross-linguistic awareness of how languages work similarly and differently, and how meaning is shaped by linguistic structure. Anderson (2017) provides several classroom activities that invite learners to reflect on when and why they move between languages. Raman (2023) documents a classroom activity in which learners were asked to share idioms and proverbs from their home languages and find English equivalents—or note where no direct equivalent exists—generating rich discussions of the cultural embeddedness of figurative

language. In a lesson using a graphic on spices and herbs used in Ayurveda (a cultural artefact), with international EFL professionals, Raman and Vijaya (2021) asked learners to write the names of spices on the board in their own scripts, producing cross-linguistic labels for the same ingredient—a move that built vocabulary while foregrounding and affirming learners' linguistic knowledge. Pathak (2021) describes a bilingual poem translation task in which learners translate an Assamese poem into English and then compare the two versions extralinguistically, reflecting on what is gained and lost. In another study, Pathak (2023) describes a concept-based word grouping task in which Assamese teachers analysed the semantic features of English verbs using Assamese conceptually labels, treating vocabulary not as translation equivalence but as semantic feature bundles—a qualitatively different and more demanding form of metalinguistic inquiry. The following activity is drawn from Anderson (2017, pp. 14–15), a practitioner-booklet designed for use across any home language-English combination in secondary and tertiary contexts. It illustrates how cross-linguistic reflection can be incorporated into classroom practice through deliberate language-meshing.

Table 2: *Meshed News Report*

Activity	**Meshed News Report**
Level	Secondary and Tertiary
Primary Skill Focus	Writing
Translanguaging Focus	Language meshing is treated as a powerful rhetorical choice, developing metalinguistic awareness of when and why speakers move between languages
Materials	A short English news report; no bilingual preparation required
Steps	1. Share a short news report. Read and briefly discuss as a class. 2. Ask learners to write it as a 'meshed' report – deliberately incorporating their home language where it feels natural, or locally relevant. 3. Learners share their versions. Discuss the choices: Why did you switch here? What effect does it create? 4. Whole-class reflection: Where do we see this kind of meshing in Indian media, social media and advertising? ***Teacher tip***: Encourage learners to explain *why* they switched languages at particular points; this reflection is what develops metalinguistic awareness.
Extension	Learners bring a real meshed text – a social media post, an ad, a film dialogue – and analyse it using the same questions.

Theme 3: Using Culturally Embedded Authentic Materials *(Goals 2, 3 and 4 of G&W, 2014): Build Background Knowledge; Deepen Understanding, Develop and Extend New Knowledge; Build Metalinguistic Awareness*

Perhaps the most distinctive contribution of the corpus to translanguaging pedagogy in India is its argument—supported across multiple studies—that the most effective multilingual instructional materials need not be specially created; they already exist in learners' cultural environments. Raman (2024) demonstrates this through an activity using *Amul* advertisements as the primary text in a postgraduate course. *Amul* ads are themselves already translingual: their iconic wordplay operates across Indian languages and English simultaneously, producing puns such as 'pol Cola' (pol kholna—to expose). While designing lessons for teachers in Assam, Pathak (2021) used a culturally familiar festival-based (Bihu) text for a bilingual reading lesson, arguing that cultural familiarity reduces cognitive load and allows learners to focus on the English language rather than on decoding unknown content. Extending this principle, Pathak (2023) presented parallel bilingual worksheets that paired the biography of Bishnu Prasad Rabha in Assamese with that of Kalpana Chawla in English—two existing texts on the same theme, placed side by side with matched comprehension questions in each language—demonstrating that bilingual quality of a material comes from task design, not from specially constructed content. The activity below is drawn from Raman (2024, pp. 179-181). Developed for multilingual, postgraduate learners at EFLU, Hyderabad, with B1-C1 levels of English proficiency, it provides an example of how culturally embedded texts that draw on English, Hindi and other home languages can be used to stimulate multilingual analysis and discussion without any teacher preparation of bilingual content.

Table 3: *Amul Ads Analysis*

Activity	**Amul Ad Analysis and Curation**
Level	Secondary and Tertiary
Primary Skill Focus	Vocabulary; Speaking
Translanguaging Focus	Authentic bi-/multilingual texts from learners' cultural environments are used to develop vocabulary; no bilingual preparation required
Materials	Amul advertisements (freely available at amul.com); no bilingual preparation required.
Steps	1. Display an Amul advertisement. Ask learners to describe the image, the text, and the slogan. 2. Ask: what is the joke or pun? Which languages does it draw on? What do you need to know in that language and in English to understand it fully? 3. Unpack the wordplay together: e.g., pol Cola (pol kholna - to expose).

	Discuss what makes the pun work across languages. 4. Ask learners to search for cross-linguistic equivalents: is there a similar kind of wordplay in their home language? Can they construct one? 5. Ask learners to find their own Amul ad or any bilingual advertisement and present it to the class, explaining the wordplay and the cultural reference. ***Teacher tip***: This activity works best when the teacher models genuine uncertainty — "I don't know the Hindi meaning here, can you explain it to me?" — which positions learners as experts and reduces the English-only power dynamic.
Extension	Ask learners to design their own bilingual advertisement for a product of their choice, using wordplay that draws on both their home language and English.

Theme 4: Production Skills and Translingual Output *(Goal 5 of G&W, 2014): Cross-Linguistic Flexibility*

While much translanguaging research focuses on receptive skills, the corpus also documents activities that require learners to produce translingual output—artefacts, presentations and written texts that draw purposefully on more than one language. Working with first-year undergraduates in an English-medium optometry programme at SRM Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, the storyboard task and group research presentation activity from Ali and Raj (2024, pp. 161-163) provides an example of how translanguaging can function as a genuine research and planning tool in professionally-contextualised translingual output tasks. At the primary level, Mukhopadhyay (2021) documents a chit-based verb tense pairing activity in which learners match Telugu and English word forms, offering a more structured grammar-focused production task.

Table 4: *Storyboarding and Oral Presentation*

Activity	**Storyboarding and Oral Presentation**
Level	Tertiary (professional/EMI contexts)
Primary Skill Focus	Speaking; Writing
Translanguaging Focus	Learners draw on their full linguistic repertoire to research and present on real-world professional topics using home languages – building both subject knowledge and communication confidence
Materials	Storyboard template, field-related research prompts
Steps	1. Assign a research question connected to learners' professional context – Where do … graduates work and what English skills do they need? 2. Ask learners to gather information in all the languages at their disposal. 3. In pairs or small groups, learners create a storyboard, planning the structure and key points of their presentation (Use any language.) 4. Learners transfer the storyboard into a short presentation in English, using slides for visuals and key words only. 5. Groups present to the class. 6. Encourage learners to use their home languages to clarify a point or to respond to questions if needed, then restate in English.

	Teacher tip: The professional research prompt is the key here. When learners are investigating their own career futures, the communicative stakes feel real and the motivation to produce English increases naturally.
Extension	Ask learners to reflect in writing on one moment where they switched languages during the task – why did they switch and what did it help them to do?

Theme 5: Building Learner Confidence, Identity and Inclusion *(Goals 6 and 7of G&W, 2014): Identity Investment and Positionality; Interrogate Linguistic Inequality*

A consistent finding across the corpus is that legitimising home languages in the classroom has a direct and visible impact on learner participation and identity. Anderson (2022) documents how the formal inclusion of learners' languages—through L1-inclusive groupwork, bilingual board work, and deliberate code choices—increased visible engagement and reduced the affective distance between learners and English-medium content. Raman (2023) documents a long-term identity outcome: a shy, hesitant, first-generation undergraduate learner confidently took up the role of the editor of a class magazine at the end of a semester, partly because of the teacher's use of broken Telugu as a solidarity move and the legitimisation of L1. This dimension—the teacher as co-learner and solidarity figure—is reinforced by Pathak (2023), who documents how English functions as a source of anxiety rather than a professional resource for many government teachers in rural Assam. The parallel task design that Pathak proposes, in which teachers first complete a task in Assamese and then in English with L1 instructions, works on teacher confidence through the same mechanism: beginning where people are and scaffolding them towards where they need to go. The activity below, drawn from Mukhopadhyay (2021, pp. 5-7) describes a memorable moment in a Grade 5 classroom in which a student previously reluctant to speak in class led a Total Physical Response activity in a grammar class after a teacher used Telugu to introduce action words. The teacher's own reflection captures the key pedagogical distinction: the planned legitimisation of home languages produces greater participation than simply allowing home language use to arise spontaneously.

Evidence from a special education context reinforces the inclusive potential of translanguaging pedagogy. In a study with learners with moderate intellectual disabilities, Sreelakshmi and Uma Maheswari (2024) found that structured translanguaging tasks led to

measurable improvements across language skills, particularly listening comprehension, the skill most directly supported by home-language scaffolding.

Table 5: *Exploring Naming Words Across Languages*

Activity	**Exploring Naming Words across Languages**
Level	Primary and Secondary
Primary Skill Focus	Grammar
Translanguaging Focus	Use of home language use legitimises learners' identities and builds participation, particularly among first generation learners
Materials	Any vocabulary set or action words; blackboard
Steps	1. Introduce a new word or action in English. Ask learners to discuss its meaning in groups in their home languages: *Say it in your language first*. Ask a volunteer to share the home language equivalent. Write both on the board, 2. Ask a learner to demonstrate (perform the action) or explain the concept to the class in whichever language they choose. If they use the home language, model the English after them. ***Teacher tip***: The planned use of home languages can encourage silent learners to take the lead in activities especially those that require Total Physical Response.
Extension	Learners teach one new word from the lesson to a family member at home and then report to the class.

The activities presented above are illustrative examples drawn from the reviewed corpus. Teachers who intend to extend their repertoire will find further classroom-ready activities in several sources. For instance, Anderson's (2017) practitioner booklet offers replicable tasks across language combinations. However, it does not contain explicit information on how teachers can incorporate home languages into the activities and what pedagogical goals they serve—significant limitations in contexts where teachers may be uncertain about using learners' home languages formally. In such scenarios, teacher training becomes indispensable: access to materials alone is insufficient without professional development that builds teachers' confidence and competence in designing translanguaging tasks. The Indian studies in this corpus, particularly Pathak's work, offer a stronger model in this respect—one where the incorporation of Assamese into teaching is not an add-on, but is built into the structural design of the lesson. This integration of a specific regional language into the task architecture represents a distinctively translingual approach. For teachers seeking a broader collection of multilingual classroom strategies, Heugh et al. (2019) offer an extensive practitioner resource. At the level of textbook

design, Raman and Vijaya (forthcoming) describe how translanguaging principles can be integrated systematically into materials development.

Conclusion

Taken together, the studies reviewed here reveal language teaching patterns bi/multilingually with implications for both classroom practice and materials design in Indian multilingual contexts. The framing of this review as an account of pedagogical translanguaging—teacher-designed, purposefully embedded in lesson structure and tied to identifiable learning goals—is itself a significant contribution. As Treffers-Daller (2025a) argues, the field urgently requires greater rigour in distinguishing planned, pedagogical translanguaging from spontaneous language alternation. This review demonstrates what that distinction looks like in practice across a range of Indian classroom materials and task types.

Teachers who deliberately planned for home language use—deciding in advance when and why learners would draw on their linguistic repertoires—reported stronger learner engagement and clearer evidence of understanding than those who simply permitted home-language use when it arose (Mukhopadhyay, 2021; Mukhopadhyay & Tsimpli, 2024). The activities presented in this article, therefore, treat translanguaging not as an incidental accommodation but as a purposeful pedagogic strategy embedded within lesson design.

A second pattern concerns the role of realia and embodied sensory learning (Raman & Vijaya, 2021; Mukhopadhyay, 2021). Activities that involve physical objects, sensory engagement or movement appear to work synergistically with translanguaging to reduce cognitive load and lower learners' affective barriers. When learners can connect language learning with tangible experiences—such as identifying familiar objects or performing actions—they are better able to link new vocabulary and structures to concepts already grounded in their everyday lives.

The studies also highlight how translanguaging can be particularly productive in multilingual, low-resource classroom environments (Pathak, 2021, 2023; Mukhopadhyay et al., 2023). In settings where a single teacher handles multiple subjects and grade levels, skills such as classifying, inferring and comparing can be developed through the home language in one subject and later applied in another. Viewed from this perspective, the multilingual classroom is not simply a challenge

to be managed, but a resource-rich environment in which conceptual learning can move flexibly across languages and subjects.

Importantly, the benefits of translanguaging extend beyond mainstream language classrooms. Studies in the corpus demonstrate its usefulness in English-medium professional courses where home-language scaffolding supports comprehension and oral production in linguistically dense subject areas, as well as in special education contexts, where access to the home language can be essential for participation and skill development. Together, these findings suggest that translanguaging is a broadly applicable pedagogic resource that enables multilingual learners across diverse educational contexts to mobilise their full linguistic repertoires to support learning.

For teachers working in multilingual classrooms, the implication is clear: translanguaging does not require specialised bilingual materials or radical curricular changes. Rather, it involves recognising and deliberately incorporating the linguistic resources that learners bring to the classroom. Future work on materials design can build on these insights by exploring how translanguaging-oriented tasks can be systematically integrated into textbooks and teacher resources across subjects and educational levels. In doing so, the gap between India's multilingual classrooms and largely monolingual materials that shape them may begin to narrow, allowing classroom practice to reflect more closely the linguistic realities of learners' lives.

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